Vice president delivers aid to flood victims in Rakhine State

Gov’t, ethnic armed groups set to resume negotiations toward ceasefire accord

By Ye Myint

YANGON, 16 July — Negotiators representing the Union government and ethnic armed groups will meet in Yangon on 22 July, aiming to strike a deal on the official signing of the national ceasefire accord, a senior adviser at the Myanmar Peace Centre said Thursday.

The planned talks in Yangon will involve the government’s Union Peace-Making Work Committee and a senior delegation from the ethnic armed groups, said U Hla Maung Shwe, who held talks the previous day with ethnic delegates led by Naw Zipporah Sein in Chiang Mai, Thailand.

“In meeting with the (ethnic armed organizations’) senior delegates, a working team of the Myanmar Peace Centre informed them of Union Minister U Aung Min’s call for finalizing the NCA at a stroke in Yangon,” the senior adviser added.

“The (ethnic) senior delegation replied that they would try their best.”

According to sources, the meeting next week will run for two days, focusing on finalizing the deal and addressing the ethnic side’s demand that the signing process be inclusive of all armed groups, including those currently not officially engaged in the negotiations.

The talks will also discuss who should be the joint action plan.

“no child soldiers”

UN official welcomes child soldier progress, says more must be done

By Aye Min Soe

YANGON, 16 July — A senior United Nations official on Thursday welcomed progress made by the Tatmadaw to stop its recruitment of child soldiers, but said stronger measures were needed to completely stamp out the practice.

Ms Leila Zerrougui, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, said it was “very positive” that the 2012 Joint Action Plan to end the Myanmar army’s recruitment and use of children was making an impact.

However, the special representative at a press conference in Yangon said there remained “gaps” in the implementation of the plan.

“For example, even two or three (child soldier) cases are gaps and we need to close the gaps,” Ms Zerrougui said.

The special representative said robust age assessment must be applied within the centralized military recruitment process.

“A professional army does not need children,” she said.

The army must also make measures to prevent violations against children a standard part of its curriculum and take action against military personnel or civilian brokers involved in underage recruitment.

Ms Zerrougui also expressed concern about the detention of children alleged to have “deserted” the army.

The government side proposed holding further talks to determine NCA signatories, while the accord until further amendments were made, before appointing a new team for further talks with the government.

A young boy walks past a billboard promoting a “No Child Soldiers” campaign in Yangon.—Photo Aye Min Soe

The NCA draft approved in Yangon in late March has yet to be signed due to its unexpected rejection by the ethnic side at the summit. The armed groups vowed not to sign the accord until further amendments were made, before appointing a new team for further talks with the government.

GNLM
Pyithu Hluttaw approves bills amending insurance law and saving bank law

By Daw Leila Zerrougui

UN official welcomes child soldier ...

expressing her hope that the UN and the government would finalize the Joint Action Plan soon. During her five-day visit, Ms Zerrougui visited Nay Pyi Taw, Yangon, Mandalay and Myitkyina and held talks with key ministers. She also met representatives from the Kachin Independence Army for the first time.

Ms Zerrougui had also made plans to meet with representatives of other ethnic armed groups including the Karen National Liberation Army and the Karen National Progressive Party on the final day of her visit.

The special representative said the UN is engaging with the armed groups to gain more information about areas that are not easily accessible. She also highlighted the importance of including child protection in the ongoing peace process between the government and ethnic armed groups.

Due to difficulty counting the refugees in Sittway Township, international organizations were providing assistance based on numbers submitted by camp committees, leading to the over-supply of relief goods, the sources said.

Nay Pyi Taw, 16 July — The Pyithu Hluttaw on Thursday approved the third amendment bill of the Union Judiciary Law, the third amendment bill of the Constitutional Tribunal Law of the Union and the amendment bill of the Union Civil Services Board Law.

The parliament also approved the reformation of the Pyithu Hluttaw’s Joint Bill Committee. Union Minister for Finance U Win Shein read out the second half-year Union Budgets Report 2014/2015 on numbers submitted by the central government.

The budget estimate for the second half of the financial year amounts to 96.91 percent of total earnings, with 97.91 percent as the total budget estimate of the whole financial year.

The union minister added that the statistics mentioned in the second half-year financial report are based on approximate budget allocations collected at the close of the fiscal year.

True figures will be announced soon after the auditor’s approval, he said. According to Daw Sanda Min of the Zabuthiri constituency, the in- come-expense scrutiny from fiscal 2013-2014 to the first half-year of 2014-2015 revealed a loss of K22.699 billion, with the Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Rural Development alone still owing 31.793 billion to the Union.

She also urged the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement to explain to parliament how they spent their budget allotments.—MNA

Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement to discuss budget affairs.—MNA

Pyithu Hluttaw approves 3 amendment bills

Nay Pyi Taw, 16 July — The Pyidaungsu Hluttaw on Thursday approved the amendment bills of the Union and the amendment bills of the Pyithu Hluttaw.

Minister for Immigration U Soe Win of Kyauktada constituency, the deputy minister said that citizenship scrutiny cards to citizens who were born of two citizen parents without delay raised by U Soe Win of Kyauktada Constituency, the deputy minister said that citizenship is an important role in the security of the nation, allowing citizenship to a disqualified person would be harmful to the nation in the long run. According to the law, it will take a certain length of the time for foreign mixed races to get through the citizenship process.

U Than Myint of Salinpyi Constituency asked about plan to take deterrent action against drug traffickers and crime brokers to prevent abuse of narcotic drugs among the youths. Deputy Minister for Home Affairs Brig-Gen Kyaw Kyaw Tun said that Yinmar Plan was implemented as anti-drug campaign with various work groups including Central Committee for Drug Abuse Control. Action is taken against the drug traffickers and those related to the narcotic drug cases, and drugs and related equipment were confiscated. Deputy Minister for Finance Dr Maung Maung Thein submitted the bill amendment of foreign exchange management law.

Pyithu Hluttaw Bill Committee member U Than Tun Oo read out the report. The Hluttaw invited MP to discuss the bill. The Hluttaw approved the bills amending the insurance law and saving bank law.—MNA

“Call upon all parties to the conflict in Myanmar to immediately stop the recruitment and use of children under 18. By doing so, they will demonstrate their true commitment to peace,” Ms. Leila Zerrougui, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict. PHOTO AYE MIN SOE

Excess relief goods sold at stalls in Rakhine: sources

Sittway, 16 July — Excess relief supplies provided to refugee camps in Rakhine State are being sold at roadside stalls, sources have reported.

International organizations, UN agencies and the Rakhine State Government have been supplying Bengali refugee camps in Sittway Township with food, kitchenware, clothes, plastic sheets and items for women and children on a monthly basis.

The sources disputed reports of goods shortages by the media and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, saying relief supplies were abundant in the camps. Such relief items were being sold at roadside shops in the Bengali village of Darpaing, with many people flocking to buy the goods, which were selling at lower prices than in shops, they said.

Due to difficulty counting the refugees in Sittway Township, international organizations have been providing assistance based on numbers submitted by camp committees, leading to the over-supply of relief goods, the sources said.

MNA

Relief items for Bengali camps are being sold at roadside shops in Darpaing (Bengali) Village in Sittway Township.—MNA

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw
Vice president delivers aid to flood victims in Rakhine State

Nay Pyi Taw, 17 July — Vice President Dr Sai Mauk Kham on Thursday inspected townships flooded by heavy rains in Rakhine State and presented relief assistance to local people.

The vice president, who chairs the Central Committee for Reconstruction of Damage and Losses due to Floods in Rakhine State, inspected a road damaged by Taunggup Creek in Taunggup and presented relief assistance to victims at the town hall.

Vice President Dr Sai Mauk Kham views the site for drain to be dredged for proper flow of water in Thandwe Creek, Rakhine State.—IPRD

Mauk Ohn then explained reconstruction tasks being undertaken.

The vice president and officials later presented food, clothes, mosquito nets, blankets and solar lamps for flood victims in villages.

In the afternoon, the vice president and party visited the district people’s hospital in Thandwe and inspected the wards, theatres, X-ray room and dental clinic.

The vice president and party later met with members of the Rakhine State government, Hluttaw representatives, officials, town elders and local people at the town hall.

At the meeting, the vice president sought advice from local people on roads, bridges, schools and hospitals.

He then presented relief assistance for victims including solar lamps.

Later, the vice president and party proceeded to Dwayawadi Creek Bridge in Thandwe and inspected the site for a new canal to prevent flooding in Thandwe Creek.

Appointment of ambassador agreed on

Nay Pyi Taw, 16 July — The Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has agreed to the appointment of H.E. Maxwell Ranga as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Zimbabwe to India. He is married with three sons.

Mr Maxwell Ranga will serve as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Zimbabwe to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar with residence in New Delhi.

Mr Berrah Mohamed will serve as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Algeria to the Republic of India.

Mr Berrah Mohamed has been appointed as an Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Algeria to the Permanent Mission of People’s Democratic Republic of Algeria to the United Nations in New York and represented Algeria in the Fifth Committee in 1990. From 1992 to 1996, he was a Counselor in the Algerian Embassy in Brussels. From 2001 to 2005, he also served as Minister Counselor in Algerian Permanent Mission in Geneva and in Algerian Embassy in Paris. Then he had been appointed as Ambassador of Algeria to Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Kirghizia. He is married with three children.

Mr Berrah Mohamed will serve as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the People’s Democratic Republic of Algeria to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar with residence in Hanoi, Vietnam.

MNA

Appointments of ambassador agreed on

Nay Pyi Taw, 15 July — The Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has agreed to the appointment of H.E. Mr Berrah Mohamed as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the People’s Democratic Republic of Algeria to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar with residence in Hanoi, Vietnam.

Mr Berrah Mohamed was born on 16 October 1956. He received Law Degree in 1980, Post-graduation (Law) in 1982 and started the preparation for Ph.D on the concept of international cooperation from 1982-1987. He was a Third Secretary in the MOFA in 1987. He then served as Second Secretary in charge of Bretton Woods Institutions in 1989. He had been temporarily posted to the Permanent Mission of People’s Democratic Republic of Algeria to the United Nations in New York and represented Algeria in the Fifth Committee in 1990. From 1992 to 1996, he was a Counselor in the Algerian Embassy in Brussels. From 2001 to 2005, he also served as Minister Counselor in Algerian Permanent Mission in Geneva and in Algerian Embassy in Paris. Then he had been appointed as Ambassador of Algeria to Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Kirghizia. He is married with three children.

Mr Berrah Mohamed will serve as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the People’s Democratic Republic of Algeria to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar with residence in Hanoi, Vietnam.

MNA

Former Guardian newspaper building set to become writers’ haven

Nay Pyi Taw, 16 July — The Ministry of Information and the Sarpay Yeikmyon Foundation met Thursday to discuss using the former Guardian newspaper building in Yangon as a creative space to promote Myanmar’s literary scene.

They discussed drafting rules for usage and rent for the two-storey gazette branch building on Merchant Street, for office for writers and literature. It plans to create various mineral, drawing together archaeological groups, open book stalls and a café.

The literary foundation plans to cooperate with international organizations to host readings, workshops, talks, exhibitions and contests to promote Myanmar literature. It plans to create offices for writers and literary groups, open book stalls and a café.

Nay Pyi Taw, 16 July — The Ministry of Information U Ye Htut meets writers U Pe Myint, Ledwintar Saw Chit (U Tin Hlaing) and party.—SNA

The Permanent Secretary U Tin Hlaing and officials, together with writers U Pe Myint, Ledwintar Saw Chit (U Tin Hlaing) and party.

They discussed drafting rules for usage and rent for the two-storey gazette branch building on Merchant Street, for office for writers and literature. It plans to create various mineral, drawing together archaeological groups, open book stalls and a café.

Dy Minister for Environmental Conservation and Forestry meets director of Wuntho Resources Co

Nay Pyi Taw, 16 July — Deputy Minister for Environmental Conservation and Forestry Dr Thet Zin received Director of Wuntho Resources Company Limited Mr Richard Taylor and party at the ministry, here, Thursday.

They discussed survey to be conducted for various minerals, drawing of environmental management plan for minimizing impacts on the standards inside and outside forest areas and environment and social impacts and carrying out the tasks meeting international norms.—MNA

Nay Pyi Taw, 16 July — The Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has agreed to the appointment of H.E. Mr Berrah Mohamed as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the People’s Democratic Republic of Algeria to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar with residence in Hanoi, Vietnam.

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Mr Berrah Mohamed will serve as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the People’s Democratic Republic of Algeria to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar with residence in Hanoi, Vietnam.—MNA

MNA
Japan ruling camp ram security bills through lower house

Photo shows the plenary session of the House of Representatives convened in Tokyo on 16 July, 2015. The lower house is set to pass security bills on the day that would expand the role of the Self-Defence Forces abroad amid strong objections by opposition parties and rising concerns among the public. — Kyodo News

Tokyo, 16 July — Japan’s ruling coalition pushed controversial security bills through the House of Representatives on Thursday, moving a step closer to achieving Prime Minister Shinzo Abe’s goal of expanding the role of the Self-Defense Forces abroad.

Hundreds protest around Diet as security bills passed by lower house

Photo: People stage a rally in front of the Diet building in Tokyo on 16 July, 2015, to show opposition to government-sponsored security bills that would expand the role of the Self-Defense Forces abroad. The House of Representatives is set to pass them the same day. — Kyodo News

Tokyo, 16 July — Hundreds of people continued to rally around the Diet building in central Tokyo on Thursday, protesting against controversial security bills that were pushed through the lower house by Japan’s ruling coalition.

Many of the participants carried placards with slogans such as “No to Abe’s politics” “Prevent war!” and “Don’t destroy Article 9,” referring to the section of the Constitution that renounces war. A 29-year-old woman teacher living in Tokyo who is on child-care leave said, “I don’t want (Japan) to walk the path toward war, for the sake of my child” who is less than one year old.

“I tried to spread news related to the security bills among my friends through Facebook postings, but found it difficult. So, I came here yesterday and today to convey my feelings (against the bills) by actually taking part in the rally,” she said.

The protest followed a similar demonstration on Wednesday after the bills were forced through a House of Representatives panel.

In occasional rain, the protesters intensified their chants after the bills passed the lower house around 2:10 pm. “It is regrettable and, at the same time, irritating to think Japan is turning in a strange direction,” said Shinsuke Kimura, a former member of the Odawara city assembly in Kanagawa Prefecture, southwest of Tokyo.

“I couldn’t help but come here after I closely watched the deliberations (on the bills) yesterday on television, hoping my participation can be of help,” said Kimura, 62, who does not belong to any political party.

“We still have some time before the end of the current extended Diet session in September. The Japanese people have to raise their voices in a protest that is strong enough to expel (Prime Minister Shinzo) Abe,” Kimura said. The bills would allow Japan to exercise the right to collective self-defense, or coming to the aid of the United States and other friendly nations under armed attack even if Japan itself is not attacked.

If enacted, the legislation would mark a major shift in Japan’s post-World War II exclusively defense-oriented security policy, paving the way for Japanese troops to be sent to fight abroad for the first time since the end of World War II. — Kyodo News

Four killed in NPA, Philippine military encounters

Manila, 16 July — Three New People’s Army (NPA) rebels and a government soldier were killed and two other soldiers were wounded in separate incidents in central Philippine provinces of Sorsogon and Masbate on Thursday morning, said military officials.

Angel Guzman, spokesman of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) Southern Luzon Command, said the three rebels died following a firefight with the Army’s 31st Infantry Battalion in barangay Bacolod in Irosin town in Sorsogon.

Guzman said the soldiers were conducting house-to-house dialogue in the barangay when they were fired upon by NPA rebels at about 11:30 am.

The 15-minute firefight also resulted in the wounding of two soldiers. At around 9 am, three NPA rebels gunned down a soldier in barangay Bagacay in San Jacinto town in Ticao Island in Masbate.

“He was on his way to send money to his family when he was shot by the three NPA SPARUs (Special Partisan Unit members). They (rebels) withdrew using motorized bancas after the attack,” said Guzman.

The 4,000-strong NPA, armed wing of the Communist Party of the Philippines, has been fighting a leftist insurgency in 60 Philippine provinces since 1969 — Xinhua

Manila, 16 July — A bridge was cut off due to flood when Muslim people moved to their hometowns to celebrate Eid al-Fitr in Aceh.— Xinhua

Photo: People stand near a broken bridge at Krueng Sabue, Aceh, Indonesia, on 16 July, 2015. A bridge was cut off due to flood when Muslim people moved to their hometowns to celebrate Eid al-Fitr in Aceh. — Xinhua

Tokyo, 16 July — Despite strong objections from prime minister Shinzo Abe’s liberal Democratic Party and its coalition partner, the Communist Party, the Japan Innovation Democratic Party of Japan itself is not attacked.

“The government bears responsibility to ensure people’s lives and peaceful living in an increasingly severe security situation surrounding our country, especially North Korea’s nuclear and missile development,” the top government spokesman told reporters, stressing the need to enact the bills.

The proposed legislation would allow Japan to defend the United States and other friendly nations under armed attack to cope with new security environments including a rising China and a nuclear-armed North Korea.

It would also enable Tokyo to increase its contribution to international peacekeeping efforts.

Opposition lawmakers and constitutional scholars argue Japan’s exercising the right to collective self-defense would violate the war-renouncing Constitution.

Abe dismisses such claims and defends a landmark Cabinet decision in July last year that reinterprets the Constitution to allow Japan to exercise the right to collective self-defense.

The prime minister has expressed determination to enact the bills by the 27 September end of the current extended Diet session. In an address to a joint session of the US Congress in late April, he promised to enact the bills “by this coming summer” as part of efforts to “provide a seamless response for all levels of crisis.”

The LDP-Komeito coalition controls more than two-thirds of the lower house and holds a majority in the upper house. Under Diet rules, even if the upper chamber fails to vote on the bills, a second vote in the lower chamber can pass them into law with a two-thirds majority.

But railroading the bills through parliament risks a further fall in public support for the government because opinion polls show a majority of the public opposes the bills and believes Abe has not explained them sufficiently. On Wednesday, Abe acknowledged such public sentiment. “It is true that the public has yet to gain sufficient understanding (of the bills). (We) would like to increase efforts so as to promote their understanding.”

Rallies have been held across Japan in protest to the forced passage of the bills. A demonstration near the Diet building in Tokyo on Wednesday drew about 10,000 people, according to organizers. — Kyodo News
Obama — Iran deal is only alternative to more Mideast war

WASHINGTON, 16 July — President Barack Obama, seeking to sell the Iran nuclear deal to sceptical US lawmakers and nervous allies, insisted on Wednesday that the landmark agreement was the only alternative to a nuclear arms race and more war in the Middle East.

Obama made his case in a nationally televised news conference responding to critics at home and abroad after four and six world powers sealed an accord in Vienna on Tuesday to restrict Teheran’s nuclear programme in exchange for sanctions relief.

“Without a deal,” Obama said, there would be no limits to Iran’s nuclear program, and the US could move closer to a nuclear bomb...

Obama said that if the United States did not seize the opportunity, “future generations will judge us harshly.”

Obama contended the deal was sound and that a “snap-back” mechanism in it to restore sanctions if Iran cheated would ensure Teheran faced real consequences.

But he acknowledged that although he hopes the deal will encourage Iran to re-in its aggressive conduct in the region, he was not betting on a change.

Obama said without a deal other countries in the region would feel compelled to pursue their own nuclear arms programmes.

“There really are only two alternatives here,” he said, citing diplomacy or war, an appeal to war-weary Americans to back a negotiated settlement with Iran.

Without a deal, Obama said, the only alternative to a nuclear war in the Middle East...

US President Barack Obama arrives at a news conference to discuss the recent nuclear deal with Iran at the White House in Washington on 15 July, 2015 — Reuters

Bangkok, 16 July — An information-providing platform is urgently needed for Chinese and Thai enter-

prises to understand each other’s demand and supply so that they can cooperate in the most effective way, a Chinese entrepreneur told Xinhua.

There are great prospects about economic cooperation and Chinese enterprises investing in Thailand, but an ex-

isting information gap has prevented enterprises in both countries from fully learning the demands, resources and strengths of each other, said Xu Genlux, president of the Thai-Chinese Rayong Indus-

trial Zone, which is located in east Thailand’s Rayong Province.

Enterprises from both sides wish to have a platform that provides dynamic and comprehensive information regarding economic statis-

tics, policies and regulations, investment environment, market demand, projects of China and Thailand, according to the head of the industrial zone, which now houses more than 60 Chinesee enterprises.

The platform is expected to serve as an information bridge that can effectively partner Chinese and Thai en-

terprises precisely based on their respective demand and supply, he added.

For instance, Xu said, a temporary deal, was Taiwan is a major grower and exporter of rice, cassava, rubber and fruit, while China happens to be a major importer of these agricultural products.

Chinese, Thai enterprises call for information platform to facilitate cooperation

Currently, the Thai govern-

ment attaches great im-

portance to using advanced
technologies to process and preserve meat, fruit, vegeta-

bles and food crops, and pro-
duce fruit beverage.

Both the Thai govern-

ment and enterprises want to learn more about China’s market conditions in relation to the above-mentioned products, in hopes of ex-

panding cooperation with Chinese enterprises and in-

creasing their share of the Chinese market, Xu noted.

Meanwhile, as ASEAN’s largest producer of automo-

bles, Thailand aims to fur-

ther strengthen its automo-

tive industry. However, Thai enterprises have not been able to manufacture sedans, transmissions and electronic control units, which Chinese enterprises enjoy advantages, Xu said.

But both sides need to have enough information to detect investment opportuni-

ties in such industries and create cooperation possibility, Xu stressed.

The Thai government is encour-

aging foreign investment in projects related to high and new technology, human resources, public and infra-

structure facilities, pollution prevention and environmen-

tal protection, according to Xu.

With advantages in many of these projects, Chinese enterprises wish to be better informed of Thai-

landfall at night

Typhoon approaches Japan’s Shikoku, may make landfall at night

Tokyo, 16 July — A strong typhoon moved northward toward the Japa-

nese island of Shikoku on Thursday and is expected to make landfall in the area soon, possibly at night, the weather agency said, warn-

ing of heavy rainfall and strong winds for hours to come.

As Typhoon Nangka made its way toward Japanese archipelago, fears of landslides prompted the government of Kouchi Prefecture on Shikoku to advise the same day over 4,000 of its residents to evacuate their homes.

Traffic has already been disrupted, mostly in

western Japan, with some flights and railway services being cancelled or suspend-

ed. West Japan Railway’s Okayama office said it will suspend all non-rail rapid services in its area after 9 pm.

All Nippon Airways and Japan Airlines have cancelled a total of 110 flights for Thursday, including those connecting Tokyo and Shikoku.

Peach Aviation, a budget carrier, has can-

celled nine flights depart-

ing from Kansai airport on Thursday and 29 departing from and arriving at the Osaka Prefecture airport on Friday.

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Friday, 17 July, 2015 | 5

S Korea, DPRK meet in Kaesong to discuss wage issue

SEOUL, 16 July — Delega-

tes of South Korea and the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK) met on Thursday in the DPRK’s border town of Kaesong to discuss issues, including a wage hike for DPRK workers hired at the namesake factory park.

Five South Korean delegates crossed the in-

ter-Korean land border to the Kaesong industrial zone, kicking off the first talks with DPRK coun-

teeps in more than a year, according to Seoul’s Unification Ministry. The talks began at about 10 am (0100 GMT).

Any agreement reached in the five-month hiatus in operation of the factory park, Seoul and Pyongyang agreed in Au-

gust 2013 to launch the joint economic cooperation committee for the Kaesong in-

dustrial complex and hold the committee meeting regularly.

The meeting was sus-

pended amid rising ten-

sions on the Korean Penin-
sula since the last meeting was held in June 2014.

During the meeting, the two sides are expected to discuss the wage hike issue.

Seoul and Pyongyang have been in deadlock on the wage hike for DPRK workers in Kaesong.

The row came after the DPRK revised labour regulations in November 2014 without consulting with South Korea and uni-

fied the South side of its decision in late February.

Under the revision, the DPRK raised mini-

mum wages for workers in Kaesong from 70.35 US dollars to 74 dollars, topping the growth ceiling of 5 percent agreed upon by an inter-Korean agree-

ment.

South Korea has called for the wage hike to be discussed through an inter-governmental di-

alogue, but the DPRK has claimed that it was a matter of internal affairs in which the South side can-

not intervene.

The Kaesong industrial zone has been seen as one of the key symbols of inter-Korean economic co-

operation.

Some 120 South Korean companies employ-

ing about 53,000 DPRK workers are operating in the park.

Xinhua
**Havana, 16 July — Cuba, US breaking with past, coexisting in peace**

President Raul Castro on Wednesday as the two countries formally restored diplomatic relations. In Havana, the US State Department Secretary of State John Kerry met with his Cuban counterpart Bruno Rodriguez. Mr Kerry praised the announcement of the resumption of full diplomatic ties.

President Obama, meanwhile, hailed the agreement as a "significant" moment in US-Cuba relations. Sen. Bob Menendez, who also met with Mr Kerry, said the decision was "one of the most important foreign policy decisions of recent decades."

Castro also said normalization would require the return to Cuban sovereignty of the US naval base at Guantanamo Bay, although American officials have said Guantanamo is not a topic of discussion in talks with Cuba.—*Reuters*

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**Greece licks wounds after bailout vote, ECB move expected**

Greece on Monday strengthened its economy programme, which has been critically assessed and is facing a vote of no-confidence this week, amid the worst protest of the pro-European opposition, thanks to the votes of the country's 28 EU members.

European leaders called on Thursday to speed up the euro zone's rescue programme and to avoid delays in the implementation of the NPLs (Non-Performing Loans) resolution plan.

The European Central Bank, which does not support Greece's proposals for its own rescue programme, said it would continue to provide liquidity to the country until the end of the month.

Greece's government plans to introduce new taxes to finance the recapitalization of its banks, effectively increasing the value added tax by up to 3.5 percentage points.

Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras arrives for a parliamentary session in Athens, Greece on 15 July, 2015.—*Reuters*

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**Castro sees Cuba, US breaking with past, coexisting in peace**

US law enforcement, Mexico agents met on Guzman escape: Mexico official

Mexico City, 16 July — US law enforcement officials met with agents of the Mexican attorney general’s office this week to share information related to the escape from prison of drug kingpin Joaquin “El Chapo” Guzman and coordinate efforts to apprehend him, a Mexican government official said on Wednesday.

Representatives from the US Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Drug Enforcement Administration met Mexican law enforcement officials in Mexico City on Monday, the government official said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

The cartel has smuggled billions of dollars worth of drugs into the United States and has been blamed for thousands of deaths.

On Wednesday, Mexican marines, who led the operation to capture Guzman last year, raided a house in Mazatlan as part of the effort to track him down, a spokesman for the Mazatlan state attorney’s office said.

The kingpin’s escape on Saturday night from a maximum security prison through a tunnel leading into his cell beneath the surface.

Mexico’s Interior Minister Miguel Angel Osorio Chong this week denied media reports Mexico had been tipped off by US authorities ahead of time that Guzman was planning an escape.

The neighbouring countries would be “cooperating permanently” to try and catch Guzman again, the Mexican official said, and were discussing everything relevant to the operation.

The official also said he had no information on the suspected whereabouts of Guzman, who headed the powerful Sinaloa cartel before his capture in February 2014 in Mazatlan, a northwestern city of Mazatlan.

The cartel has smuggled billions of dollars worth of drugs into the United States and has been blamed for thousands of deaths.

On Wednesday, Mexican marines, who led the operation to capture Guzman last year, raided a house in Mazatlan as part of the effort to track him down, a spokesman for the Mazatlan state attorney’s office said.

The kingpin’s escape on Saturday night from a maximum security prison through a tunnel leading into his cell has massively undermined President Enrique Peña Nieto’s efforts to crack down on organized crime.

Mexican security chiefs were abashed and the government said the breakout could only have taken place with the help of prison guards and officials, and fired the prison’s director.

Guzman previously broke out of prison in 2001.—*Reuters*

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**France says foils jihadist attack on military sites**

Paris, 16 July — Security forces prevented an attack on French military installations this week by arresting four people whose leader had links to jailed jihadists, Interior Minister Bernard Cazeneuve said on Wednesday. According to a source close to the situation, the attackers had planned to act in January 2016 and were targeting a senior military official in the south of France. The four were aged between 16 and 23 and arrested in different places around France, the minister said. One was ex-military, he added.

The announcement came as France is on high alert after 17 people were killed in attacks in and around Paris in January. Last month, a suspected Islamist beheaded his boss and tried to blow up a US-owned industrial gas plant in the suburbs of Lyon.

French authorities have also confirmed that two fires that broke out at a petrochemical facility near Marseille on Tuesday were started deliberately. No motive has been established for the arson attacks, and Cazeneuve said no link had been made between the incidents. The arrests were made at dawn on Monday, the day before Bastille Day, France’s national public holiday. “At the (Bastille Day) ceremony, the President reminded us that every week we prevent... terrorist acts,” Cazeneuve said. “That was once again the case this week.” Cazeneuve said the leader of the group was also known to have wanted to go and fight in Syria. He was planning his escape from prison, he said.

Security forces had now identified 1,850 people normally resident in France who were known to be involved in jihadist networks. Of those, about 500 were currently fighting with Islamists in Syria and Iraq. France had issued 118 prevention orders stopping people from leaving the country.—*Reuters*
Israeli air strike hits Gaza Strip after militant rocket launch

Jerusalem, 16 July — Israeli aircraft struck militant targets in the Hamas-controlled Gaza Strip early on Thursday after a rocket from the coastal territory landed in southern Israel, the Israeli military said.

A passerby was lightly hurt in the Gaza Strip, according to residents. No damage or injuries were reported in Israel after warning sirens sounded and the rocket struck open ground near the city of Ashkelon before dawn, the army said.

Rocket launchings have become an almost weekly occurrence from the coastal strip recently but no militant group took immediate responsibility for the attack.

“The repeated rocket fire at Israel ... is a deliberate decision to target civilians. No person should live under the threat of terrorism,” Israeli military spokesman Lieutenant-Colonel Peter Lerner said in a statement.

A group that sympathises with al-Qaeda, which has claimed Hamas, has been blamed for other recent strikes, none of which caused injuries or damage.

The Israel-Gaza border area had largely been quiet since last year’s July-August war, when Palestinian militants launched thousands of rockets and mortar bombs into Israel, Israeli shelling and air strikes battered the enclave.

More than 2,100 Palestinians were killed, most of them civilians, while 67 soldiers and six civilians were killed on the Israeli side.—Reuters

Some 2,700 migrants rescued at sea near Libya — Italy coast guard

Rome, 16 July — Around 2,700 migrants were rescued from 13 boats near the coast of Libya on Wednesday, Italy’s coastguard said. A German navy vessel and a search and rescue ship deployed by medical charity Medecins Sans Frontieres participated in the rescues along with the Italian navy and coastguard.

A spokesman for the Italian coastguard said the rescues had all been carried out in an area around 35 miles (55 km) from the coast of Libya.

An estimated 150,000 migrants have reached Europe by sea so far in 2015, most of them in Greek and Italian, the International Organization for Migration said. More than 1,900 migrants have drowned in the Mediterranean, twice the toll during the same period last year, said spokesman Joel Millman.

The United Nations refugee agency said on Friday that Greece urgently needed help to cope with 1,000 migrants arriving each day.

The vast majority of the migrants fleeing war and poverty in Africa and the Middle East depart from Libya, where human traffickers have taken advantage of a breakdown in order to build up a lucrative business.—Reuters

72 killed in clashes, airstrikes against IS in Iraq

Baghdad, 16 July — Iraqi security forces backed by Iraqi and US-led coalition aircraft continued their clashes with the Islamic State (IS) militants on Wednesday in the provinces of Anbar and Salahuddin leaving a total of 72 people killed, security sources said.

In Iraq’s western province of Anbar, the security forces and allied paramilitary militias known as Hashid Shaabi, or popular mobilization, launched three attacks from the west and the south of the IS-held provincial capital city of Ramadi, some 110 km west of Baghdad, a provincial security source told Xinhua on condition of anonymity.

The troops fought fierce clashes with the IS militants near Ramadi and battles ended after three hours when suicide bombers detonated four truck bombs in the troops’ positions, the source said.

The huge blasts killed at least eight security members and militiamen killed and 17 others wounded, the source added. On Tuesday, Ali Dhowood, mayor of Khalidiyah town, 40 km east of Ramadi, told Xinhua that the troops were making slow progress in the open lands toward Ramadi because of stubborn resistance from the IS militants and scores of roadside bombs planted by the extremist militias. Separately, at least eight Hashd Shaabi militia members and two policemen were killed in the morning when a suicide bomber rammed his explosive-laden vehicle into a security checkpoint in Nekheb area, some 400 km south of Ramadi, the provincial security source said.

Meanwhile, international warplanes bombarded IS positions near the town of Khalidiyah, some 80 km west of Baghdad, leaving at least 15 militants killed, the source said. Five IS militants were killed and five others wounded in an air strike by an army helicopter gunship on four neighbourhoods detonated in the militant-held city of Fallujah, some 50 km west of Baghdad, the source said, adding that the four civilians were also killed by the attack and eight others wounded.

In addition, six people were killed and nine wounded when an unknown warplane bombarded the town of Qaim, near the Iraqi-Syrian border, the source added.

On Monday, the Iraqi authorities announced the start of a major offensive against IS militants to free key cities and towns in Iraq’s largest province of Anbar Province from IS militants.

Earlier in the day, Iraqi security forces repelled an attack by IS militants, including a suicide bombing, in the oil refinery town of Baiji in the Salahuddin Province, killing at least 12 IS militants and 12 security members.

The attack occurred in the early morning when a suicide bomber rammed his explosive-laden truck into the posts of the troops and Hashd Shaabi militias in the central part of the town of Baiji, 200 km north of the Iraqi capital of Baghdad, a security source from Salahuddin Province anonymously informed Xinhua.

The powerful bomb blast was followed by the advance of dozens of IS militants towards the troops’ posts, sparking heavy clashes lasting for hours, the source said.

“At least 11 soldiers and militiamen were killed and 10 others injured, while 121 IS militants died,” the source said. Also in Baiji, a Shi’ite militia leader from the Hashd Shaabi, Hadhr al-Qansi, was killed and three of his bodyguards were wounded when they entered a buoy-trapped house which exploded during a search operation, the source added. The battle in Baiji comes about two weeks after security forces and allied militias, covered by Iraqi and US-led coalition aircraft, cleared most of the town following days of heavy clashes with extremist militants.

Sporadic clashes persist in Iraq’s largest oil refinery near Kirkuk as security forces fight to drive IS militants out of the refinery, which militants have seized large sections of. The security situation in Iraq has drastically deteriorated since June 2014, when bloody clashes broke out between security forces and IS militants. The IS militants took control of the country’s northwestern city of Mosul and later seized swathes of territories after Iraq security forces abandoned their posts in Nineveh and other predominantly Sunni provinces.—Xinhua

US delivers Iraqi antiquities seized in raid on Islamic State

Baghdad, 16 July — The United States handed back to Iraq on Wednesday antiquities it said it had seized in a raid on Islamic State fighters in Syria, saying the haul was proof of the militants were funding their war by smuggling ancient treasures. The Iraqi relics were captured by US special forces in an operation in May against an Islamic State group known as Abu Sayyaf. They included ancient cylindrical stamps, pottery, metallic bracelets and other jewellery, and were said to be a coloured vase.

The haul also included early Islamic coins. Islamic State, a hardline Sunni Islamist group, has ransacked some of the greatest archaeological sites in northern Iraq, posting video footage of fighters destroying pre-Islamic monuments they consider idolatrous. Iraqi officials have been unable to verify the full extent of damage at the sites under Islamic State control, but they have said that footage of the destruction was published in part to distract attention from the fact Islamic State is smuggling antiquities to raise cash.

“This is the first tangible evidence that Daesh are selling artefacts to fund their activities,” US ambassador Stuart Jones said, referring to Islamic State by its Arabic acronym.

“arife’s goal is to sell these antiquities on the global black market,” he told reporters at Baghadad’s national museum where the items were handed over.

Abu Sayyaf, who was killed in the raid, was described by US officials at the time as an Islamic State commander responsible for the group’s oil and gas sales.

He was killed south-east of the city of Deir al-Zor, near Syria’s main oil fields and about 100 km (60 miles) from the Syria-Iraqi border which across Islamic State declared its “caliphate”.

“Today’s effort represents one success in the efforts to return Iraq’s historic patrimony, but the campaign to return all of Iraq’s treasures continues,” Jones said.

Islamic State fighters have desecrated ancient Assyrian and Greco-Roman palaces in northern Iraq including the 2,700-year-old Assyrian capital of Khorsabad, the cities of Nimrud and Nineveh and the desert complex at Hatra.

Iraqi officials have appealed for international help to protect the sites, asking why the US-led coalition which has been bombing Islamic State bases and convoys across Iraq and Syria has not deployed its air power in defending the ancient treasures. Jones said that, in the absence of forces on the ground, aerial bombardment near the ruins would have limited effect and could be self-defeating. “The coalition does not have boots on the ground and certainly using air strikes on targets like that can be damaging to the patrimony of Iraq,” he said.—Reuters

Recovered artifacts are seen at the National Museum of Iraq in Baghdad on 15 July, 2015.—Reuters
Ownership of policy can ensure success

By Myint Win Thein

For a policy to be successfully implemented, all levels within an organization, from the leadership to the rank-and-file, must have a sense of ownership over it.

Generally speaking, policies are laid down by the leadership of an organization without involvement of lower-level members.

However, it is necessary for all levels to work together for the success of the organization. A policy therefore should not be implemented without the contribution of lower-level members. Leaders should present it to all members and make ownership of it organization-wide.

To do so, it is necessary for leaders to include the rank-and-file in discussions, even before a policy is laid down. When this is done, all members of the organization will feel the policy is of their making and have a stake in ensuring it is implemented and followed.

When the rank-and-file feel like true stakeholders, they can be more productive and contribute to greater success for the organization.

In this sense, a policy laid down by all members of the organization is better than one merely instituted from the top. It is clearly beneficial for organizations to invite the participation of all members before implementing a policy.

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Religious, political figures share thoughts on Martyrs’ Day

By Khin Yadana; Photo: Bo Bo

He drove an army officer to the Secretariat Office on the rainy day and waited at a garage there.

“I heard reports of guns fired, and I still visualize the sight of the blood-covered bodies of our leaders taken to hospital by ambulance.”

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, daughter of General Aung San, said that she was too young at that time to remember the details of what had happened.

“The day taught us a precious lesson that the violent approach to political issues never works,” she said, describing peaceful negotiations as the best way to find solutions to political issues.

On 19 July, she holds a vigil for the murdered leaders of the country at her party’s headquarters without missing a single year. In addition, she always lays wreaths at the Martyrs’ Mausoleum.

She urged the people to continue marching on to the democratic goal set by her father, saying that “it is the right way to honour and respect the martyrs.”

Students create portraits of General Aung San

Nay Pyi Taw, 16 July—Gangaw private high school held a painting contest for portrait of General Aung San in commemoration of the 65th Anniversary of Martyrs’ Day at its school in Yanaung Ward 2, Pyinmana Township, Nay Pyi Taw Council Area, on Wednesday.

Principal of the private school U Aung Khang explained the history of martyrs’ day to students.

Altogether 47 students from the 6th to 11 grades participated in the painting contest.

Maung Kyiik Latt (IPRD)
Myanmar Schools Project Foundation donates school building, equipment worth K50 million

 Mandalay, 16 July — Chief Minister of Mandalay Region U Ye Myint attended the opening of a school building at the basic education middle school branch in Nachangyigon village, Kyaukse Township, recently.

The Ahman Thit building was donated by the Myanmar Schools Project Foundation under the 100-school project for development of education sector in the region. Mr John, a Canadian donor who provided more than 200 uniforms for the school, cut the ribbon at the opening. The foundation provided the one-storey building, along with staff housing, toilets, and desks at a cost of K50 million.

*Thiha Ko Ko (Mandalay)*

Medical gives checkups to factory employees

 Mandalay, 16 July — A Social Security Board medical team conducted checkups on employees at the Asahi Lofi Heim Co. soft drink factory in Aungmyethazan Township on Wednesday. The team gave checkups to 106 employees at the plant. “Members of the Social Security Board have the opportunity to receive medical treatment at the clinics of the board free of charge,” said Staff Officer Daw Shwe Mi of the branch. “If necessary, medical officers of the board will refer the patients to respective worker’s hospitals. Every member of the board can receive medical checkups.”

*Tin Maung (Mandalay)*

Computerized mapping course gives surveyors new perspective

Yangon, 16 July — The Farmland Management and Statistics Department opened a computerized mapping course recently at the central land record development training school in Taikkyi Township, northern Yangon Region. Principal U Myo Oo gave an opening address for the two-month course that will provide practical and theoretical lectures to 270 land surveyors from around the country.

*Tun Hlaing (Myaing)*

MPT slashes landline installation cost

Yangon, 16 July — Myanmar Posts and Telecommunications reduced its installation charge for telephone landlines from K650,000 to K32,000 as of 15 July with the aim of widening access to information technology. Businesses need landlines to access to the Internet through an asymmetric digital subscriber line (ADSL).

MPT currently provides 2G and 3G mobile networks across the nation. The state-run firm has signed an agreement with KDDI-Sumitomo of Japan for development of communication technology in the nation. KDDI and Sumitomo of Japan has announced plans to invest US $2 billion in communication sector of Myanmar.

*Hsu Hnin Lei*

UEC supervises election preparations in northern Shan State

Kyaukme, 16 July — Union Election Commission member Dr Sai San Win met officials of political parties from Kyaukme District at the hall of Township General Administration Department on 15 July to explain the electoral process.

He also held a meeting with officials of Kyaukme District, as well as Kyaukme, Hspaw, Nawngkho and Namtu township election sub-commissions, and spoke about tasks for the general election on 8 November.

Sub-commission officials reported on preparations for the coming general elections.

*Myint Aung (KaMa)*
Restaurant food not much healthier than fast food

New York, 16 July — Home cooking is still the best way to control the calories, fat, sugar and other nutrients that families consume, a new US study suggests.

Researchers found that eating food from restaurants — whether from fast food places, or better establishments — led to increases in calories, fat and sodium compared to meals made at home. Public health interventions targeting dining-out behavior in general, rather than just fast food, may be warranted to improve the way Americans’ eat, says the study’s author.

Ruopeng An, a professor of kinesiology and community health at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, noted that people have previously equated fast food with junk food.

“But, people don’t know much about the food provided by full-service restaurants and if it is better or healthier compared to fast food or compared to food prepared and consumed at home,” An told Reuters Health.

For his study in the European Journal of Clinical Nutrition, An used data from the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES), which regularly gathers health and dietary information from a representative sample of the US population.

More than 18,000 adults answered survey questions about what they’d eaten over a two-day period. About a third of participants reported eating fast food on one or both days, and one quarter reported eating full-service restaurant food on at least one day.

Compared to participants who ate food prepared at home, those who visited fast food restaurants consumed an average of 190 more calories per day, 11 grams more fat, 3.5 g more saturated fat, 10 mg extra cholesterol and 300 mg additional sodium.

Participants who dined at full-service restaurants consumed about 187 more calories per day compared to those who ate food prepared at home, 10 more grams of fat, 2.5 g more saturated fat, almost 60 mg more cholesterol and over 400 mg more sodium.

The impact of fast food consumption on daily total calorie intake was largest among participants with the least education, while participants in the middle-income range were more likely to get their extra calories from full-service restaurants.

Participants who were obese were also more likely to consume extra calories from full-service restaurants compared to people who were normal weight or overweight.

When An compared calorie and nutrient intake of restaurant food taken home to eat, he found there wasn’t much difference between eating fast food out at home, but full-service restaurant meals consumed at home had about 80 fewer calories, slightly less fat and about 80 mg less sodium.

The US Food and Drug Administration requires restaurants with 20 or more locations to provide calorie content and nutrient content in the menu labeling, but that’s not applied to most full-service restaurants, An pointed out. “So people who consume food at full-service restaurants are not aware of the calorie and nutrient content in the food served (and are) more likely to overeat and are less cautious about the extra calories they intake from the full-service restaurant.”

Lori Rosenthal, a dietitian at Montefiore Medical Centre in New York City, was not surprised by the findings.

“When we prepare our own meals we know exactly what the foods we are eating contain,” Rosenthal, who wasn’t involved in the study, told Reuters Health by email.

“When dining out, we are leaving the ingredients to the chef or food chain,” she said. “When we make our own, we are in control.”

Rosenthal said cooking at home lets people make healthy substitutions, such as swapping out full-fat cheese for reduced fat versions.

She added that people are more likely to have “cheat meals” or “splurges” in restaurants than at home, but certain habits can help curb the calories.

“Before heading to a restaurant look up the menu online,” she said. “This helps to avoid succumbing to the pressure of ordering before reading all of the options.”

Rosenthal also suggests, “Don’t be afraid to ask how menu items are prepared and stick to those that are baked, broiled, grilled or steamed.” Also, “Choose dishes that contain vegetables (i.e. veggie omelet, kabobs or pasta primavera) or request they be added.”

“Vegetables bulk up a meal, so a person feels more satisfied without adding many more calories, she said.

Rosenthal advises asking for a to-go container and packing up half of a large portion. “If you are done, give no major news and did not change the widely perceived view that the Fed will likely raise rates sometime this year,” said Takuya Takahashi, a strategist at Daiwa Securities in Tokyo.

“If the rates are increased in small increments while US fundamentals are improving, the stock market should take it as a positive thing, and that’s what the market is expecting.”

The Greek parliament passed a sweeping bundle of austerity measures demanded by European partners, a price to pay for opening talks on a multi-billion euro bailout package to avoid near-bankrupt Athens needing to stay in the euro zone.

The Canadian dollar was at C$1.2936 to the greenback after touching C$1.2958, its lowest since March 2009.

The New Zealand dollar slumped under a similar predication after weaker-than-expected inflation data and plunging dairy prices cemented expectations for a rate cut there as early as next week.

The kiwi skidded to $0.6698, a low not seen since July 2009.

In commodities, crude oil rebounded modestly after data showed that US crude inventories dropped and refinery demand was high.

US crude rose 0.7 percent to $51.79 a barrel after dropping 3 percent on Wednesday when expectations that increased exports from Iran could add to global supply glut. Brent gained 0.4 percent to $57.42 a barrel.

Tuesday’s nuclear agreement between six world powers and Iran is expected to result in the lifting of sanctions, which have limited sales of Iran’s oil for several years.

TORONTO, 16 July — Most Asian shares edged up on Thursday after Greece approved a bailout plan and brought mild relief, while the dollar stood tall as Federal Reserve Chair Janet Yellen reinforced expectations for a US rate hike.

Spreadbatters expected a higher opening for Britain’s FTSE, Germany’s DAX and France’s CAC after the Greek parliament approved a bailout plan that further lessens the likelihood of Athens exiting the euro zone.

Japan’s Nikkei rose 0.7 percent, Australian shares were up 0.6 percent South Korea’s Kospi also 0.6 percent. And as of 0530 GMT, Shanghai stocks were up 0.7 percent and the CSE00 index gained 0.8 percent, clinging to positive territory after sinking earlier in the session.

Underconsuming fragile sentiment after a big recent rout, China’s mainland indexes had dumped the previous day despite positive gross domestic product data.

The latest sale, the second executed this month, has reduced Britain’s finance ministry’s stake to 14.93 percent from 15.5 percent earlier, the bank said in a statement.

Lloyds was rescued during the 2007-9 financial crisis at a cost of 20.5 billion pounds ($32 billion) to taxpayers, leaving the government with a 45 percent stake in the bank. Britain began selling off its stake in September 2013 and has so far recouped more than 13 billion pounds for the taxpayer, the treasury said in a statement.

Lloyds is on track to return to full private ownership in 2016.

Reuters

Fish and chips are seen in a sea front cafe in Blackpool, northern England on 8 Sept, 2013. Reuters
EU opens two antitrust investigations against Qualcomm

B RUSSELS, 16 July — The European Commission said on Thursday it had opened two antitrust investigations into Qualcomm’s possible abuse of its market dominance of semiconduc-
tors used in consumer elec-
tronic devices.

The first would exam-
ine whether Qualcomm, the market leader for base-
band chips, offered fi-
nancial incentives to cus-
tomers on condition that they buy the baseband
chips exclusively or al-
most exclusively from
Qualcomm.

The second will look into whether Qualcomm engaged in “predatory pric-
ing” by charging prices be-
low costs with a view to
forcing its competition out
of the market.

“Many customers use
electronic devices such as
a mobile phone or a tablet and we want to ensure that they ultimately get value
for money,” said European Competition Com-
missioner Margrethe Vestager in a statement.

Additional time is
needed to repair the plane’s
four batteries, which store
energy from the sun during
daylight hours to keep the
craft powered overnight,
allowing it to remain aloft
around the clock on ex-
treme long-distance flights.

The repairs and testing
will then push the next
available window for com-
pleting the plane’s trans-
Pacific crossing to next
spring, in terms of both weather conditions
and sufficient hours of day-
light.

The batteries became
overheated during the air-
craft’s initial climb after
takeoff on 29 June from
Nagoya, Japan, en route to
Hawaii on the eighth and
most challenging leg of the
circumnavigation quest, of-
ficials for the mission team
said.

Still, the pilot, Swiss
aviator Andre Borschberg,
and his team successfully
completed the Japan-to-Ha-
waii leg, safely landing near
Honolulu on 3 July af-
after five days and five
ights, or 117 hours and 52
minutes, airborne.

The trip shattered the
76-hour world duration re-
cord for a nonstop, sole
flight set in 2006 by the late
American adventurer Steve
Fossett in his Virgin Atlan-
tic Global Flyer. It also set
new distance and duration
records for solar-powered
flight.

Borschberg and co-founder of the project,
Drew Pilkington, are aiming to
achieve the first round-the-
world solar-powered flight,
alternating turns at the con-
trols for each leg of the voyage.

A nine-month hiatus,
while a setback for the crew, does not disqualify
the team from claiming a
place in the official world
aviation record books if
successful.

It merely adds to the
total elapsed time for ac-
complishing the feat, said
Art Greenfield, director of
contests and records for the
National Aeronautic Asso-
ciation, the US chapter of
the Swiss-based Federation
Aeronomique Internation-
ale, or FAI.

Citing the world
body’s “sporting code” for
solar-powered airplanes,
Greenfield said the opera-
tive rule states: “Any time
spent on the ground be-
tween the start and finish
shall be counted as flying
time.”

Subsequent teams may
end up doing it faster, but
“everybody remembers the
first,” Greenfield said.

The Swiss team hopes
eventually to cross the fin-
ish line in Abu Dhabi, where they started on 9
March.—Reuters

Solar-powered plane grounded nine
months in Hawaii by battery damage

9-year-old Australian boy discovers new
species of box jellyfish

SYDNEY, 16 July — Australian scientists have identified new species of box jellyfish that was dis-
covered in a Gold Coast ca-
nal by a nine-year-old boy,
however the discovery raises
concerns about its deadly
cousin.

Chryosella Saxoni —
named after Saxon Thomas,
the nine-year-old Australian
boy who discovered it in
2013 — also known as the “pygmy box jellyfish,” is only about two-and-a-half centi-
metre long.

“It’s a really, really little
boy, cute as can be.” Queens-
land Museum jellyfish ex-
pert Dr Lisa-Ann Gershwin
said Australia’s national
broadcaster on Thursday.

Gershwin said there is
no reason to believe it is le-
thal as the type of sting that it
would give would be very
minor due to its size.

“I mean it probably
hurts, but that’s about it.”
Gershwin said.

However, Gershwin
warned the discovery of the
pygmy box jellyfish could be a sign that larger, poten-
tial lethal box jellyfish that is
normally found in northern
Australian waters is on the
move.—Xinhua

Brazilian scientists discover Jupiter-like planet

RIO DE JANEIRO, 16 July — Brazilian scientists have
led the discovery of a new Jupiter-like planet that rais-
es the possibility of a sec-
ond planetary system like
ours, Brazil’s G1 news
website reported on Wednesday.

“The new planet has a
mass similar to Jupiter and
orbits a star with character-
istics similar to the sun,” G1
said, citing Jorge Melendez,
an academic at the Univer-
sity of Sao Paulo who led
the team that made the dis-
cover.

Melendez said the
discovery was made possible
thanks to the High Accura-
cy Radial velocity Planet
Searcher, or HARPS, tele-
scope at the European
Southern Observatory (ESO) in northern Chile.

“More observation
is needed to confirm the
discovery,” said Melendez,
“but according to the ESO,
the star, HIP 11915, is one of
the most promising can-
didates so far to host a plan-
etary system similar to our
own.”

In a “Science Release”
titled “Jupiter Twin Discov-
ered Around Solar Twin,”
the ESO said “the existence of a Jupiter-mass planet in a
Jupiter-like orbit around a
Sun-like star opens the pos-
sibility that the system of
planets around this star may
be similar to our own Solar
System.”

According to the most
recent theories, said the
ESO, “the arrangement of
our Solar System, so condu-
cive to life, was made possi-
ble by the presence of Jupit-
er, and the gravitational
influence this giant ex-
erted on the Solar System
during its formative years.”

Melendez, who also
coauthored the paper on the
discovery, said “the quest
for an Earth 2.0, and for a
complete Solar System 2.0,
is one of the most exciting
discoveries in astronomy. We are thrilled to be part of this
cutting edge research.”

Xinhua

Ebay nearing deal to sell enterprise
unit for about $900 million

NEW YORK, 16 July — E-commerce compa-
y eBay is nearing a deal to sell its enterprise
business to a consortium led by private equity
firm Permira for about $900 million, the Wall
Street Journal reported.

The deal could be
announced as soon as
Thursday, along with the
company’s second-quar-
ter results, the Journal
reported, citing people
familiar with the matter.

The people said
there was no guarantee a
deal would be reached,
the newspaper reported.

Earlier this month,
people familiar with the
matter told Reuters that
private equity firm
Thomas H Lee Partners
(LP was in talks to buy
Ebay’s enterprise unit for
close to $1 billion.

Ebay said in Jan-
uary that it would explore
if possible of the enter-
prise business,
which did not fit
earily with its PayPal or
marketplace divisions.
Ebay’s enterprise
business, formerly known as GSI Commerce, helps
retailers around the world
move their online pres-
ence and e-commerce ca-
pabilities.

It generated $288 mil-
ion in revenue in the first
quarter.

GSI Commerce was acquired by eBay for $2.4
billion in 2011. It has lost

customers and seen slug-
gish growth in the past few
years with clients
moving their online op-

An eBay spokes-
woman said the com-
pny does not comment
on rumor or speculation.

Permira could not
be reached for comment
outside regular business
hours.—Reuters
China says Japanese security changes must not harm regional peace

BEIJING, 16 July — China on Thursday questioned the motives of Japan’s ruling bloc in pushing a raft of controversial national security legislation through the Diet, saying any changes to the country’s defence policies must not affect regional stability.

Japanese security changes must not harm regional peace

Japan must “respect the major security concerns of its Asian neighbours,” Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying said in a statement following the passage of the bills by the lower house of Japan’s national legislature on Wednesday.

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“Japan must ‘respect the major security concerns of its Asian neighbours,” Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying said in a statement following the passage of the bills by the lower house of Japan’s national legislature on Wednesday.

“The action gives ‘people a reason to question whether Japan wants to abandon its policy of self-defence, whether it wants to change the road of peaceful development that it has supported for a long time since the war,” she said.

Any changes, she added, “should not damage China’s sovereignty and its security interests or harm regional peace and stability.”

Earlier in the day, Japan’s Liberal Democratic Party, led by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, and its coalition partner Komeito party pushed several bills through the country’s House of Representatives intended to loosen restrictions on Japan’s armed forces, despite popular opposition to the moves. Since coming to office in late 2012, Abe has worked to allow the country’s Self-Defence Forces to participate in “collective self-defence” with its allies and friends, an effort partly motivated by concerns about China’s rising power.

China, which was invaded by Japan in the lead-up to World War II, has kept a wary eye on the changes, arguing that Abe intends to return the country to its imperialist ways.

“The bills will be deliberated by Japan’s upper house before they can become law.” — Kyodo News

Interoceanic railway project is Brazil’s dream: minister

RIO DE JANEIRO, 16 July — The proposed interoceanic railway project has been Brazil’s longtime dream, a Brazilian minister said here on Wednesday.

The Brazilian government will study the routes of the transcontinental railway that will connect Peru’s Pacific coast with Brazil’s Atlantic coast, and minimize its impacts on Brazil’s rain forests, Environment Minister Izabella Teixeira told a Press conference.

The federal government will discuss, with state governments, about the routes of the railway which is expected to reduce the cost of transportation in Brazil, Teixeira said.

This will be a win-win situation for Brazil and the countries that buy Brazilian products, the minister said.

Highways have a much higher environmental cost than railways, Teixeira said.

“By working with railways, we are hoping to avoid the consequences of highways which lead to deforestation. Railways have a smaller impact when it comes to deforestation,” Teixeira said.—Xinhua

United Airlines awards hackers millions of miles for revealing risks

NEW YORK, 16 July — United Continental Holdings Inc has awarded millions of frequent flier miles to hackers who have uncovered gaps in the carrier’s web security, in a first for the US airline industry.

United confirmed with Reuters that it has paid out two awards worth $1 million each, worth dozens of free domestic flights on the airline. United did not confirm tweets from individuals who say they have been paid smaller awards as well. The Chicago-based carrier has hoped to trailblaze in the area of airline web security by offering “bug bounties” for uncovering cyber risks. Through the programme, researchers flag vulnerabilities before malicious hackers can exploit them. The cost can be less than hiring outside consultants.

Three of United’s competitors declined to comment on bug bounty programmes. A fourth was not immediately available for comment.

Trade group Airlines for America said in a statement that all US carriers conduct tests to make sure their systems are secure. United unveiled the approach in May just weeks before technological glitches grounded its entire fleet twice, underscoring the risks that airlines face. One incident locked the airline out of its reservations system, preventing customers from checking in, and another zapped functionality of the software United needed to dispatch its flight plan.

“The belief that this programme will further bolster our security and allow us to continue to provide excellent service.” United said on its website, declining additional comment.

Jordan Wiens, a researcher focused on cyber vulnerabilities, tweeted last week that he received United’s top reward of $1 million miles for exposing a flaw that could have allowed hackers to seize control of one of the airline’s websites.

“It’s really interesting that United did what they did,” he said in an interview. “There actually aren’t that many companies in any industry outside of technology that do bug bounties.”

Wiens said it was normal for large companies such as United to have bugs in their websites.

“Terms of the agreement prohibit Wiens from disclosing the bug he discovered. The terms also required that Wiens reveal the supposed problem to United without trying to exploit it, meaning he does not know how much information he could have accessed or manipulated.”

Beyond the bounty, United said it tests systems internally and engages cybersecurity firms to keep its websites secure.—Reuters

Former US President George HW Bush fractures neck in fall at home

PORTLAND, (Maine), 16 July — Former US President George HW Bush suffered a neck fracture in a fall at his home in Maine on Wednesday, though he was listed in stable condition and his hospital stay was expected to be brief, his spokesman said.

Bush, 91, who served as America’s 41st president, was last hospitalized in Houston for a week in December 2014 after experiencing breathing difficulties.

“41 fell at home in Maine today and broke a bone in his neck,” spokesman Jim McGrath said in a statement posted on Twitter following the accident. “His condition is stable — he is fine — but he’ll be in a neck brace.”

Bush was taken to Maine Medical Centre in Portland, Matt Paul, a hospital spokesman, said in a telephone interview that President Bush was transported to the hospital on Wednesday afternoon.

“He was brought here earlier today and diagnosed with a fracture in his neck. He is in stable condition and will be wearing a neck brace.”

Paul said the former president will remain in the hospital overnight, adding it was “too early to say when he will be released.”

McGrath said Bush will stay in the hospital “as long as needed.”

“But he is doing okay.”

He’s as tough as they get,” he said.

Bush is the father of President George W Bush and former Florida Governor Jeb Bush, who is now seeking the Republican nomination for the 2016 presidential election.

The elder Bush, a Republican like his sons, served as vice president for eight years during Ronald Reagan’s two terms in the White House before being elected president, defeating former Massachusetts Governor Michael Dukakis, the Democratic nominee, in 1988.

Bush took office in 1989 and served four terms in the White House, during which he organized the US-led military coalition that defeated Iraqi forces after Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait.

He lost his 1992 re-election bid to Democrat Bill Clinton.

Bush previously served as a congressman, an UN ambassador, a US envoy to China and director of the Central Intelligence Agency before becoming Reagan’s running mate in 1980. A Navy pilot during World War Two, he celebrated his 90th birthday on 12 June, 2014, by skydiving near Kennebunkport, Maine, with the Army’s Golden Knight parachute team. He currently suffers from Parkinson’s disease and cannot use his legs.

Reuters
Police can not use water cannons in London: Home Secretary

LONDON, 16 July — British Home Secretary Theresa May ruled out on Wednesday the use of water cannons by police forces in London, or any part of England and Wales.

The decision was greeted with regret in London where both the Metropolitan Police and Mayor Boris Johnson wanted to add water cannons to their police armoury.

Currently the only part of Britain where water cannons are authorized for use is in Northern Ireland. Their use was sanctioned at the height of the Irish troubles. May told the British House of Commons that following a series of riots and disturbances in English cities in the summer of 2011, police reviewed the range of tactics and equipment available to manage public disorder. The Metropolitan Police Service identified water cannon as a potential option.

In March 2014 the Home Secretary was handed a formal request from 43 police forces covering England and Wales for German-made Ziegler Wasserverwerfer water cannons to be made available as a policing tactic.

The Mayor of London’s Office for Policing and Crime approved the purchase of three Ziegler Wasserverwerfer 9000 water cannons from German federal police, which arrived in Britain in July 2014, but remained unused.

“Water cannons, without safeguards, have the capacity to cause harm. It is a police tactic that has not been used in Great Britain previously and some argue that its introduction would change the face of British policing,” May told MPs.

The Home Secretary contacted senior former chief constables to gain a better understanding of the operational context in which water cannons could be used, citing events such as Israeli Embassy demonstrations in London, student protests and the G20 protests in London in 2009, as well as the summer riots in 2011.

“I have decided not to authorize the Wasserverwerfer 9000 water cannons as a policing tactic for operational use in England and Wales,” said May. “I am acutely conscious of the potential impact of water cannons on public perceptions of police legitimacy. This country has a proud history of policing by consent and this is a decision which goes to the very heart.” The London Evening Standard on Wednesday described the decision as embarrassing to Johnson because “it could turn the German-built machines into a costly white elephant”.

“They were bought second hand for 218,000 pounds (341,000 US dollars) last June, imported to Britain disguised as rubbish carts, and then treated to expensive adaptation and testing by the Met (Metropolitan Police) ‘in second hand for 218,000 pounds (341,000 US dollars) last June, imported to Britain disguised as rubbish carts, and then treated to expensive adaptation and testing by the Met (Metropolitan Police)’ — Wallace Tun

People have fun in a swimming pool in the Chinelong Water Park in Guangzhou, capital city of south China’s Guangdong Province, on 15 July, 2015. The local meteorological authority degraded the alert for heat from orange to yellow on Wednesday. But the temperature in Guangzhou is expected to stay high.—Xinhua

The proposals (English/Myanmarese) will be available at the cost of Ks 1,000,000 (One Million Myanmar Kyat) from the date on 20 July, 2015 and the Managing Director, Supply Department, Myanma Railways, Corner of Theinbyu Street and Merchant Street, Botahtaung Township, Yangon, Myanmar. Phone 95-1-29985, 291994, with the official letter of the respective company.

The proposals must be submitted to Deputy General Manager, Supply Department, Myanma Railways, Corner of Theinbyu Street and Merchant Street, Botahtaung Township, Yangon not later than 14:00 on 18th September, 2015. Late submission shall be not entertained.

In line with rules and regulations, the following (5) companies were evaluated and shortlisted as second step potential developers:

(a) KERRY Logistics Network
(b) Resources Group Logistics Co., Ltd
(c) KMA Shipping Co. Ltd
(d) Malikha Automobile Co., Ltd
(e) UMG Logistics Co., Ltd

As the third step, the above mentioned of short listed companies have to submit their detailed proposals and documents needed to proceed tender completion.

The proposal forms (English/Myanmar) will be available at the cost of Ks 1,000,000 (One Million Myanmar Kyat) from the date on 20 July, 2015 and the Managing Director, Supply Department, Myanma Railways, Corner of Theinbyu Street and Merchant Street, Botahtaung Township, Yangon, Myanmar. Phone 95-1-29985, 291994, with the official letter of the respective company.

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6. Myanma Railways will select the (2) potential developers which are mostly qualified. Enquires can be made by calling telephone +967-77005, 77025, 77024 and also mail to kmmp.lhtm@gmail.com

Managing Director
Myanma Railways
Ministry of Rail Transportation

Ministry of Energy
Myanma Petrochemical Enterprise
Extension of the request for the Letter of Expression of Interest (LOEI)

Joint Venture Project of Laboratory Services and Supply Chain of LPG Business

Myanma Petrochemical Enterprise (MPE) had invited the interested party for the request of two LOEI regarding the Joint Venture Projects of Laboratory Services and Supply Chain of LPG Business from 22.5.2015 to 28.5.2015 in the national newspapers and to be submitted not later than (12:00) noon at the date of 15.7.2015.

MPE hereby announces that the submission of LOEIs shall be extended up to 23.7.2015 (12:00) noon from 15.7.2015.

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE MV E.R TURKU VOY NO (076W)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV E.R TURKU VOY NO (076W) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 17.7.2015 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 12:20 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: M/S HANJIN SHIPPING LINES

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE MV ESM CREMONA VOY NO (128W)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV ESM CREMONA VOY NO(128W) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 17.7.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.E.P where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S ORINET OVERSEAS CONTAINER LINES

Phone No: 2301185

111,489 report medical conditions that could affect driving in Japan

TOKYO, 16 July — A total of 111,489 people reported medical conditions that could affect their driving in the year after Japan made it a legal requirement on 1 June, 2014, the government said on Thursday.

They were among some 22 million people who applied to get or renew driving license in the year, and included 1,415 whose licenses were rejected, cancelled or suspended for medical reasons, the National Police Agency said.

Most of those who reported such conditions were found to have only mild symptoms or had been already prescribed medicine, the agency said.

Eight were charged with failing to meet the legal requirement, including a man in his 20s whose failure to report a health problem was discovered when he had an accident after losing consciousness while driving in February in Nagoya. The legal requirement was included in the road traffic law after six elementary school pupils were killed by a crane truck in April 2011 in Tochigi Prefecture north of Tokyo, after the driver had an epileptic stroke.—Kyodo News
Montreux, (Switzerland), 16 July — Caetano Veloso and Gilberto Gil gave a pure and poignant concert at Switzerland’s Montreux Jazz Festival on Wednesday, celebrating decades of Brazilian music and friendship.

The pair of singer-songwriters sat on a bare stage at Stravinsky Auditorium, each playing an acoustic guitar, but without a back-up band, throughout the 100-minute concert that included two encores.

They opened with “Back in Bahia”, the northeastern region where they are from, and played standards in Brazilian Portuguese including “Tropicalia”, emblematic of their influential movement in the late 1960s that blends Brazilian and African beats with rock.

Veloso and Gil, now 72 and 73, endured imprisonment by the military regime as “subversives” before being exiled to London in 1969. Decades later Gil became Brazil’s culture minister under President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva.

Billed as “Two Friends, a Century of Music”, the sold-out show was a highlight of the 49th edition of one of Europe’s most prestigious summer music festivals.

“It was incredible for me. It was very intimate, just two guitars and two singers,” said Gabriela Adams, a Brazilian living near Geneva. “The atmosphere and quality of the music was great. They picked the right songs.”

Veloso put aside his guitar during “Marginalia”, joining in the vocals, and the duo teamed up for “E Luxo So”, followed by “Sampa”, about the city of Sao Paolo.

“Terra” (Earth), Veloso’s song about seeing images of the earth filmed from space, for the first time while he was in a prison cell, made some in the audience cry. “Terra de Luna Ilena” by Gil, about the full moon, was also moving. For their encore, they sang “Desde Que o Samba e Samba”, ending the night arm-in-arm on the famed stage.

The pair, who played in London two weeks ago, have dates booked later this month in Italy, Spain, France, and Portugal before returning to their homeland for gigs in August.

Duos have featured heavily in Montreux’s line-up this year, led by Lady Gaga and Tony Bennett, going “cheek to cheek” in a mix of Cole Porter, Duke Ellington, Frank Sinatra and Edith Piaf to a sell-out crowd spanning generations.

Herbie Hancock and Chick Corea team up on Thursday. The 16-day festival ends on Saturday with a tribute to Paco de Lucia, the Spanish flamenco guitarist who died last year at 66.

The story made Australia an international laughing stock for the first time while he was in prison. “I’m always pleased with the legal process — we are all equal before the law,” Joyce told an interviewer. —Xinhua

SYDNEY, 16 July — Hollywood actor Johnny Depp’s wife Amber Heard faces charges in Australia for breaching biosecurity laws which could bring a 10 year jail sentence and a 100,000 Australian dollar (74,000 US dollar) fine for smuggling their pet dogs into the country.

The Yorkshire terriers Pisto and Boo made widespread international headlines when they were smuggled into the country on a plane and fined for smuggling their pet dogs into the country. The Yorkshire terriers Pisto and Boo were sentenced to 100,000 Australian dollar (74,000 US dollars) fine for smuggling their pet dogs into the country.

Agricultural minister Barnaby Joyce threatened to have the dogs put down unless they were immediately taken back to the United States. “They should bugger off back to America,” he said at the time.

But the issue was suddenly back on Thursday when it was widely reported actress Heard has been charged with two counts of biosecurity breach and has been ordered to face a Queensland court in September.

The Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions issued a summons against Ms Heard. Penalties include fines of up to 10,000 Australian dollars or up to 10 years imprisonment.

On Thursday it was reported Joyce again took an aggressive stance against Heard, saying it didn’t matter she was a star with a big-star husband.

“I’m always pleased with the legal process — we are all equal before the law,” Joyce told an interviewer. —Xinhua

LOS ANGELES, 16 July — The Eagles, singer-songwriter Carole King and acclaimed “Star Wars” director George Lucas are to be recognized at the 2015 Kennedy Centre Honours, one of the highest awards in American culture.

The annual honors, announced on Wednesday, celebrate lifetime contributions to US culture through the performing arts.

Other honorees include Broadway actress Cicely Tyson, known for portraying strong female characters; classical music director Seiji Ozawa, who led the Boston Symphony Orchestra for 29 years; and veterans Puerto Rican actress Rita Moreno of “West Side Story” fame, who said he enjoyed guiding Schumer.

“I like the moment of discovery,” Apatow said. “It’s fun for me to help them try to crack the code of how they would work as a lead in a movie. “Trainwreck” opens in US cinemas on Friday.—Reuters

NEW YORK, 16 July — Comedian Amy Schumer makes her big screen debut as first-time feature-film screenwriter as well as leading lady in “Trainwreck”, a comedy about love, family and sport.

In the movie, Schumer’s character, magazine journalist Amy, finds herself falling in love with the subject of a profile piece she is writing — sports physician Aaron, played by Bill Hader. Averse to monogamy, she learns about romance.

“I think this movie is kind of a love letter to my sister and the way that I realized that I was hurting myself and being destructive was through falling in love,” Schumer said at the film’s premiere in New York on Tuesday night.

New York Academy Award winning British actress Tilda Swinton plays Schumacher’s boss, Diana.

Sports players are well represented in the movie. American basketball stars LeBron James and Anthony Davis wear roles while former tennis pro Chris Evert and wrestler John Cena also make appearances. The film was directed by Judd Apatow, of “This is 40”, “Knocked Up” and “The 40-Year Old Virgin” fame, who said he enjoyed guiding Schumacher.

“This is a movie of discovery,” Apatow said. “It’s fun for me to help them try to crack the code of how they would work as a lead in a movie. “Trainwreck” opens in US cinemas on Friday.—Reuters

The Eagles, George Lucas, Carole King to get Kennedy Centre honors

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It was very intimate, just two ensembles in Brazilian Portuguese including “Tropicalia”, emblematic of their influential movement in the late 1960s that blends Brazilian and African beats with rock.

Veloso and Gil, about the full moon, was also moving. For their encore, they sang “Desde Que o Samba e Samba”, ending the night arm-in-arm on the famed stage.

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Comedian Amy Schumer makes film screenwriter debut in ‘Trainwreck’
Labour unions, human rights groups step up calls for FIFA reform

WASHINGTON, 16 July — Prominent labour union and human rights groups on Wednesday stepped up public pressure on world football body FIFA, which is currently mired in a corruption scandal, to agree to be reformed and clean up its act through an independent process.

Transparency International, Avaaz and the International Trade Union Confederation said they were joining with a reform campaign called “#NewFFA” to press for rapid “independent reform of FIFA led by an eminent person.”

The US national labour union federation AFL-CIO, on Wednesday also sent letters to three major FIFA corporate sponsors, Coca-Cola Co, Visa Inc and McDonald’s Corp asking them to support calls for reform.

“As a major sponsor, we urge you to demand an independent FIFA Reform Commission to restore transparency and integrity to international football, and ensure that major sporting events are upheld, the highest possible human rights standards,” said Cathy Feingold, the AFL-CIO’s international director, in the letters to the CEOs of the three American companies.

The human rights groups said they also support the creation of such a commission, whose task the groups said would include reviewing FIFA’s current internal governance, membership and to conduct fresh elections. “There has to be an independent reform commission and FIFA has to change. No more false dawns, no more scandals, no more dawns,” said Transparency International Managing Director Cobus de Swardt, alluding to the arrest of seven FIFA officials or former officials by Swiss authorities on behalf of US prosecutors in April and morning operation at a hotel in Zurich in May. Prosecutors have indicted nine football ball officials and five executive functionaries on a range of bribery-related offences.

Alluding to allegations that workers involved in constructing facilities in Qatar for the 2022 World Cup had suffered abuses, Feingold said in the letters that “no worker tricked of life constructing stadiums or other infrastructure for such high-profile international tournaments, yet thousands of migrant workers in Qatar are at risk.” A representative of Amnesty International was expected to raise similar concerns at a US Senate subcommittee hearing on Wednesday afternoon focussing on “governance and integrity of international soccer.”

Chicago art exhibit stirs controversy with Ferguson replica

Two men look through a window at an art installation depicting the body of Michael Brown, made by artist Ti-Rock Moore, at Gallery Guichard in Chicago, Illinois, on 14 July, 2015.—Reuters

CHICAGO, 7 July — It was an image that shocked and angered many: a dead black 18-year-old left face-down for hours in the middle of a street. The footage, from a multiple times by a white police officer, his red Cardinals baseball cap knocked from his head by the fall.

A Chicago art exhibit has stirred controversy with a life-size silicone replica of Michael Brown after he was fatally shot on a street in Ferguson, Missouri, last year.

The mimicquin, dressed in white T-shirt and khaki pants, lies on the hardwood floor of Gallery Guichard, in the city’s Bronzeville neighbourhood. A television screen above the body plays Eartha Kitt’s 1956 song “Angelitos Negros,” (Little Black Angels), which is also the name of the installation. Gallery curator and co-owner Andre Guichard, 48, said he has received death threats and racist phone calls about the Brown replica.

The installation is one of 50 works included in “Continuing Flight: Up, Up!,” an exhibit by Ti-Rock Moore, a white woman from New Orleans, that has attracted a trickle of visitors since it opened on Friday.

“The installation ... is the result of my desire to mark the tragedy as one of historical significance, commemorate this young man, and call attention to the racial injustices that remain so devastatingly relevant today,” Moore said in an email, acknowledging that the likeness of the dead body was sensitive.

“Other installations in the exhibit feature nooses, Saltine cracker boxes and a model Statue of Liberty with black face. Moore says her art explores white privilege.

“I feel that it is necessary for white people to take accountability for their role in the fight against racism, and advocacy on our behalf is absolutely necessary in getting it everywhere. After all, we are the perpetrators. My race is pivotal to the conversation that revolves around the world.”

Akpom states Arsenal case with hat-trick in Singapore

SINGAPORE, 16 July — Rookie striker Chuba Akpom put forward his case for more playing time at Arsenal next season by scoring a hat-trick in a 4-0 win over a Singapore Select XI in the Premier League Asia Trophy on Wednesday.

The 20-year-old from an academy striker, who signed a long-term contract in February, has made only four substitute appearances in the Premier League for Arsenal and has been farmed out on loan to lower tier sides Brentford, Coventry City and Nottingham Forest in recent years for experience.

With striker Danny Welbeck not making the trip to Asia because of injury and first-choice forward Olivier Giroud, like most of the headline acts, given the night off by manager Arsene Wenger, it was left to Akpom to make the most of a rare opportunity.

After some nervy opening touches, he smashed home the opener at Singapore’s National Stadium on the 24th minute after defender Baihakki Khaizan blocked Arsenal midfielder Jack Wilshere but could not clear adequately.

Wilshere then added a second from the penalty spot in the 66th minute after Mathieu Debuchy had been brought down in the area.

The England midfielder was then taken off as Akpom given the chance to show his penalty prowess after substitute Jon Toral was halted by Singapore goalkeeper Izwan Mahbud in the 76th minute.

The Londoner confidently sent Izwan the wrong way and continued his hot streak with his third hat-trick minutes later after nodding home a cross from the right by Hector Bellerin.

The striker, who joined the club aged six and was playing under-18s football at 15, could have scored a fourth at the death but for a strong save by Izwan.

Wenger, who also offered game time to promising academy talents Alex Iwobi, Gedion Zelalem, Dan Crowley and Chris Willock, gave Akpom hope of more first-team chances.

“I sent him out on loan last year, because I thought his role was being confined to that and this season, no, I plan to keep him with us,” the Frenchman told reporters.

“It’s down to performance and attitude,” he added of Akpom’s chances of starting more. “Let’s not forget it’s a friendly, he is talented but he has to work.”

Arsenal are through to Saturday’s final where they will face Everton, who earlier beat Stoke City 3-4 on penalties after a drab goalless draw. —Reuters
Trinidad tops group after thrilling draw with Mexico

Trinidad and Tobago celebrate after scoring a goal against Mexico late in the second half of CONCACAF Gold Cup group play at Bank of America Stadium. Mexico and Trinidad and Tobago played to a 4-4 tie. — Reuters

Southampton sign Clasie as Schneiderlin replacement

LONDON, 16 July — Southampton have completed a deal for Feyenoord midfielder Jordy Clasie after moving quickly to fill the void left by Morgan Schneiderlin’s departure to Manchester United.

Clasie, who has 11 caps for the Netherlands, has signed a five-year contract, the Premier League club said on Wednesday.

British media reports indicated the fee was in the region of 7 million pounds ($10.95 million).

The 24-year-old will be reunited with Southampton manager Ronald Koeman, his former boss at Feyenoord where the midfielder has spent his entire professional career since making his debut four years ago.

Clasie is a direct replacement for the outgoing Schneiderlin, who packed his bags for Old Trafford in a deal reported to be worth 25 million pounds. — Reuters

Di Maria’s United future still uncertain

LONDON, 16 July — Manchester United manager Louis van Gaal has done little to damp speculation that Argentine winger Angel Di Maria could leave the club, a year after moving to Old Trafford for a British record transfer fee.

British media have reported that Di Maria, who joined United for 59.7 million pounds ($93.35 million) last year, is a target for French club Paris Saint Germain and that his wife is unhappy living in the northwest of England.

Van Gaal, while keen to keep the 27-year-old, was unsure if he would stay. “We shall see,” the Dutchman told reporters in Seattle when asked whether he expected Di Maria to be with the club for the next English Premier League season.

“In football it’s a process and I have said that many times. It’s not clear in one day. It’s a process for Di Maria, for United and we shall see. For now he’s still a member of United and he has told me he shall come on 25 July.”

Di Maria played for Argentina in the recently completed Copa America and was given permission to join the club’s pre-season tour of North America later this month. — Reuters

Manchester United to sell Valdes after reserves refusal — Van Gaal

LONDON, 16 July — Manchester United will sell goalkeeper Victor Valdes after the Spaniard refused to play in the reserves, manager Louis van Gaal said on Wednesday.

Speaking at a news conference in Seattle during United’s pre-season tour of the United States, van Gaal made clear 33-year-old Valdes was on his way out after only six months at the Premier League club.

“He doesn’t follow our philosophy. There is no place for someone like that,” said the Dutchman. “The philosophy is how you play football, and how you maintain your match rhythm. For example, he refused last season to play in the second team. That’s also one aspect of our philosophy but there are a lot of other aspects in the philosophy of how you have to play like a goalkeeper in Manchester United. When you are not willing to follow the principles of the 67th minute but Mexico drew level with an Andres Guardado blast with two minutes of normal time remaining.

In the early kickoff, Maikel Reyes scored the only goal of the game in the 75th minute to lead Cuba past Guatemala and into the quarter-finals as one of the two best third-placed finishers at the 12-team tournament.

Reyes, who missed Cuba’s first match due to visa issues, headed home his side’s first goal of the tournament to set up a daunting last eight encounter against hosts and defending champions the United States in Baltimore, Maryland on Saturday.

Haiti will then take on Jamaica at the same venue in the other quarter-final. — Reuters

Argentina’s Angel Di Maria laughs during a training session in La Serena on 23 June, 2015. — Reuters

Trinidad and Tobago celebrate after scoring a goal against Mexico late in the second half of CONCACAF Gold Cup group play at Bank of America Stadium. Mexico and Trinidad and Tobago played to a 4-4 tie. — Reuters

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LONDON, 16 July — Manchester United will sell goalkeeper Victor Valdes after the Spaniard refused to play in the reserves, manager Louis van Gaal said on Wednesday.

Speaking at a news conference in Seattle during United’s pre-season tour of the United States, van Gaal made clear 33-year-old Valdes was on his way out after only six months at the Premier League club.

“He doesn’t follow our philosophy. There is no place for someone like that,” said the Dutchman. “The philosophy is how you play football, and how you maintain your match rhythm. For example, he refused last season to play in the second team. That’s also one aspect of our philosophy but there are a lot of other aspects in the philosophy of how you have to play like a goalkeeper in Manchester United. When you are not willing to follow the principles of