President tours Mon State

TWO ON HERITAGE LIST
Myanmar’s stone inscription and gold letter on world heritage

The Myazedi Stone Inscription and the Golden Letter of King Alaungphaya to King George II have been recognized as documentary heritage of world significance.

The 12th meeting of the International Advisory Committee (IAC) of the Memory of the World Programme took place in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, from 4 to 6 October, with the committee approving the inclusion of 47 out of 88 nominations in the World Heritage List.

Myanmar submitted two nominations for inclusion in the memory of the world programme and both have won inscriptions on the list of the documentary heritage of world significance. One is the Myazedi stone inscription and the other is the Golden Letter of the Myanmar King Alaungphaya to King George II of Great Britain.

Located in the historic city of Bagan, the Myazedi stone inscription is a unique quadrilingual document of history, religion and culture. The inscription is believed to have been inscribed in 1113 AD. The four-sided stone pillar bears four languages Pyu, Mon, Myanmar and Pali, on each side. Its authenticity and intact texts have been identified as a document of rare historical value. The quadrilingual stone inscription is regarded as the oldest writing of the Myanmar Language documenting the history, religion and culture of the 12th century.

The Myazedi stone inscription records the administration, social and economic affairs, literary works of religion, construction of pagodas, enshrinement of Buddha statues, the enslavement of villages by royal princes and princesses, respect for parents, and meritorious deeds of Bagan Period.

The second nomination is a letter made from pure gold that was sent by Myanmar King to King George II in 1756. Engraved on a gold sheet and adorned with 24 rubies, the Golden Letter of the Burmese (Myanmar) King Alaungphaya to King George II is an entry of documentary heritage submitted by Germany, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Myanmar for inclusion in the Memory of the World Register in 2014. According to historical researchers, King Alaungphaya gave the letter to his counterpart in 1756.

The letter given by a Myanmar king to his British counterpart is of outstanding aesthetic value considered as a unique testament in world history as well as in the history of Myanmar and Europe. The content of the letter is a trade proposal from King Alaungphaya to King George II in the 18th century. Currently, the letter is kept at the Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz Library in Hanover, Germany.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) introduced its Memory of the World Programme in 1992 and has so far inscribed 348 documentary heritage sites from world nations on the World Heritage List.

Meet ‘Snubby’ the monkey: the darling of new discoveries

Aye Min Soe

FLASH flood in a creek caused by heavy rains in Kalewa Township swept away 16 people on Thursday.

All are feared dead along with more than 20 cattle, and so far two bodies have been found, said local authorities to The Global New Light of Myanmar Saturday.

Kalewa Township Disaster Management Committee is carrying out rescue operations.

Among the victims, 12 are from two families living near the creek where the flash flood happened in the creek around 11 pm due to heavy rain in Sagaing Region.

Around 200 acres of farmland were also buried under the sand brought by the flash flood in the Phonetheone creek in Kyaukme in Shan State saw a record rainfall on Friday with 4.25 inches. The previous record rainfall of 4.09 inches happened in the same month in 2013.

Squalls with rough seas may occur off and along Rakhine State, Kyaikmi in Shan State and Kayin and Mon states are expected to experience a continuation of increased rain for the next two days.

The weather bureau Friday warned of heavy rainfall in the country’s upper areas including Sagaing Region, which was badly hit by the floods in July and August.

Kyaukme in Shan State saw a record rainfall on Friday with 4.25 inches. The previous record rainfall of 4.09 inches happened in the same month in 2013.

Squalls with rough seas may occur off and along Myanmar’s deltaic, Gulf of Mottama, off and along Rakhae State, with possible surface wind speeds of up to 35 to 40 miles per hour, the forecast said.
**Blood donation at Jivitadana Sangha Hospital**

Monks, nuns and laypersons donate their blood at Jivitadana Sangha Hospital. Photo: Ye Hrut

THE blood donation ceremony during the Buddhist Retreat was held at Jivitadana Sangha hospital in Yangon on 10 October. The ceremony was attended by Union Minister for Information (Retd) U Aung Kyi, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the hospital U Maung Maung and board members, Professor Dr Daw Thida Aung of the National Blood Bank and others.

Altogether 332 monks, nuns and laypersons donated their blood at the ceremony. The blood were checked systematically and sent to the National Blood Bank. The blood donation ceremony dates back to 1992. After a long pause the ceremony began in 2004.

The Jivitadana Hospital was founded on 8th May 1940 at Kaytawya Road in Bahan Township as a small dispensary and moved to No. 38, Ko Min Ko Chin Street in the same township in 1952 as a hospital called Jivitadana. In 1972, the name was changed into Jivitadana Sangha Hospital.

Eight buildings including six storey medical ward and two storey ward for nuns occupy the compound of the philanthropic hospital. One hundred and thirty monks, fifty nuns and 20 laypersons are now admitted at the 200-bed hospital.—Min Thandar

**IN view of Bayer’ efforts to ease the burden of the people affected by the devastation caused by the recent flood in Myanmar, Bayer Thai Co., Ltd. (Myanmar Branch), has donated 160,000 purification tablets to help purify 60 million liters of water to help people in Myanmar gain better access to clean water after the recent floods. The donation included cash and purification tablets to the value of 25,000 Euro to Myanmar Red Cross Society.**

Today, I am very delighted that Bayer touches upon one of the most important needs of the communities after the flood to attain safe drinking water for local communities. Bayer’s donation of purification tablets is highly appreciated. After a flood, it is highly likely that the people’s usual source of water may have become contaminated. Even bottled water which has been in flood water may have become contaminated. By removing the harmful microorganisms causing diarrhea to ensure that people can access to clean water. "Prof. Dr. Thar Hla Shwe, President Myanmar Red Cross Society, said.

Bayer is a global enterprise with core competencies in the Life Science fields of health care and agriculture.

**Malaria outbreaks in annual decline**

Myanmar has set to get rid of malaria out of the country by 2030 through a shift of programme from ‘control’ to ‘elimination’. Khaing Thanda Lwin

THE National Malaria Programme has decided to make a shift from “control” to “elimination” with a goal to achieve an Asia-Pacific region free of the mosquito-borne disease by 3030, a spokesperson of the Ministry of Health said at a monthly health forum in Yangon on 9 October.

As the outbreaks of malaria have gradually declined since 2011, the country is likely to reach the millennium development goal of reducing the malaria deaths by half by 2015, said Dr Aye Mon Mon Kyaw, assistant director of the Vector-Borne Disease Control Programme at the Yangon Region Public Health Department.

According to the ministry’s data, nine in 1,000 people were infected with malaria in 2007 but the number was reported declining to 5.13 in 2013. In addition, the disease killed 0.48 in 100,000 in 2013, down from 2.16 in 2007.

The number of confirmed malaria cases in individual states and regions shows a downward trend, but it is still high in the country’s western and northern parts, especially in Rakhine State and Sagain Region, where malaria remains endemic.

Most malaria transmission occurs in forested football zones below an altitude of 1,000 meters. High-risk groups are residents, plantation workers and migrants living near or in forests.

To achieve the goal of malaria elimination, doctors on their part need to make field trips to vulnerable areas, Prof Daw Mar Mar Kyi from Insein General Hospital said, warning malaria patients against the consumption of fake drugs.

The ministry and the Food and Drug Administration are making a joint effort to prevent the inflow of fake drugs into the local market. Dr Aye Mon Mon Kyaw said, adding that the ministry distributes malaria drugs free of charge to all rural healthcare centres across the country in order that drugs are within the reach of patients.

**117 youths win Presidential Scholarship**

THE President’s Scholarship Selection Committee, for the first time, awarded the Presidential Scholarship to 117 youths on 8 October. According to the notification issued by the President Office, the outstanding youths will be sent abroad for further study.

To promote human resources, HRD Plan has been implemented for long term interest of the nation.—Myanmar News Agency

**MSF, MSESF signed agreement**

MYANMAR Seamen’s Federation (MSF) and Myanmar Seamen Entrepreneurs’ Service Federation (MSESF) signed Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) on Saturday in the presence of Union Minister for Labour, Employment and Social Security U Aye Myint and Deputy Minister for Transport U Han Sein.

At the annual general meeting of MSF the union minister said that MSF was formed on 12 December 2012 to serve the interests of the seamen; the concept of employers should be changed in fulfilling the needs of seamen; raising the quality of seamen means promoting the interests of the employers; and the federation should copy the norms of labour organizations in developed countries joining hands with employers’ association.

MSF was formed with the aim of protecting the rights of seamen; producing qualified seamen for seafarer job opportunities; assisting seamen’s families, tackling the problems and hardships faced by seamen and settling the disputes between employers and seamen.—MNA

**Japan, UNICEF commit to disaster risk reduction in Rakhine, Chin**

THE government of Japan has pledged US$10 million to UNICEF to assist children’s education in areas severely affected by floods in Myanmar, according to the UNICEF.

Through this contribution from Japan, the UNICEF in partnership with the Myanmar government will support the education flood response in Chin and Rakhine states, the country’s poorest areas, where children are the most vulnerable to hazards.

Activities will focus on construction of approximately 30 new primary schools under the principle of “Building Back Better” so as to provide examples of good practice and standards of disaster-resistant school construction. Rehabilitation and repair of around 75 damaged schools will also be undertaken. “We are supporting the Government of Myanmar to lead the recovery process in education, based on building back better with elements of disaster risk reduction, and principles of emergency awareness for education staff, teachers and students”, explains Bertrand Bainvel, UNICEF Representative to Myanmar.

The USD 10 Million grant from Japanese government complements the $2 million commitment to the flood response by partners in the Quality Basic Education Programme (QBEP-Australia, Denmark, EU, Norway, UK, and UNICEF).

Through this project, approximately 12,000 students will benefit directly from construction and repairs to school infrastructure during the first school year, with a further cohort of around 3,000 students benefitting in the second school year.

The education, staff training, with a focus on psychosocial support and disaster preparedness, is expected to reach 2,400 Head Teachers and 9,000 teachers, which will have positive impact on over 300,000 students annually.

Myanmar is at highest risk of hazards in the Asia-Pacific region, but there are many ways to reduce the vulnerability of children and their families.—GNLM
President tours Mon State

President U Thein Sein arrived at Thanlwin bridge (Chaungzon) construction site in Mon State yesterday. Union Minister for U Kyaw Lwin briefed the president on the construction saying that the project started on 8 February 2015 and expected to complete in December 2016.

Upon completion the bridge will be 1586 meter long spanning Mawlamyine and Chaunggone Townships.

Union Minister for Electric Power U Khin Maung Soe and State Chief Minister U Ohn Myint presented the president on erecting Thanlwin River Tower. The president instructed them on completing the project as schedule.

The president proceeded to Mawlamyine University and met teachers, students and locals. In his speech the president attached great importance to smooth transportation in the region as it can help promote health, education and business in the region. He ranked the electric power as the second priority as it plays an important role to become an industrialized nation. Human resource develop is the third priority according to the president.

The president arrived at Attaran Bridge spanning Kayin and Mon State. The Union Minister for Construction briefed the president on construction of Attaran Bridge (Chaungnakwa). The president presented Buddha images, solar-powered lamps and helmets for locals. The building of Attaran Bridge (Chaungnakwa) started on 20 July 2014 and completed on 30 July 2015.

The president visited Chaungzon, gave advice to local officials and arrived back in Nay Pyi Taw later in the evening.

—Myanmar News Agency

Thanlwin Bridge (Chaungzon) construction project started on 8 February 2015 and expected to complete in December 2016.

President U Thein Sein inspects Thanlwin Bridge (Chaungzon).

President meets faculty members, students and local people at Mawlamyine University. | President U Thein Sein being warmly welcomed by locals on Attaran Bridge.
Monyin hospital wins good reputation

MONYIN’S 100-bed people’s hospital has won reputation from the local residents since 2013 as it’s service provided to the patients were good and also great. Under its health care programme, methadone substitution therapy has been given to about 400 patients everyday and antiretroviral therapy to nearly 400 adults and about ten children. In the aged health care system, at least 50 people of 60 and above receive treatment at the hospital everyday.

In addition to providing health care to over 200,000 Monyin’s residents, the hospital is attending people from Mogauk, Hpakant and Indaw Townships. To fulfill their needs the Ministry of Health has appointed more medical staff including seven specialists. The government has provided medicines and medical equipment sufficiently, said the medical superintendent Dr Win Win Huay.

In the past people were afraid of admitting to hospital but now there is no need to worry about buying medicines as the hospital provides enough medicines to patients. Moreover, the dealings and service provided by the staff has become good, said war veteran U Kyaw Win.—GNLM-001

Library promotion talks at Thekyun Village of Othayathi Township

EDUCATIVE talks for raising reading habits and sustainability of libraries was held at Thekyun Village’s ‘Pyinabyekman’ Library, in Othayathi Township of Nay Pyi Taw Council Area on 9 October. Township Information and Public Relations Department officer Daw Swe Swe Moe explained of the benefits of having a library in a village. She also informed to the villagers of IPRD’s public digital library service, Wi-Fi service and its Mini Book Corners. Wall posters on preventions against natural disasters and anti-narcotic drugs campaigns were shown, on the sidelines of the talks.—Shwe Ye Tint U Aung Ko Ko

Abundant monsoon watermelons benefit farmers in capital area

KHAYANSUTKONE Village on the motor car road between Ottarathiri and Tatkon townships of Nay Pyi Taw Council Area, is having a good harvest of monsoon watermelons, this year. The melons fetched good prices which made a profitable trade between farmers and broker-buyers, than last year.

The prices of a melon at the field will be K700 or K800, bought by the brokers. A K800- melon can get K 2500 at the market. But the 200 melon growers of Khayansutkone are still making lucrative yield says a village-farmer who grows three acres of monsoon watermelons.

As last year’s harvest was not good, there were not much monsoon watermelon growers this year which resulted into a suppliers’ market, this year, he says. Watermelons are grown across the area at all seasons.—Tin Soe Lwin IPRD
Girls’ Aerobic Competition in Myawaddy

**Meiktila Township wins District SPF Chairman’s Badminton Shield**

Various winning township badminton teams of Meiktila, Mahlaing, Wundwin and Thazi were awarded at the Meiktila District Sports and Physical Fitness Chairman’s Shield tournament, on 9 October. The matches, of men singles and men and women doubles, were held at Meiktila District Sports Stadium. The best players were awarded and the winning teams were given first, second, third and honor prizes. Meiktila Township team won the Meiktila District SPF Chairman’s Shield presented by District Commissioner U Tint Wai Thon.—Chan Tha -Meiktila

**Girls’ Aerobic Competition in Myawaddy**

Girls show their skills at MYAWADDY Township Girls’ Aerobic Competition. PHOTO: HTIEIN LIN AUNG – IPRD

**Inlay’s acclaimed Phaungtaw Oo Pagoda Festival starting soon**

The historic Buddha images of Inlay’s Phaungtaw Oo Pagoda in Nyaungshwe of south Shan State, starts their annual 18-day tour across the large lake from October 14. They will stop at 21 places where devotees from far and near, will pay homage. The images will tour on a decorative float pulled by traditional rowing boats and return to the pagoda on 31 October. When the images arrive at Nyaungshwe town on 20 October, there will be traditional leg rowing boat races, including a 46-men and 26-women leg rowing boat races. There will also be decorative boats demonstrated with songs and traditional dance shows.

Meanwhile, at the vicinity of Phaungtaw Oo Pagoda in the lake during the acclaimed pagoda festival, there will be sports competitions such as volleyball, shops of commodities from all over the country, traditional dance troupe shows in theater, open shows, and exhibitions on environmental conservation and about Inlay Lake.

The pagoda festival with its Buddha images’ tour is a major tourist attraction in Myanmar.—AINT KYA Ngon Phu

**Myawaddy officials meet local pharmacists**

MYAWADDY District’s pharmacists and drugstore owners were urged by local officials to sell medicines in line with the rules and regulations, on 8 October. District Commissioner U Lwin Ko Oo told them to sell with goodwill. District Health Officer Dr Aung Myint, Kayin State’s Department of Food and Drug Administration Supervisor Daw Seint San-da Myint Aung, Township Traditional Medical Officer Daw Sanda Win and District Police Chief Police Lt Col Moe Nyo explained on the rules, storage of medicines, and differences between prescription and common medicines. The attendees had thorough discussions at the meeting in Myawaddy town, said an attendee.—Hein Lin Aung – IPRD
Indonesia launches int’l fight against forest fires amid mounting pressure for national disaster state

JAKARTA — Indonesia finally accepted the help of foreign countries to quell the raging fires in Sumatra and Kalimantan amid the warming effects of El Nino that have triggered famine in the forest regions.

A fire-fighting team from Singapore has arrived in Indonesia on Friday with more teams from Malaysia, Australia, Russia, China and South Korea expected to arrive in the coming days. They would bring planes and helicopters capable of extinguishing forest fires.

Those aircraft are expected to join a water-bombing operation in the worst-affected areas. Indonesia has dispatched 20 planes and helicopters to carry out water bombing and artificial rain in Sumatra and Kalimantan since May.

The foreign assistance would be assigned to help fight the fire in South Sumatra province where most of “hotspots” were detected. At least 414 “hotspots” were recorded in Sumatra on Friday, according to Indonesia’s Meteorology, Geophysics and Climatology Agency (BMKG) agency.

President Joko Widodo visited areas affected by the forest fire in Riau province on Friday. He traveled to Kampar in the province by car as the haze was still disrupting fights to Riau’s capital of Pekanbaru.

“It is already on the ground now, seeing what really happens. Troops, police and BNPB (Indonesian National Disaster Mitigation Agency) have really done their utmost. But we have to understand the areas gutted by fire were very vast, 1.7 million hectares,” he said at a public health center in Kampar.

The Indonesian government was urged to declare a state of national disaster so as to make the efforts more effective and efficient.

The forest fires had led to 14 casualties, including 12 people who died from respiratory tract infections and two who were killed in car crashes due to low visibility amid the thick haze, said the Indonesian Forum for the Environment (Walhi).

Meanwhile, more than 300,000 people in Sumatra and Kalimantan suffered from respiratory disease related to the haze emitted by the forest fire.

Lukman Ery, a legislator of Commission II at the parliament, said the government seemed incapable of dealing with the disaster.

He added that local administrators in the affected areas did not dare to allocate funds from their budgets to fight the forest fires.

“This is because of the absence of national disaster status. At the same time, people were suffering from the haze,” the legislator from the National Awakening Party (PKB) said. —Xinhua

A C-130 Hercules plane from Malaysian Air Force lands at Sultan Mahmud Baddarudin II airport to help Indonesian government fight forest fire in Palembang, Indonesia on 9 October 2015. PHOTO: Xinhua

China completes construction of lighthouses in South China Sea

SHANGHAI — China has completed the construction of two lighthouses in the disputed South China Sea, the official Xinhua news agency reported, as tensions in the region mount over Beijing’s maritime ambitions.

A completion ceremony was held for the lighthouses on Cua Lon Reef and Johnson South Reef in the Spratly islands, Xinhua said late on Friday. The United States and the Philippines have opposed the construction.

China claims most of the energy-rich South China Sea, through which $5 trillion (£3.3 trillion) in ship-borne trade passes every year, and the Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, Taiwan and Brunei have overlapping claims.

China said on Friday it would not stand for violations of its territorial waters in the name of freedom of navigation, as the United States considers sailing warships to waters inside the 12-nautical-mile zones around islands it has built in the Spratly chain.

Washington has signalled it does not recognise Beijing’s sovereignty over the several islands China has built on reefs in the Spratly archipelago and says the US navy will continue to operate wherever international law allows. The issue is central to increasingly tense relations between the United States and China, the world’s two largest economies.

Beijing has said construction in the region is to help maritime search and rescue, disaster relief, environmental protection and navigational security. It has also said it will continue to build other installations to better serve countries in the region and vessels navigating those waters. —Reuters

A-bomb survivors disheartened by failure to win Nobel Peace Prize

TOKYO — Atomic bomb survivors who have worked for years to eliminate nuclear weapons expressed disappointment Friday at not being awarded this year’s Nobel Peace Prize despite expectations they might win on the 70th anniversary of the US atomic bombings of Japan.

“It is extremely disappointing,” Terumi Tanaka, secretary general of the Japan Confederation of A- and H-Bomb Sufferers Organisations, told a press conference in Tokyo after the Norwegian Nobel Committee awarded the prize to a Tunisian democracy group.

“We had survived 70 years and have continued conveying our messages.” Setsuko Thurlow

An atomic bomb survivor

“We saw this year as a final chance (for our group to receive the award) because the hibakusha are aging,” he said, using the Japanese term for survivors of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in World War II.

The 83-year-old survivor also said he had hoped the award would go to the group or individual survivors to remind people around the world that there are still around 16,000 nuclear weapons in existence, an “unbearable” situation for the hibakusha.

“I saw this year as a final chance (for our group to receive the award) because the hibakusha are aging,” he said, using the Japanese term for survivors of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in World War II.

The 83-year-old survivor also said he had hoped the award would go to the group or individual survivors to remind people around the world that there are still around 16,000 nuclear weapons in existence, an “unbearable” situation for the hibakusha.

“I too bad, but let’s step up our antinuclear campaigning activities” so that related groups or individuals can win the prize, Akira Kawasaki, executive committee member of civic group Peace Boat, told around 60 people at an event in Tokyo to watch the online stream of the prize announcement.

In Canada, Setsuko Thurlow, an 83-year-old atomic bomb survivor and antinuclear campaigner who was seen as a possible winner of the prize, said she was “a little bit sad.”

“We have survived 70 years and have continued conveying our messages,” she told reporters at her home in Toronto.

The Nobel committee awarded the 2015 peace prize to the Tunisian National Dialogue Quartet “for its decisive contribution to the building of a pluralistic democracy in Tunisia in the wake of the Jasmine Revolution of 2011.” —Kyodo News

Terumi Tanaka (R), secretary general of the Japan Confederation of A- and H-Bomb Sufferers Organisations, speaks at a press conference in Tokyo on 9 October 2015. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

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Samsung did not infringe Nvidia graphics chip patents: US ITC

NEW YORK — Samsung Electronics Co Ltd has been cleared on its use of graphics chip technology owned by Nvidi-a Corp without permission, in a US International Trade Commission ruling on Friday.

Judge Thomas Pender said Samsung did not infringe two Nvidia patents, and while it did infringe a third, he ruled that patent is invalid because it was not a new invention compared with previously known patents.

Nvidia spokesman Robert Sherbin said the ruling will be reviewed by the full commission, which will make a final decision on the dispute in February. “We remain confident in our case,” he said.

A spokeswoman for Samsung declined to comment.

Santa Clara, California-based Nvidia filed a complaint against Samsung and Qualcomm Inc last November in federal court in Virginia, also alleging patent infringement. Samsung also sued one of Nvidia’s customers.—Reuters

Japan-backed fund considering investing in Sharp: Nikkei

TOKYO — A Japanese government-backed fund is considering investing in embattled Sharp Corp to take the initiative in reorganising the electronics maker’s operations, Nikkei business daily reported, without citing sources.

The Innovation Network Corporation of Japan (INCJ) and Sharp had hired financial advisors to gauge Sharp’s asset value and would hold direct talks on the size of any investment, it added.

INCJ is also the top shareholder of Sharp rival Japan Display Inc, the world’s largest maker of liquid crystal displays for smartphones and tablets.

INCJ was considering merging Sharp’s liquid crystal display unit with a venture developing organic light-emitting diode display technology that it owned with Japan Display, the newspaper reported.

Sharp had considered spinning off its LCD panel business, which supplies displays to smartphone and tablet manufacturers, and seek funding for it from INCJ, a source told Reuters in April.

Officials from the fund were not available for comment. An Osaka-based Sharp spokesman declined to comment on the report. Once among the top display suppliers to Apple Inc, Sharp has been pushed aside by the likes of LG Display and Japan Display as the US device maker diversified its supply chain amid longstanding concerns over Sharp’s prospects.

Japanese launched INCJ in 2009 in a bid to keep the technology sector competitive.—Reuters

Mexico expects first results in Volkswagen probe in three months

MEXICO CITY — Mexico expects preliminary findings from a probe into Volkswagen’s compliance with emissions standards within three months, the environment minister said on Friday, adding the review will include gasoline-fueled cars as well as diesel.

Mexico announced last month it was investigating whether Volkswagen cars complied with emissions rules in Latin America’s second economy, after Europe’s largest carmaker admitted to cheating in US diesel emissions tests.

“I expect we can begin to have the first results from Volkswagen diesel vehicles...in the next three months,” Rafael Pacchiano told local radio on Friday. “We are going to expand the tests to gasoline vehicles.”

Last month, Volkswagen (VOWG_p.DE) said it was checking to determine whether the roughly 32,000 series EA 189 diesel engine vehicles it has sold in Mexico since 2009 provided “altered” emissions data to local authorities.—Reuters

Computer science now top major for women at Stanford University

SAN FRANCISCO — Computer science has for the first time become the most popular major for female students at Stanford University, a hopeful sign for those trying to build up the thin ranks of women in the technology field.

Based on preliminary declarations by upper-class students, about 214 women are majoring in computer science, accounting for about 30 percent of majors in that department, the California-based university told Reuters on Friday.

Human biology, which had been the most popular major for women, slipped to second place with 208.

If more women majored in technological fields like computer science, advocates say, that could help alleviate the dearth of women in engineering and related professions, where many practitioners draw on computer science backgrounds.

“We’ve crossed that threshold where women feel supported and comfortable,” said Eric Roberts, a Stanford professor emeritus of computer science who first obtained the numbers. “What we need to do is not turn anyone away because they feel unsupported, and a vibrant core community with a critical mass is essential.”

The shift at Stanford is particularly important given its prominence in Silicon Valley and the large number of companies, including Yahoo and Google, founded by its students.

Only 27 percent of entrepreneurs are women, said Ross Levine, a professor at the University of California, Berkeley, who is researching the gender gap in entrepreneurship.

Computer science is Stanford’s most popular major and has been for several years, according to a spokesman, representing about 20 percent of students with declared majors.

Women make up 49 percent of Stanford’s undergraduate body of about 7,000 students, according to the university.

It was unclear if Stanford is the only major US university where computer science is the top major for female students.

At Harvey Mudd College in southern California, often praised for its high percentages of technical women graduates, computer science is the second-most popular major for women after engineering, a spokeswoman said.

Adding in two other majors that combine computer science with math or computational biology, computer science leads, she said. Although women earn 57 percent of all bachelor’s degrees, according to the National Science Foundation, only about 18 percent of all US undergraduate computer science degrees go to women.—Reuters
A single breach of trust is too many
Kyaw Thura

It is undeniable that we are living in such a challenging epoch of history that the country is in urgent need of greater political action and responsibility than ever before. The challenge of reconstituting the country’s political power should be turned into an impetus for sustainable development through a process of decisive change that can satisfy human needs and aspirations without discrimination.

Peace cannot come from the exchange of fire. Six decades of internal armed conflict has demonstrated that bullets are unable to solve the ethnic crises simply because the problems are deeply rooted in the hearts of all ethnic groups. Peace and stability cannot be built on uncertainty.

As the nationwide peace accord has been openly scheduled to be signed on 15 October, the government and ethnic troops should do everything they can to bring recent sporadic clashes to a complete halt in the knowledge that a single breach of trust is too many. The current political exigency requires both sides to resolve on a shift from a head-to-head talk to a heart-to-heart one.

It is true that more than half a century of deterioration in mutual understanding will take time to heal, but a speedy recovery is feasible once we come together to stand for common goals and pursue them in harmony.

As a country blessed with natural resources, Myanmar should no way lag way behind others in terms of economic, education and social development. It is time that all stakeholders learnt to get their political differences across.

A Fervent Plea For A Fair And Free Election
From Charles Cardinal Maung Bo, Yangon

Five years ago, the dawn of hope broke forth in the parched lands of despair. After decades of sacrifice of blood and tears, my Myanmar Brothers and Sisters tasted democracy. Termed ‘controlled democracy’ by our rulers, that dawn brought encouraging changes. People who have walked in darkness saw the light. It was not perfect democracy but the fledging democracy brought forth a stream of hope in the hearts of our country men and women. Democracy is a process. So through this appeal I call upon the rulers and the people to make the forthcoming election a true exercise in democracy. But democracy is a long and arduous journey. The rulers and the people need mutual accompaniment in this journey. Democracy has won our people’s heart and mind. The surging enthusiasm for elections reflects our people’s desire for peace and prosperity-making this nation once more the Golden land.

Voting is a fundamental right in democracy. The primary duty bearer of this responsibility is the Election Commission. Most of the vibrant democracies in the world are fortified by the strong resolve of the Election Commission. Voter education, enrollment of all in the electoral roll, a ruthless battle against vote tampering, a strong inclusive approach and a commitment to transparency are some of the expectations from our people of the Election Commission. Our earnest desire is that Election commission rises up to this challenge.

Candidates from various political parties have exhibited great desire to serve the nation. Mutual respect and consideration for the candidates from minority groups and ethnic parties will promote long term peace. Induce Democracy is a process. So through this appeal I call upon the rulers and the people to make the forthcoming election a true exercise in democracy.

Democracy is a process. So through this appeal I call upon the rulers and the people to make the forthcoming election a true exercise in democracy.

The application of Themis laser for stone fragmentation and various soft tissue procedures in surgical procedures, deliver high standards in the field of urology. The Themis system is a holmium laser with 2.1 micron wavelength emission which is highly absorbed by water and soft tissue. System applications in urology include urethral stone treatments, kidney stone treatments, bladder tumors, strictures, PCNL and TUIP.

Integra: A State-of-the-Art Electromagnetic SWL System
Integra incorporates a novel shockwave technology, innovative imaging and a revolutionary architecture oriented toward fragmentation effectiveness and accurate imaging. Integra is a single unit, including a fluoroscopy system, treatment table and shockwave unit all in one. This architecture dramatically reduces coupling, set-up and treatment time. The vertically positioned shockwave source makes patient positioning easy and quick and offers in-line fluoroscopy without the need to delay the treatment procedure (“On-line”). Integra’s unique One View Localization method replaces the need to rotate the X-ray unit and allows for a concise design and footprint. A user friendly physician’s console enables complete control of the procedure as well as advanced image processing functions.

“Israel’s Innovative Technology in the field of Urology is launched in Myanmar”

As the first time in Myanmar, an innovative technology for treatment of kidney stones was installed in hospitals in Yangon and Mandalay. The systems by Initia Ltd, an Israeli medical technology company, have just been launched at Kant Kaw Hospital in Mandalay and at Asia Royal Hospital and Sakura Hospital in Yangon, on August 2015.

The presentation exposed innovation in the field of urology, focusing on treatment of kidney stones through laser and lithotripsy- shockwave therapy: Themis is a 30W Holmium Laser with a unique “Fibrex” optic fiber.

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Meet ‘Snubby’ the monkey: the darling of new discoveries

A new report reveals that the Himalayan habitat of a rare species of monkey in Myanmar is threatened by deforestation – and to a lesser degree, its susceptibility to sneezing.

**Jacob Goldberg**

**THE** Myanmar snub-nosed monkey has been known to spend rainy days crouching with its head between its knees. Scientists believe this behaviour prevents water from entering the monkey’s exposed nostrils, which causes the monkey to sneeze. If snub-nosed monkeys could read, however, scientists would do well to consider another explanation — that the monkeys got their hands on the latest report by the Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA) and are depressed by its bleak predictions about their habitat.

The EIA report was published just two weeks before another report, this one by the World Wildlife Federation (WWF), which highlights the 211 new species of plants and animals discovered between 2009 and 2014 in the Himalayan mountain range.

The monkey, which scientists have nicknamed ‘Snubby’, is the only mammal featured in the report, titled ‘The Hidden Himalaya: Asia’s Wonder Land’, which was published on Tuesday. Though only a sliver of Myanmar’s northern Kachin State is part of the Himalayan foothills, that sliver is home to the darling of the new discoveries. Its photo has been featured in nearly every major news story about the report’s publication.

Snubby is not the only major animal discovery in Myanmar over the last six years. The country is also home to the ‘Dracula minnow’ – a tiny fish with elongated fins at the front of each of its jaws – and a well-camouflaged bird with a high-pitched mating song. However, aside from being a large mammal, Snubby also stands out for its conservation status.

The International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) has categorised the monkey as ‘critically endangered’. Fauna and Flora International (FFI), an international conservation group operating in Myanmar, estimates that there are fewer than 300 individual Myanmar snub-nosed monkeys left and that the species will be extinct in 18 years unless a major conservation effort is launched.

**Elusive yet threatened**

The Myanmar snub-nosed monkey is an elusive creature. Scientists first learned of its existence and behaviour from local communities in Kachin State in 2010, and it has only been scientifically observed within the last five years, by FFI and the People’s Resources and Conservation Foundation (PRCF). Before that, the rugged terrain and absence of roads in its habitat kept strangers away.

Now, however, Snubby’s fate has become entangled in the drama of Myanmar’s economic development, making it the target of several human and environmental threats.

“The region is currently facing a wide range of threats and pressures, with climate change being by far the most serious. Population growth, deforestation, overgrazing and logging, poaching, the wildlife trade, mining, pollution and hydropower development have all contributed to the pressures on the fragile ecological systems in the region,” the report says.

**Vulnerable in the rain**

Local hunters in Kachin State have said the monkeys are easy to spot in the rain because water easily enters their noses, causing them to sneeze and making them easy prey for people craving bushmeat.

The WWF report says the species is “likely to be classified as critically endangered due to its restricted range and significant hunting pressures.”

“The species is also threatened by habitat loss, which is caused in large part by illegal logging. The animals’ loss of habitat restricts it to smaller areas, making them even more vulnerable to hunting,” the report says.

The EIA report sheds some light on how and why Snubby’s habitat is disappearing. According to the report, Myanmar’s Kachin State and China’s Yunnan Province, which border one another, are the site of “one of the single largest bilateral flows of illegal timber in the world.” This is because law enforcement in both countries is yet to prove itself up to the task of ending it, with some alleging that more than negligence is involved.

**Rapidly shrinking habitat**

Logging, as well as deforestation for agri-business, has accounted for an average loss of 185,000 hectares of forest every years since 2009. As forests near the border disappear, loggers push deeper into Myanmar’s interior. As limited forest resources shrink, so does the habitat of Myanmar’s snub-nosed monkey.

According to FFI, Chinese loggers can buy logging rights to entire mountains from Myanmar. The loggers pay for logging rights with bars of gold and once the logs enter China, they are effectively legalised as soon as the smugglers pay customs tax.

“The snub-nosed monkey likely to be classified as critically endangered due to its restricted range and significant hunting pressures.”

World Wildlife Fund

“MOECAF legal protection of the National Park should enable better law enforcement and the establishment of a patrol force to Chinese loggers effectively,” Momberg said.

Once the greatest threat to the endangered animals of Myanmar’s Himalayan silver, Snubby’s human neighbours are now proving themselves an asset to their survival.

“The Eastern Himalayas is at a crossroads,” said Sama Tornokoski, head of the WWF Living Himalayas Initiative.

“Governments can decide whether to follow the current path towards fragile economies that do not fully account for environmental impacts, or take an alternative path towards greener, more sustainable economic development.”
Chinese envoy calls for establishment of int’l code of conduct on cyberspace

UNITED NATIONS — A Chinese official Friday called on the global community to jointly bring about an international code of conduct on cyberspace by an early date.

Wang Qun, director-general of the Arms Control Department of Chinese Foreign Ministry, made the call at the General Debate of the First Committee of the 70th Session of the UN General Assembly.

“It is highly necessary and pressing for the international community to jointly bring about an international code of conduct on cyberspace by an early date,” Wang said. He said that the cyberspace is “an anony-
mous and flat space with no borders” and China believes that an international code of conduct on cyberspace ac-
teptable to all should comply with the UN Charter and other universally recognized basic norms governing international relations, respect the cyberspace sovereignty of each state, among others. The code of conduct should resolve international disputes in this field by peaceful means and ensure that the cyberspace can only be used for activities for the maintenance of international peace and security, Wang said.

China commends the work of the UN Group of Governmental Experts on information security, and welcomes its latest report, said Wang. “China expects that this cooperative mechanism will keep its momentum by focusing its work at the next stage on working out something in a nature of an international code of conduct on cyberspace.”

“China, for its part, will continue to commit itself to upholding peace, open and cooperative cyberspace and pushing for an early international code of conduct acceptable to all,” he said.—Xinhua

Israel, Iran trade barbs at UN disarmament panel meeting

UNITED NATIONS — Israeli and Iranian diplomats traded sharp criticisms at a meeting of the UN General Assembly’s disarmament committee Friday, accusing each other of a major destabilising force in the Middle East.

Israeli Ambassador Tzipi Hotovely told the UN’s First Committee that “Iran remains the most significant threat to the security of the Middle East and beyond.”

He reiterated his government’s strong opposition to a historic nuclear deal between Tehran and six world powers, saying it was “unlikely to stop Iran’s relentless pursuit of a nuclear weapons’ capability.” He accused Tehran of continuing “vehement anti-Semitic rhetoric and threats against Israel.”

Iran UN Ambassador Gholamali Khoshroui in turn accused Israel, which is widely presumed to have the region’s only nuclear arsenal, of being “the only impediment … towards realizing a nuclear weapon free zone in the Middle East.”

“Israel continues to block all international and regional efforts to fulfill this goal,” Khoshroui added.

Iran says its nuclear programme is purely for civilian purposes, denying allegations from the United States and its allies that it has sought to develop the capability to produce atomic weapons.

Under the July 14 nuclear deal with the United States and five other nations, sanctions on Iran will be lifted in exchange for long-term curbs on Iran’s nuclear activity.

Roth-Snir also raised concerns about the use of chemical weapons in Syria’s civil war. He said the removal and destruction of Syria’s declared chemical arsenal was an important achievement. But he cautioned that the government maintained a residual chemical weapons capability while the use of weapons with poison gas in Israel’s neighbouring was increasing.

“It is all the more troubling that due to the frequent use of chemical weapons by the Syrian regime, the use of such agents is emulated by terror organizations and has become almost commonplace during the fighting,” Roth-Snir said.—Reuters

US warns governments, bankers Iran sanctions still in place

LONDON — The Obama administration has privately reminded foreign governments and US bankers that sanctions against Iran remain in effect, cautioning against a rush by Western companies to invest in Iran’s oil industry and other businesses until the country complies with the July nuclear agreement.

The US State Department recently cabled a message, known as a demarche, to embassies around the world to reiterate that sanctions on Iran are still in place, diplomatic and government sources told Reuters on Friday.

The demarche stressed that sanctions on Iran would not be lifted until the International Atomic Energy Agency’s director-general has signed a final nuclear deal that has complied with the terms of the deal.

“The United States wants to see Iran not only get to the table but not to get ahead of themselves when dealing with Iran,” said a London-based diplomatic source.

It is uncertain exactly when the layers of Western sanctions might be lifted, but experts have said some international financial transactions with Iran would be possible sometime next year if Iran complies with the deal. US law allows the administration to enforce sanctions by targeting financial institutions in countries that do business with the state-owned National Iranian Oil Co or its subsidiaries. Companies that breach the sanctions risk fines, asset freezes and being cut off from the US dollar banking system.

In 2014, the United States imposed a record fine on French bank BNP Paribas, which agreed to pay almost $9 billion to resolve accusations it violated US sanctions against Sudan, Cuba and Iran.

An Obama administration source confirmed the demarche was sent recently. The administration is “routinely in touch with third party stakeholders in the private sector and governments about the terms of the plan,” said the official, who is not authorized to speak publicly about the deal and spoke only on condition of anonymity.

In addition to the demarche, US officials have recently held round table discussions with oil industry executives and bankers in Washington and New York to reiterate that sanctions remain in place. According to the London-based diplomatic source, Iran’s decision last month to postpone a key oil conference in London for the fourth time came after US officials conveyed concerns to British diplomats that the Dec. 14 event would take place before the easing of sanctions. It is now planned for February 2016.

Iran’s national oil company has said it plans to unveil more than 50 new contracts for development of the country’s energy reserves that have been choked under Western sanctions.

Business delegations led by senior government officials from major economies, including Britain, France, Italy, Japan and India, have travelled over the past three months to Tehran to discuss future trade opportunities.

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In addition to the US administration’s warning, UK and EU banking and official sources have said that implementation of sanctions risks will remain until Iran complied with the July nuclear accord.

The International Day of the Girl Child

The newly adopted Sustainable Development Goals rightly include key targets for gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls.

They offer an opportunity for a global commitment to breaking intergenerational, and across societies, to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls.

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UN Security Council adopts resolution on adjusting mandate of UN mission in South Sudan

UNITED NATIONS
The UN Security Council on Friday adopted a resolution to adjust the mandate of the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) to support implementation of the “Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan.”

The resolution will renew the mandate of UNMISS until 15 December. It requests the Secretary-General to review the mandate within 45 days of the resolution’s adoption and provide “an assessment and recommendations, including resource requirements, for necessary civilian and force structure capabilities for UNMISS deployment and requirements in the context of implementation of the Agreement and to fulfill the mandate.”

The adjustments were made in line with recommendations proposed in the High-Level Implementation Panel on Peace Operations report in June 2015.

To support the implementation of the peace agreement, the resolution stated that UNMISS will support the planning and establishment of agreed transitional security arrangements. Moreover, the resolution said that UNMISS will assist the South Sudanese government in rolling out security sector reform.

An American hired gun aims to persuade Britons to leave EU

LONDON — Most Britons have never heard of Gerry Gunster, yet the 48-year-old American could be a major player in their decision to leave the European Union at a membership referendum due by the end of 2017.

A referendum veteran, he has been hired by the Leave.EU ‘ou’ group to mastermind its campaign to persuade Britons they are better off without the European Union. The advocacy firm he heads, Goddard Gunster, says it has a 90 percent success rate.

For the man behind Leave.EU’s ‘out’ campaign, persuading other EU leaders to support Britons is better off without the European Union. The advocacy firm he heads, Goddard Gunster, says it has a 90 percent success rate.

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Guatemala landslide toll reaches 253 dead, 374 missing

GUATEMALA CITY — At least 253 bodies have been recovered after a massive landslide buried part of a town in Guatemala last week, with 374 people still unaccounted for, national disaster agency Conred said on Friday.

After heavy rains, a hillside collapsed onto Santa Catarina Pinula on the southeastern edge of Guatemala City on 1 October, burying more than a hundred homes under tons of earth, rock and trees.

Entire families were buried alive and hundreds of rescue workers have spent the past week trying to dig out bodies.

Around 40 families still living in the area have been given official notice that they must leave. The government has promised to build them new homes, hoping to use a plot of land through an expired ownership law, but is still looking at whether to give them financial subsidies in the meantime. The rescue effort will continue through the weekend, Conred said. — Reuters

Ivory Coast leader launches re-election bid with pledge on justice

ABIDJAN — Ivory Coast’s President Alassane Ouattara pledged on Friday to improve citizens’ access to justice as he launched his bid for re-election in an 25 October poll he hopes will cement the country’s economic recovery following a brief civil war.

Ouattara, who is widely expected to win a second term, is presenting himself as the guardian of stability and the new-found prosperity in French-speaking West Africa’s largest economy.

Nobody expects a repeat of the civil war that marred the aftermath of the 2010 presidential election, when more than 3,000 people were killed, but doubts linger among investors about Ivory Coast’s long-term political and economic stability. Ouattara marked the first day of the official two-week campaign period with a rally in the capital Yamoussoukro that attracted thousands of supporters, some brandishing signs reading “With ADO”, referring to the president’s term political and economic stability.

Ivorian Popular Front (FPI) and National Coalition for Change (CNC), has struggled to gain nationwide traction and is yet to agree on uniting behind a single candidate in the first round.

“You have to agree that in the 21st century ADO is the candidate who truly responds to the expectations of young people,” said Fernandez Kouame, a student and Ouattara supporter present at the rally. — Reuters

Russia, Ukraine fail to reach deal on Kiev debt to Moscow, talks to continue

LIMA — Russian Finance Minister Anton Siluanov and his Ukrainian counterpart, Natalia Yaresko, failed to reach a deal at their meeting on Friday on restructuring Kiev’s $3 billion ($2 billion) debt to Moscow, but agreed to continue talking.

Ukraine has agreed a debt restructuring deal with a group of its largest creditors in order to plug a $15 billion funding gap under an International Monetary Fund-led $40 billion bailout programme, but major creditors still need to approve the plan.

“We stated our position on the need to repay the debt to the Russian Federation,” Siluanov said after his talks with Yaresko that took place on the sidelines of the IMF and the World Bank semi-annual meeting.

It was the first meeting between the countries’ finance ministers since January, when Ukraine announced its plans to restructure its foreign debt.

“(Yaresko) provided details on the debt restructuring agreement reached with Ukraine’s Ad Hoc Committee of creditors and called Russia to participate in that agreement,” the Ukrainian side said in a statement.

Russia has said numerous times that Ukraine must repay the debt in December, when it falls due.

Ukraine has included the $3 billion Eurobond among the sovereign and sovereign-guaranteed bonds to be restructured, but Siluanov reiterated that Russia does not see the debt as commercial.

Moscow bought the bonds from Kiev before the pro-Russian president Viktor Yanukovych was ousted early last year, opening a rift which widened with the annexation of Crimea and the outbreak of the pro-Russian rebellion in eastern Ukraine.

“Colleagues from the Ukrainian Ministry of Finance said that they had no such money in the budget and invited us to participate in the restructuring, together with commercial lenders,” Siluanov said.

“We are a sovereign (lender). So for us, such conditions are unacceptable.”

Yaresko said in her statement that “all creditors can participate in the exchange until 29 October”.

Friday’s meeting was brokered by Germany and attended by German Finance Minister Wolfgang Schauble. “We have agreed to continue the dialogue,” Siluanov said. — Reuters
More rain, flooding predicted for inundated South Carolina

GEORGETOWN — As state and local officials warned on Friday of the possibility of more flooding in eastern South Carolina, Georgetown County resident Wilma Green said she would heed their advice to evacuate.

“I’m waiting on rescue people to come pick me up,” said Green, 70, who planned to leave her home in the vulnerable bar community and stay with her daughter until the floodwaters subsided.

Concerns about additional inundation in four coastal counties and more rain had officials on guard Friday, nine days after a state of emergency was declared because of historic rains that washed out roads, swamped hundreds of homes and killed 17 people in the state.

Emergency management officials in several areas were encouraging residents to leave their homes as a precaution as floodwaters flow south into homes as a precaution as residents prepare to evacuate.

The governor would fall across much of the state starting Saturday morning, with some places getting up to an inch.

That comes after record rainfall of more than 2 feet (60 cm) in parts of South Carolina.

“It’s not a lot of additional rain, but after all the we’ve had, this is definitely what we don’t need,” said weather service meteorologist Steve Rowsell.

Governor Nikki Haley said emergency responders would continue monitoring water levels and go door-to-door to let residents know if they were in danger in the coming days.

A Reuters photographer accompanied South Carolina National Guard members on Friday as they evacuated 23 people whose homes were surrounded by flooded roads in the Dunbar community.

Haley met on Friday with US Homeland Security Secretary Jeh Johnson, who traveled to Columbia and Charleston to take stock of the flooding response and recovery efforts.

The governor would not estimate the financial toll from the record rainfall and flooding.

“This is damage at levels I’ve never seen before,” she told a news conference.

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Rihanna unveils new album artwork at gallery exhibition

LONDON — R&B star Rihanna has unveiled the artwork for her upcoming eighth album at a gallery exhibition for Israeli artist Roy Nachum.

The 27-year-old “Stay” singer invited fans to the MAMA Gallery in Los Angeles to check out Roy’s Braille art pieces and they were given blindfolds to feel the works, until Rihanna arrived and removed black curtains to reveal the front and back cover of the follow-up to her 2012 record Unapologetic, reported Contactmusic.

“In her collaboration with Roy Nachum, Rihanna has changed the history of album art. By continuing to follow her own instincts, her work strives to make an impact by doing the very antithesis of what the public expects,” a statement on the gallery wall read.

The art, which she called her “favourite” cover ever, features a childhood photograph of Rihanna holding a balloon, with her eyes covered by a gold crown. The image is splashed in red and covered with a poem by Chloe Mitchell which is written in Braille. Rihanna’s album is called Anti, but she has yet to reveal a release date for the record.—PTI

Bruno Mars to produce new family series

LOS ANGELES — Grammy-Award winning singer Bruno Mars has inked a deal with NBC to produce a family comedy pilot.

The proposed series, whose pilot is being written by Premice Penny of “Brooklyn Nine-Nine” and “Happy Endings” fame, centres on a boisterous musical family in the Bronx that takes in their wide-eyed 10-year-old relative, reported Entertainment Weekly.

“Empire” executive producer/Imagine co-founder Brian Grazer is among the executive producers on the single-camera project.

Mars’ music is likely to be used in some capacity on the series.

The 30-year-old “Just the Way You Are” hitmaker is not the only music star to score a TV production deal in recent weeks.

Earlier, ABC Family announced Nicki Minaj will executive produce and appear in a family comedy based on her life.

While rapper Pitbull is executive producing “305”, a one-hour Miami drama for Fox.—PTI

Hayek, Paltrow lend voices for equal pay for women in Hollywood

LOS ANGELES — In a week that saw Meryl Streep speak out about equal pay and other actresses of the film “Suffragette” applaud the domestic violence protesters who invaded their premiere, the topic took center stage at a Los Angeles event on Friday.

The “Power of Women” event hosted by trade magazine Variety honored Oprah Winfrey, Anna Kendrick, YouTube CEO Susan Wojcicki among others. On the red carpet, conversation quickly turned to the fight for gender equality in Hollywood.

“I feel that women are more united than ever, and I think it’s now more obvious than ever and that people are beginning to show some support because we are — our demographic — a very strong economical power also as movie-goers,” actress Salma Hayek told Reuters.

On equal pay, an issue highlighted numerous times in the past year as more high-profile actresses demanded the same salaries as their male co-stars, Hayek said it was a problem that went beyond Hollywood.

“This is a problem that is in every single industry,” she said. “If you have the same capacities and you are doing the same job, it is criminal not to pay the same salary.”

Gwyneth Paltrow, whose $9 million in earnings ranked her 12th on Forbes’ list of highest-paid actresses in Hollywood this year, told Reuters that women in Hollywood have been criticized for speaking about disparities in pay.

“You were considered ungrateful, you were considered entitled, so I think it’s amazing that now we are saying ‘we’re going to talk about this. This isn’t fair,’” she said.

When asked if she could foresee a time when pay will be equal between the sexes, Paltrow replied: “I think so. When I look at my daughter and her peers and I look at the millennial women, I think it’s all about to change.”—Reuters

‘Steve Jobs’ takes big screen deep-dive into the man behind Apple

LOS ANGELES — “It’s like, five minutes before a launch, everyone goes to a bar and gets drunk and tells me what they really think,” Apple co-founder Steve Jobs, played by Michael Fassbender, says with exasperation in a new biographical film.

The phrase sets the tone for Oscar-winning screenwriter Aaron Sorkin’s “Steve Jobs,” a dialogue-heavy reimagining of one of technology’s most revered figures in the moments leading up to three product launches: 1984’s Macintosh, 1988’s NeXT cube and 1998’s iMac.

The film, directed by Oscar winner Danny Boyle and opening in New York and Los Angeles on Friday and across the US next week, explores Jobs’ fraught four of his key relationships — with Apple’s marketing head Joanna Hoffman (Kate Winslet), fellow Apple co-founder Steve Wozniak (Seth Rogen), Apple CEO John Sculley (Jeff Daniels) and Jobs’ eldest daughter, Lisa.

Seen across the years, the behind-the-scenes moments aim to shed light on Jobs the man, whether it’s his warm relationship with “work wife” Hoffman, being a protective older brother-type to Wozniak or seeking a pat on the back from father-figure Sculley.

Coming four years after Jobs died at age 56 from cancer, the film is the third film on him, following 2013’s “Jobs” starring Ashton Kutcher and this year’s Alex Gibney’s documentary “Steve Jobs: The Man in the Machine.”

It looks at the much-revered technology entrepreneur from yet another angle. Sorkin adapted his screenplay in part from Pulitzer-winning Walter Isaacson’s book: “Steve Jobs.”

Introducing Boyle at a Los Angeles screening on Thursday, Sorkin enthused “you’re never going to meet someone with this talent that has no business being this nice — one of them we explore.” Unlike Boyle, the film portrays Jobs as contentious, arrogant, stubborn, isolated, troubled, charismatic, witty and often misunderstood.

In heated, passionate and spirited conversations, Jobs is struggling to find a balance between his talents and being a nice guy. He makes diva-like demands on long-suffering colleagues for his product launches. He has no qualms about delivering pointed threats or even rejecting his five-year-old daughter as she stands in front of him.—Reuters
Beirut art museum reopens to tell a troubled city’s history

A visitor poses for a photo near an artwork displayed at the Sursock Museum in Beirut, Lebanon, on 9 October 2015. Photo: REUTERS

BEIRUT — A stone’s throw from dramatic street protests shaking central Beirut, art lovers gathered to celebrate the reopening of a museum of modern art which they hailed as a symbol of the Lebanese capital’s resilience through conflict and turmoil.

The Sursock Museum, an Italianate mansion built for an Ottoman aristocrat, first opened to the public when he bequeathed it to the city more than 60 years ago. In the 1960s, when Beirut flourished as the Middle East’s capital of culture, the Sursock galleries boasted paintings and sculptures by artists from Lebanon and across the world.

A watercolor by Lebanese artist Amine el Bacha and a 1966 piece by British artist David Hockney. A more permanent exhibition shows the development of Lebanese modern art over the last two centuries.

Mingling with the artists at Thursday’s reopening were government ministers, whose resignations were buttressed by scores of demonstrators chanting the refrain of the Arab Spring uprisings:

“The people demand the ousting of the regime.”

Riot police fired tear gas and water cannon to disperse the demonstrators, some of whom threw rocks and water bottles back at them.

“Sursock museum is a part of Lebanon’s modern history, a history that the war of 1975 tried to erase.”

Rafic Chlala
A former presidential adviser

The country’s 1975-1990 civil war all but shut down the museum, and it closed again in 2008 for extensive renovation, before finally opening this week for a third time.

“Sursock museum is a part of Lebanon’s modern history, a history that the war of 1975 tried to erase,” said Rafic Chlala, a former presidential adviser attending a reception to mark its reopening.

The museum is one fallout of the four-year civil war in neighbouring Syria, which has also brought bombings, economic slowdown and more than 1 million refugees to Lebanon.

Minister Mohammad al-Mashnouk, a focus of the protesters’ anger, said the Sursock Museum was a home to the country’s artistic and cultural treasures. — Reuters

SANTIAGO — Pulitzer-Prize winning writer Hector Tobar says the 33 Chilean miners trapped deep underground for 69 days in 2010 were left “battled scarred” from the ordeal, despite quickly becoming minor celebrities after their improbable rescue.

“They had lived through this event that a billion people had seen unfold on television. But what I found out when I got to speak with them was how hurt they were, how wounded they were,” Tobar, whose 2014 book “Deep Dark Down” chronicles the miners’ tale, told Reuters in an interview.

“They were like guys who had been through war.”

The miners’ rescue drew heavy international coverage, and Chile’s then-president Sebastián Piñera personally greeted the workers as they emerged from a freshly drilled shaft one-by-one in October 2010.

Eventually, the miners chose Tobar to author the official account of their experience. That account in turn forms the backbone of “The 33,” a film about their ordeal to be released in the US on 13 November.

Initially, the 33 vowed to maintain a pact of silence about their time underground so no individual would profit unduly.

But that scheme soon broke down, as outlets offered to pay miners for media appearances, leading some to say the survivors were being opportunistic.

For Tobar, however, who recorded hundreds of hours of interviews with the miners, such criticisms hold little merit.

“They feel like they have been treated with a lack of respect. That people sort of see them as these ordinary guys who accidentally got buried underground and hoped to get rich and famous off of it,” Tobar said.

“And what they hope that the movie and the book will show them, will show Chile, is that they went through a war underground, that they are battled scarred.”

Tobar added that many survivors were drawn to tears by “The 33,” a fictionalized retelling of the miners’ time underground which was released in Chile on 6 August.

“For many it was a kind of rebirth and so to see that your near death experience and rebirth played out on the big screen was very emotional for them,” he said.

“So there were many tears shed at the screening in Chile.” — Reuters

China World Heritage Tourism Promotion Alliance set up in Beijing

BEIJING — China World Heritage Tourism Promotion Alliance was founded in Beijing on Friday to promote the country’s 48 world heritage sites abroad.

The alliance, initiated by Beijing Municipal Commission of Tourism Development, now has 32 members including provinces and cities with abundant tourism resources, and world heritage sites such as the Dangjyanggan irrigation system in southwest China’s Sichuan Province.

The alliance will help China develop its own tourism brand, according to Wu Wei, deputy head of the China National Tourism Administration. It will provide tourists from home and abroad a comprehensive way to learn about China’s culture and history, according to Cheng Hong, vice mayor of Beijing. — Xinhua

China World
Heritage Tourism Promotion Alliance

The confrontation took place on the edge of Martys Square, less than 1 km (1 mile) from the Sursock.

Beirut has been hit by a series of protests in recent months against Lebanon’s politicians, who bickered over the summer months while rubbish lay uncollected across the city.

The political deadlock is one fallout of the four-year civil war in neighbouring Syria, which has also brought bombings, economic slowdown and more than 1 million refugees to Lebanon.

Environment Minister Mohammad al-Mashnouk, a focus of the protesters’ anger, said the Sursock Museum was a home to the country’s artistic and cultural treasures. — Reuters

Rescued Chilean miners were ‘battle scarred: author

Miner Mario Sepulveda (C) celebrates as President Sebastian Pinera, rescue workers and government officials watch, when he became the second miner to be hoisted to the surface in Copiapo, on 13 October 2010. Photo: Reuters

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Prime Time

07:03 PM

07:25 PM

07:51 PM

08:03 PM

08:26 PM

08:54 PM

09:00 PM – 09:11 PM

09:25 PM – 09:36 PM

10:03 AM

10:30 AM – 11:00 AM

10:35 AM

10:36 AM – 11:00 AM

07:00 AM – 07:06 AM

07:03 AM

07:06 AM

07:10 AM

07:15 AM

07:30 AM

07:36 AM

07:40 AM

07:45 AM

08:00 AM

08:06 AM

08:12 AM

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Today Fresh

National Literary News

Wages

Today Myanmar “Fixing The Rate of Minimum Wages”

Let’s Cook (EP-5) Creamy Mushroom Soup & Honey Lemon Drink

Myanmar Literature “Sayar Zaw Gyi” (Episode-3)

National Literary News

Prime Time

A Snake Catcher

8:25 am

8:10 am

Prime Time

Fashion Show (Music)

Teleplay

Sing & Enjoy

Myanmar Video

7:55 am

8:25 am

6:25 am

6:00 am

Myo Ma Neyin Music Troupe

8:10 am

Prime Time

Myanmar Movie

7:55 am

8:25 am

6:25 am

6:00 am

• Myanmar Video

• Fashion Show (Music)

• Teleplay

• Sing & Enjoy

• Myanmar Movie

• Close Down
**Pyanlarbi Bo Min Naing wins Bo Bo Gyi boat race award**

IN memory of Bo Bo Gyi Nat spirit, residing at Taungthaman Lake in Amarapura Township, Mandalay Region, Myanmar traditional boat races have been held yearly. This year’s competition took place on 8 October. In the final match, Pyanlarbi Bo Min Naing (Bo Min Naing the Returnee) won the cup. The first runner-up was Ma Chit-te Maung Lay (Damsel’s Young Man).

The boat race was to mark the annual festival dedicated to Bo Bo Gyi Nat spirit. During the festival, Taungthaman natives return to their homes and present offerings to Bo Bo Gyi. The festival is one of the tourist attractions in the country.—*Tin Maung*

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**Barcelona back Messi in tax fraud case**

BARCELONA — Barcelona have given their full backing to Lionel Messi in the Argentina forward’s tax fraud case and vowed to fight “external decisions” they say are unfairly targeting the club.

A Spanish court on Thursday ordered Messi and his father Jorge, who are accused of defrauding the Spanish state of 4.2 million euros ($4.76 million) from 2007 to 2009, to stand trial and the state attorney said Barca’s star player should serve a jail sentence of up to 22 months if found guilty.

The Messis’ lawyer, Javier Sanchez-Vera, told Reuters on Friday the court hearings would not take place until 2016.

In a statement published late on Thursday, Barca noted the state attorney’s stance was “the complete opposite” to that of Spain’s public prosecutor, who has said Lionel Messi should not have to answer the charges as his father oversaw his finances.

“FC Barcelona has expressed its affection and solidarity to Leo Messi and his family in such a peculiar situation,” the statement said.

“The club shall continue to offer him and his family its full support and assistance in the legal, fiscal and administrative aspects of these proceedings.”

Messi is one of several Barca players, including compatriot Javier Mascherano and Brazil forward Neymar, who have been targeted by the Spanish authorities in recent months. All deny wrongdoing.

The club itself was charged last year with tax fraud in the signing of Neymar from Brazilian club Santos and paid $18.6 million in what it called a “complementary tax declaration”.

They said they remained “convinced the original tax payment was in line with their fiscal obligations”.

Barca’s legal problems have come on top of a FIFA ban for breaking rules on the signing of minors and president Josep Maria Bartomeu complained last year of what he called a concerted campaign to damage the Spanish and European champions.

He was repeatedly asked who was behind the alleged campaign, including if it might be arch rivals Real Madrid, but he declined to provide any names.

“FC Barcelona condemns the accumulation of totally inadmissible and external decisions that have been going on for some time and that have nothing to do with strictly sporting affairs,” Barca said on Thursday.

“They are damaging to the smooth running of the club, its status and that of the players that form part of it. ‘The club shall be working with more determination than ever to defend its legitimate rights and is ready for any new challenges that might arise.’—*Reuters*

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**England cruise against Estonia to secure ninth win**

E NGLAND, who reached Euro 2016 last month, comfortably beat Estonia 2-0 at Wembley on Friday to stay on course to complete a qualifying campaign with a 100 percent record for the first time.

Goals from Theo Walcott after 45 minutes and Raheem Sterling in the 85th gave England their ninth successive win in a qualifying campaign for the first time.

England lead Group E with 27 points from nine games, with Switzerland also qualifying after beating San Marino 7-0 to climb to 18 points. Estonia have a remote mathematical chance of finishing third after Slovenia where held 1-1 by Lithuania.

England manager Roy Hodgson told ITV: “It was as tough as we thought it would be because we have played against an organised team that are also quite intelligent in the way they play.

“We attacked a lot and saw a lot of the ball and had quite a few chances but it was a question of putting them away.

“But I think we were good value for our 2-0 win. In these type of games if you are not careful and lose your concentration you can slip up.

“People are telling me that this victory tonight will ensure we are seeded for the tournament in France and that is important too.”

England were never under any threat from an Estonia side that have only scored four goals in nine matches on a generally subdued night at Wembley.

One of the high spots came before kickoff when Bobby Charlton presented fellow Manchester United great Wayne Rooney with a golden boot for breaking his 45-year-old scoring record with his 50th goal for England last month.

Rooney was out injured but England did not miss him. Ross Barkley created Walcott’s opener before halftime with a superb through ball which the Arsenal man collected with a deft right foot touch before his shot gave keeper Mikkel Kjuel no chance.

Sterling doubled the lead five minutes before the end with an easy chance following a cross by substitute Jamie Vardy, who had only been on the pitch for two minutes.—*Reuters*