State Counsellor and Union Foreign Affairs Minister meets with Bangladeshi PM’s special envoy

STATE Counsellor and Union Minister for Foreign Affairs Daw Aung San Suu Kyi received the Bangladeshi Prime Minister’s Special Envoy Foreign Secretary Mr. Md. Shahidul Haque in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

During the talks the representatives held comprehensive discussions on further bilateral relations and cooperation.

Also present were Union Minister for Office of the State Counsellor U Kyaw Tint Swe, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs U Kyaw Tin and officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.—Myanmar News Agency

Amber preserving feathers, bones, tissue of dinosaur-age birds found in Myanmar

BEIJING — Two chunks of amber unearthed in Myanmar preserving feathers, bones and tissue from nearly 100 million years ago could offer palaeontologists a glimpse on the ancestry and evolution of birds, according to media reports Wednesday.

The translucent fossils, nicknamed “Angel Wing” and “Rose”, contain not only feather fragments, but fully intact wing parts complete with skin, flesh and plumage in an alternating pale and brown pattern.

“The biggest problem we face with feathers in amber is that we usually get small fragments or isolated feathers, and we are never quite sure who produced them,” said Ryan McKellar of Canada’s Royal Saskatchewan Museum. “We don’t get something like this. It’s mind-blowingly cool.”

The wing feathers show an advanced degree of development with clearly discernible differentiation between primary asymmetrical flight feathers, secondary feathers, and covert feathers.

These 99-million-year old predecessors to modern birds already possessed flying gear comparable to those still in use today by their distant successors.

Researchers identify the specimens with enantiornithines, a group of avian dinosaurs that became extinct at the end of the Cretaceous period.

They hope that this study will encourage scientists to turn to amber fossils more readily to find new insights into ancient organisms.—Xinhua

The undated photo shows an amber containing an impeccably preserved bird’s wing tip. The tiny specimens of baby birds’ wings entombed in amber were found in the Hukawng Valley in northern Myanmar and described in the journal “Nature Communications.” —Photo: Xinhua
BILATERAL ties between Myanmar and Bangladesh have been maintained and the two BIMSTEC member countries can enhance the good neighborly relations through constructive engagement, said Commander-in-Chief of Defense Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing yesterday.

The Senior General expressed his view on the bilateral ties in meeting with Bangladeshi Prime Minister’s special envoy Foreign Secretary Mr. Md. Shahidul Haque in Nay Pyi Taw.

In his address, the Senior General stressed the need for greater understanding and acceptance of reality, expressing his belief that constructive engagement will contribute towards ensuring greater friendship between the two nations.

During the call, they also held talks on further relations between the two Defense Services and greater cooperation between the two border guard forces in an effort to ensure border security and peace and stability.

--- Myanmar News Agency

UN Special Rapporteur holds separate meetings with union-level officials

UN Special Rapporteur holds talks with Deputy Minister for Home Affairs Maj-Gen Aung Soe. Photo: MNA

UNited Nations Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar Ms Yanghee Lee separately met officials of union-level organisations yesterday.

Ms Yanghee Lee met Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice Senior General Soe Win in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

At the meeting the two representatives discussed cooperation by the army in the process of organising the 21st Century Panglong Peace Conference, the fight against the violation of human rights, humanitarian activities and measures being taken for the prevention of the recruitment and use of children for the armed forces together with the Country Task Force on monitoring and reporting, a UN agency.

In her meeting with Union Attorney General U Tun Tun Oo, the UN special rapporteur discussed measures for law enforcement, legislation, the emergence of an independent judicial system and justice for the people.

Ms Yanghee Lee also had separate meetings with Ethnic Affairs Union Minister Nang Thet Lwin, Religion and Culture Union Minister Thura U Aung Ko and Union Education Minister Dr Myo Thein Gyi.

She met Information Union Minister Dr Pe Myint in the afternoon. The two discussed challenges to the ministry’s reform processes, measures for the shift from the state to public media, reviews for the media law, the training programmes for spokespersons, the development of ethnic media, the involvement of women in media. They also exchanged views on how to counter hate speech on social media in the fashion of other countries.

Ms Yanghee Lee also met Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation Union Minister U Ohn Win. In the meeting, they talked about the discontinuation of timber extraction, reforestation, and supervision of extractive companies. She also had a discussion with Deputy Minister for Home Affairs Maj-Gen Aung Soe, also Secretary of the Central Investigation Committee for Farmland and Other Land Confiscations. Their discussion focused on the handover of seized land plots, compensations and existing land management policies.

--- Myanmar News Agency

Sub-Mekong countries, RoK discuss trade promotion in Yangon

The 4th Mekong-ROK Business Forum named “Realising Investment Opportunities in the Mekong Sub-Region” took place in Yangon yesterday with the aim of trade promotion between the five sub-Mekong countries and the Republic of Korea.

Union Minister for Planning and Finance U Kyaw Win and first Vice-Minister Mr. Lim Sung-nam of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the RoK spoke on the occasion.

The forum focused on market potential of the sub-Mekong countries—Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Vietnam and Thailand—and the RoK, building trade fair networks and online business partnerships as well as organising business excursions to industries in Cambodia, Laos, Viet Nam and Thailand and allowing for business-matching events.

Also present at the forum which was jointly-organised by the Myanmar Investment Commission, the Foreign Affairs Ministry of the RoK and the Mekong Institute, were officials from sub-Mekong countries and RoK delegation members.

Entrepreneurs from sub-Mekong countries and the RoK visited the Thilawa Special Economic Zone today.

--- Myanmar News Agency

Five-year plan to develop Ayeyawady Delta

The Ministry of Transport and Communications has conducted development works in the Ayeyawady Delta under its five-year plan (2015-2020), said U Tun Lwin Oo, director-general of the Directorate of Water Resources and Improvement of River Systems.

Since May this year, a 43-member group including government staff and experts have implemented the project with a Ks117bn (US$100m) loan from the World Bank. The new scheme is divided into three phases. “The first project covers economic and sustainable development of the delta region, establishment of a research center for water-related information, improvement of systems for water resource development, capacity development programme,” said Prof Daw Khin Ni Thein, one of project directors.

International and local experts are invited to apply for construction projects already being conducted by the project implementing body. “The second includes construction of weather facilities to provide updated weather information to people living in remote areas,” said its project officer Daw Le Le Win.

A plan is underway to start a measurement of water flow of the Ayeyawady and Chindwin rivers through Magwe, NyaungU, Khani and Monywa camps at times when water levels rise.

U Nay Phone Latt, regional Hilutaw MPs, suggested that SMS messages be sent to villagers with updated weather information.

“Improvement of transport routes along the rivers for economic development will be carried out in the third phase,” said director U Aung Myo Khang.

The department will finalise the report relating to the new project next year, with plans to upgrade services provided by the Meteorology and Hydrology Department by 2020.—Ko Moe

--- Myanmar News Agency
State Counsellor visits sports camp in Nay Pyi Taw

STATE COUZSELLOR Daw Aung San Suu Kyi visited a sports camp in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday, where she encouraged selected athletes undergoing training.

During her inspection tour of the Gold Camp, the state counsellor met the young volleyball players training for the 19th Southeast Asian Junior Men’s Volleyball Championship to be held from 2 to 6 July in Nay Pyi Taw. After asking about the strengths and weaknesses of the volleyball teams, she urged officials to train the players both physically and mentally.

The state counsellor also inspected the Sports Medical Centre at the camp.—Myanmar News Agency

Mandalay shopkeepers protest against reconstruction plan for fire-gutted market

MORE than 300 shopkeepers from the fire-gutted Mandalay Mingalar Market staged a protest against Mayor U Ye Lwin’s plan regarding an entirely new construction project for the market yesterday.

“We demonstrated against the Mayor’s plan as he has neglected our desires,” said U Kyaw Soe who led the protest.

Protestors said that they will not allow the new model of the fire-devoured market as it has failed to meet their demands.

During a press conference on Wednesday the mayor promised the market reconstruction will be carried out in accordance with the consent of the majority of affected shop owners who voted in favour of rebuilding.—Aung Thant Khaing

Nay Pyi Taw gems expo earns 51.13m Euros in jade sales


Total sales in jade lots sold under an open tender system and competitive biddings commencing on Tuesday amounted to 157.47m Euros at the emporium yesterday.

The expo, attracting local and foreign merchants, earned 3.12m Euros in sales of pearl lots and 3.29m Euros in sales of gems lots respectively.

According to inside sources, five foreign buyers who have visited the Myanmar gems emporium for 54 times, 35 times, 25 times and 20 times in total over the years were presented certificates of honour yesterday.—Myanmar News Agency

Myanmar addressing TIP issues as national priority

THE Ministry of Foreign Affairs yesterday issued a press release on the US decision to drop Myanmar to Tier 3 with the release of its annual human trafficking report.

The following is the press release of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the 2016 Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report of the US Department of State:

It is regrettable that the 2016 Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report of the US Department of State drops Myanmar from Tier 2 Watch List status to Tier 3 at a time when the new democratic government is stepping up its efforts to protect its migrant workers and victims of human trafficking and forced labour.

We understand that while Myanmar meets the criteria for the Tier 2 Watch List, having remained at that ranking for the last four years, a further extension is no longer possible. Therefore, Myanmar has been moved to Tier 3. It is hoped that steps can be taken to ensure that restrictions associated with Tier 3 countries will not be allowed to hamper cooperation between Myanmar and the United States, particularly as Myanmar is working assiduously to alleviate poverty, a primary breeder of conditions that lead to human trafficking.

Myanmar has been addressing the TIP issue as a national priority and making tangible progress in various aspects. Elimination of forced labour through an ILO complaints mechanism is in progress. Extraction of forced labour by anyone is a criminal offence subject to stringent penalties both in law and in practice. Implementation work on the goal of prevention of underage recruitment and use of children in military with the United Nations Country Task Force is in its final phase. Myanmar saved, sheltered and repatriated voluntarily in close cooperation with the country of origin, irregular migrants cast adrift in the Indian Ocean were proven not to have originated from Myanmar. Bilateral cooperation with neighbouring countries, particularly on the protection of trafficked victims, is progressing well. A sound legal framework in line with international standards is in place and enforcement capabilities have been reinforced.

Myanmar will continue to step up its efforts with regard to anti-trafficking measures, seriously taking into account recommendations made in the 2016 TIP Report. The issue of human smuggling and trafficking will be addressed vigorously in close cooperation with international partners.—Ministry of Foreign Affairs

CSOs appeal to government for inclusion

CIVIL SOCIETY Organisations are compiling a report to file to the government at the beginning of July in an attempt to strengthened relationships between the two groups. Equality Myanmar, Actionaid, Local Resource Centre and the EU are working on the project.

As well as government ministries, the suggestions will be sent to Pyithu and Amyotha Hluttaw, along with Hluttaw MPs personally, according to CSOs. “This report is important especially since the government’s excluded CSOs from its ‘100-day plan’. We’ve discussed how CSOs can cooperate together with the government and will send our suggestions to all government ministries at the beginning of July,” said U Aung Myo Min, director of Equality Myanmar.

The EU’s roadmap for engagement with CSOs aims to increase space for CSOs; develop ties between CSOs and public institutions and improve their internal management. Myanmar boasts approximately 10,000 CSOs throughout the country.

The suggestions include how to strengthen concerted efforts of CSOs and government, and are based on the EU roadmap. I hope it will have a positive outcome,” said Daw Toe Toe Yi, executive director of the Local Resource Centre.—Myitmakha News Agency
Kayah State provided with K100 ml fund for disaster preparedness

KAYAH State, which experienced deadly landslides in November last year, was provided with a disaster preparedness and response fund by a philanthropic organisation Wednesday.

The establishment of the K100 million-fund in Kayah State came after the KBZ’s Brighter Future Myanmar foundation’s establishment of such a fund in Rakhine and Chin states as well as in Sagaing and Magwe regions recently.

“The establishment of the fund is aimed at assisting a quick response to disasters by authorities,” said Daw Ei Ei Khaing, KBZ’s bank branch in Loikaw, at the ceremony in Loikaw to hand over the cash to the Kayah State Government.

Kayah State Chief Minister U El Phaung Shi accepted the donation and expressed thanks.

Following landslides which occurred in a mountainous area in Mawchi last year that destroyed around 60 houses, displaced 360 people and killed around 17, the foundation carried out rescue and relief efforts.

The village is also equipped with two water tanks with a total storage capacity of 8,000 gallons and a pipe system to supply water to each home as well as one 100 KVA transformer for electrification. — Thura Lwin

Crime NEWS

Yaba and Tramadol capsules seized in Myawady and Pyapon

ON 27 June Police seized 990 Yaba pills from a Saw Tu in Myawaddy, Kayah State and 3,000 Tramadol capsules from Aye Aye Min in Pyapon in Ayeyawady Region.

Similarly, a combined investigation team comprising officers and staff from Mandalay police station searched a motorbike driven by Aung Mo Khine with Ma Pa Pa Win and Ma Thin Thin Ye on board at Kanthyawar yard, Chanmyathazi township, Mandalay.

They found 190 Yaba tablets and 1,480 bags full of illegal Tramadol worth Ks3.7ml.

Police said the driver could not produce evidence to prove that the betel was grown in Myanmar and believe that it has been imported from an unspecified country. Four drivers and four conductors were arrested. — That Oo (Thaton)

Illegal betel nut worth Ks3,700 lakh seized in Thaton

ACTING on a tip-off, police stopped and searched a semi-trailer truck, heading to Yangon, when they discovered 1,480 bags full of illegal betel worth Ks3ml.

Police said the driver could not produce evidence to prove that the betel was grown in Myanmar and believe that it has been imported from an unspecified country. Four drivers and four conductors were arrested. — That Oo (Thaton)

Faw vehicle plunges into ravine

A FAW vehicle plunged into a 170-foot-deep ravine between mileposts 74/5 and 74/6, on the Yangon-Sittwe road, Ann Township, Rakhine state on 17 June, leaving two injured and one killed.

According to an investigation, the Faw (Chinese made) was being driven by one U Sai Aung Thein, 36, with three passengers on board.

Police obtained an approval to charge new ticket fares starting July. Exact date for the fitting of prosthetic limbs will be announced soon, said one of the hospital’s members. — 200

Amputees to receive prosthetic limbs for free

A local Kachin charity organisation will be providing amputees with artificial limbs for free with the area of focus being in Waingmaw township, Myitkyina.

The aim of the campaign is to promote the lives of people who lost their legs due to different accidents.

“The organisation will do their best fitting artificial limbs to people,” said a member of the NPO.

The foundation is compiling a census of those who need a prosthetic limb.

People in need of prosthetic legs may dial 09 420 749 214 of U G Zong Hsaung, chairman of the NPO, or 09 781 892 639 - Daw Dwe Bu not later than 10 July. Exact date for the fitting of prosthetic limbs will be announced soon, said one of the NPO’s member. — 200
Yuan depreciation affects Myanmar pulses market as India negotiates pea exports

MYANMAR’s Inland Water Transport (IWT) is extending new lines in order to enable passengers to travel and transport their goods at a cheaper rate, according to U Aung Than Myaing from IWT.

IWT has six divisions with 178 ships operating in the Ayeyawady and Chindwin Rivers. In delta area, the ships are operated between Labutta, Myaungmya, Pathein, Bogale and Mawgyun.

“It is needed to modernize the ships so that they can run in full capacity as the old ones cannot carry heavy loads, and they are very often causing the delays,” said U Aung Than Myaing.

Indian Rupee (INR) pulses market has been affected due to Yuan depreciation because Indian Rupee is selling well at a higher price, according to Mandalay Pea market.

The currency exchange rate of Yuan was 0.555 Yuan per Ks100 in mid June and drops down to 0.566 Yuan per Ks100 on 29th June.

“Sterling pound and Euro hit 31 year low because of United Kingdom’s withdrawal from European Union (BREXIT) and thus the neighboring countries of Asia have an adverse effect on their economy. However, Myanmar is not related to those currencies, and so, Myanmar currency has become hard. The dollar price is also stable at Ks1,183 per dollar these days,” said U Soe Win Myint, the brokerage owner.

Euro depreciation might affect the export market of pea, rice and fishery products that are being exported to European countries. The price of green gram increased from Ks94,000 to Ks97,000 per bag on 29 June. The price of chick pea (V2) also climbed up, from Ks116,000 to Ks120,000 per bag.

All this comes as Myanmar and India are negotiating a direct pea export as Myanmar merchants sell various peas through Singapore based companies. 5% of the value is to be paid in advance in direct export.

“There are cases of fixing the price and other difficulties,” said a responsible person from Myanmar Pulses, Beans & Sesame Seeds Merchants Association.

The authorities concerned between two countries have been coordinating; it is unlikely that direct pea export will begin this year. The commerce ministry will utilise ways that will benefit local pea merchants and growers.

India is the main buyer of Myanmar mung bean, purchasing 70% of mung bean produce. India also purchases pigeon peas in competition with Chinese merchants. - Min Htet Aung (Man Ko Pwar) & YCDC Daily

State-owned factories to be privatised in four years

STATE owned factories are to be sold off in order to decentralise Myanmar’s economic sector, allowing for competition to begin again in Myanmar. The list of privatization is not announced yet, and so, we cannot say which factories will be privatised, an official from the Ministry of Planning and Finance.

Myanmar will try to effectuate industrial development through privatization beginning in the 2016-17 financial year to 2020-21 FY.

“State-owned factories in Myanmar will be privatized in four years,” said an official of the Ministry of Planning and Finance.

The industrial development plan includes extended manufacturing of value added products, transformation of the state-owned industries, formulation and implementation of industrial policies, training and development of industry-related human resources, development of technology and improvement of standardisation, reduction of production costs through energy-efficient use and reduction of glass house gases.

The ministry plans to help development of small and medium enterprises for improvement of private sector, enforce rules in the development of industrial zones, for the state-owned factories to co-operate with the private-owned ones and to collect the data and statistics of the industries.

The government is making effort to import technology, added the official of the Ministry. —200

India will provide technical assistance to promote bean exports

INDIA will provide Myanmar farmers with technical assistance to promote the bean export trade, said U Khin Maung Lwin, assistant secretary of the Ministry of Commerce.

The demand for all varieties of Myanmar bean from India is annually high, but local cultivators and manufacturers cannot fulfill the requirements as demanded by Indian buyers, it is learned.

India has, therefore, shown interest in cooperating with the ministries concerned and bean producers within Myanmar to provide pedigree seeds free of charge annually, said an official of the Ministry of Commerce.

Local farmers and producers tend to follow the traditional methods of growing beans, rendering the quality and yield of the products low. Therefore, the Ministry of Agriculture of India and the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock Breeding and Irrigation are jointly making an arrangement.—Nay Nay

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Duterte, ‘the punisher’, sworn in as Philippines’ president

MANILA — Rodrigo Duterte was sworn in as the Philippines’ 16th president on Thursday, capping an unlikely journey for a provincial city mayor whose brash man-of-the-people style and pledges to crush crime swamped establishment rivals in May’s election.

After making his pledge at the presidential palace in Manila, with one hand on the Bible, Duterte delivered a short speech in which he promised a “re- lentless” and “sustained” fight against corruption, crime, drugs and illegal drugs.

However, he said these ills were only symptoms of a virulent social disease cutting into the moral fibre of society.

“I see the erosion of the people’s trust in our country’s leaders, the erosion of faith in our judicial system, the erosion of confidence in the capacity of our public servants to make the people’s lives better, safer and healthier,” he said.

Outgoing President Benigno Aquino brought the country an average annual growth rate of 6.3 per cent in his six-year term, the fastest of Southeast Asia’s five main economies.

Duterte said on Thursday that he would give specifics of his economic policies later, but some already fear that his defiance of convention could pose a danger to the country’s health.

In the election campaign, Duterte railed against the country’s political elite and tapped into voters’ disgust with a succession of governments that failed to tackle poverty and inequality even when the country was bounding ahead.

His campaign focussed almost entirely on the scourges of murder, rape, drug abuse and corruption, and voters were not deterred by his repeated warnings, in profanity-peppered speeches, to have offenders killed.

Duterte conceded in his maiden speech that many critics believe his methods of fighting crime were “unorthodox and verge on the illegal”. However, the 71-year-old former prosecutor said he knew right from wrong and would be uncompromising in adhering to due process and the rule of law.

Duterte was mayor for 22 years of the far-south city of Davao, where, according to human rights groups, death squads have killed at least 1,400 people since 1998, most of them drug-pushers, addicts, petty criminals and street children.

He denies any involvement in the vigilante killings.

In keeping with his unorthodox manner, the inauguration ceremony was far less elaborate than those of his predecessors.

Aides said there would be no sumptuous banquet and no champagne corks popping, just a meal of homely dishes for the president’s family and invited guests.

But an abrupt economic slowdown since 2012 has cast doubt over the role of global mining firms such as Rio Tinto, whose last month finally approved a $5.3 billion extension plan for the Oyu Tolgoi copper mine.

The MPP’s victory will likely be a greeted as a tailwind for the economy and international miners, as the party’s success in attracting investors when it last held power, from 2008-2012, led to the country being nick-named “Mine-golia”.

The MPP, which has governed for most years since the revolution, won an 85 per cent majority with 65 seats in the 76-member parliament, taking back power from the Democratic Party, an unmanned official from Mongolia’s general election committee told a press briefing.

The ruling Democratic Party won nine seats in Wednesday’s vote, down from 37. Prime Minister Chimed Saikhanbileg, and the parliament’s chairman, Zandanshuu Enkhbolor, were among those kicked out of their seats.

“The Mongolian People’s Party’s landslide win shows the public assigning clear blame for the country’s economic woes to the outgoing Democratic Party government,” John Marrett, an analyst at The Economist Intelligence Unit, said in an emailed statement.

A late change of election rules hindered independents and small parties during the short 18-day campaign period.

One seat went to the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party (MPPR), and one to an independent, popular folk singer Samand Javkhlan, who has taken up environmental causes.

A vast country with just three million people, best known as the birthplace of Mongol emperor Genghis Khan, Mongolia had struggled in recent years to adapt to a downturn in fortunes.

Demand for coal and copper from giant neighbour China, and weak commodities prices have hit Mongolia hard.

The IMF forecasts economic growth of 0.4 per cent this year, compared with 17.5 per cent in 2011, the year before the Democratic Party took power.

Since 2012, Mongolia has borrowed billions of dollars in sovereign debt. In March, rating agency Moody’s gave it a negative outlook, citing the rising debt burden, a projected widening of budgetary imbalances and mining revenue shortfalls. — Reuters
Western Sydney takes centre stage in close-run Australian election

SYDNEY — Twenty-two-year-old forklift driver Mitchell Beckwith is living the dream. Or he’s living Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull’s dream anyway.

Beckwith, who quit his job in inner Sydney for work closer to his home in the west, is an exemplar of Turnbull’s ambitious plan to create 30-minute cities around the country where people can both work and live with a commute in that timeframe.

The project is part of Turnbull’s focus on jobs and wealth creation as he seeks another term in Saturday’s general election, aiming to reassure Australians that the good times aren’t over despite the end of mining boom that drove economic growth through the global financial crisis.

Beckwith lives in Parramatta, a key electorate to the west of Sydney that is the focus of a A$32 billion (£17.7 billion) infrastructure and urban renewal programme.

“Commuting to the city by train was stressful, expensive and I had to stand for 40 minutes,” Beckwith told Reuters outside an early polling station this week. “Now I drive to work instead. I can wake up later, have more energy, don’t have to stress about how to get home after work and have more spare time.” Western Sydney could be a major determinant of the 2 July vote and has attracted intense lobbying over the eight-week election campaign. As many as six marginal seats at play between Turnbull’s conservative Liberal-National coalition government and the centre-left Labour Party led by Bill Shorten.

Concerned about polls showing a potentially close result, Turnbull has used “Brexit” shockwaves to urge voters to return his government.

While far right groups have returned to the fray on anti-Islam platforms, domestic economic issues such as jobs, tax and the funding of education and healthcare have dominated the campaign.

Long derided as “westies” and until recently neglected in public spending plans, residents of Western Sydney experience higher crime and lower employment, health and education outcomes than their wealthier harbour side neighbours.

Having soaked up the majority of the region’s migrants, Western Sydney now boasts one of Australia’s most multicultural populations: nearly 39 per cent of homes use a language other than English, compared with the national average of 18 per cent.

For now, culinary delicacies like Vietnamese Pho soup or momo dumpplings from Nepal are easier to come by than high-paying jobs, or the infrastructure for quick routes into central Sydney.

Turnbull plans to fix that with A$30 billion in projects including the country’s largest public transport and urban road developments and the new international airport at Badgyer’s Creek, to bring thousands of jobs and attract new businesses.— Reuters

Nine killed in pharmacy fire in Mumbai

NEW DELHI — At least nine people, including five children, were killed in a fire at a pharmacy in Mumbai Thursday, a senior police official said.

“The victims, mostly members of the same family, were asleep on the first floor of the building and had been trapped when the fire broke out around 6am (local time) in the medical store on the ground floor and quickly engulfed the building in Andheri,” he said on condition of anonymity.

While eight charred bodies, including that of a few months old baby, were recovered by rescuers and firefighters, one injured person sustained to his injuries in the hospital later in the day, the official said.

Local TV channels reported, quoting eyewitnesses and officials, that the blaze started because of a short-circuit or could also be the result of a cooking cylinder blast.

Some reports also said that a fireman sustained injuries while dousing the flames.— Xinhua

DPRK leader elected chairman of new state institution

PYONGYANG — Top leader of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK) Kim Jong Un on Wednesday was elected chairman of a newly-created institution at the 4th session of the 13th Supreme People’s Assembly (SPA), or the country’s parliament, state television reported.

Three members of the standing committee of the political bureau of the central committee of the ruling Workers’ Party of Korea were elected vice-chairmen of the institution, namely Hwang Pyong So, Choe Ryong Hae and Pak Pong Ju.

“Eight others were appointed members of the institution, some of whom are members of the political bureau of the WPK Central Committee,” a report on the SPA’s cabinet television said.

The session revised the Constitution of the DPRK. The new state institution, called the State Affairs Commission, was set up to replace the National Defence Commission, according to the revised Constitution.

Kim has led the National Defence Commission as first chairman since April 2012.

In addition, the Supreme Public Prosecutors Office and the Supreme Court were changed to the Central Public Prosecutors Office and the Central Court respectively, according to the revision.

A personnel adjustment was also made to the President’s Office, the cabinet and legal institutions.

The Secretariat under the Committee for the Peaceful Reunification of Korea will be removed.

Kim was promoted from the first secretary to the chairman of the ruling Workers’ Party of Korea at the 7th party congress held in early May.

He is also holding the post of the Supreme Commander of the Korean People’s Army.— Xinhua

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un waves as he participates in a photo session with officials who are committed to the success of the test-fire of surface-to-surface medium-long range strategic ballistic missile Hwasong-10, in this undated photo released by North Korea’s Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) on 28 June 2016. Photo: Reuters
Maw Soe Maung Gyi

WHEN the Union’s dormant annulment was announced from the Union Election Commission on 25 March, many people in the country who are out of the League of Nations have left. The Union Prime Minister David Cameron announced the dissolution of the Union which would resign from the position of the Council of the European Union. The Union was furtherMaw Soe Maung Gyi

As a result, a number of regional organizations have taken action to mediate the situation. They have been pursuing negotiations to resolve the conflict in unity in one’s own country on the issue of the Kashmir conflict. This has happened in India, Pakistan and China. Only when ASEAN is truly in danger, is the world at the present time. This is why the Union is still a European Union, and now they are musing on what they should do at the light of the Brexit referendum result. As a matter of fact, there are others like terrorism and fundamentalism which still remain hard to handle by the international community and the European Union, as well as the UN and other intergovernmental organizations. In one of the cases of the肆早 read the second paragraph.

In the changing international political landscape, the UK’s referendum results in the so-called “Brexit” have significant implications for the world and perhaps for the world. The UK’s exit from the European Union has been fostering regional and international cooperation. As a result, the world today is facing a multitude of challenges, including economic issues, political issues, and even social issues. With the world becoming increasingly interconnected, it is crucial to find ways to address these challenges and promote peace and prosperity. One way to achieve this is through regional and international organizations. These organizations are able to bring together countries with shared interests and work collaboratively to address common problems. In addition, they can provide a platform for dialogue and cooperation, allowing countries to work together to find solutions to pressing issues. However, the effectiveness of these organizations depends on the commitment and cooperation of their member states. It is important that countries actively participate in these organizations and contribute to their goals and objectives. By doing so, they can help to ensure that these organizations are able to continue to play a vital role in promoting peace and prosperity around the world. In conclusion, the UK’s exit from the European Union highlights the importance of regional and international cooperation in addressing the challenges facing the world today. It is crucial that countries work together to find ways to overcome these challenges and promote a better future for all. 

Against all odds

Kyaw Thu

It comes as no surprise that there are some people who cannot help criticizing whatever the government does. It is quite possible that when it comes to poli-

For the last two decades, many young people have been seeking ways to overcome poverty and develop their lives. This has often been achieved through education, but it has also involved efforts to improve agricultural practices and develop small businesses. In some cases, this has led to the creation of new opportunities and the development of new industries. However, despite these efforts, many people still face significant challenges in their daily lives. In order to address these challenges, it is important to continue to invest in education and to provide support to those who are struggling to make ends meet. This will require the involvement of governments, civil society organizations, and individuals who are committed to improving the lives of those who are most in need.

Tour guide grows Saplings in Mingun

TOUR guides in Maign, Sagain Region have planted 200 trees as part of a campaign to raise awareness about sanitation in the town, according to Myanmar Tourist Guide Association (Mandalay). The campaign aims to improve the environment in the town by planting trees in the Mingun Park (Poboz-sa-) and Myawadyan Pagoda and basic education high school No 1. “This is the first time the associa-

China’s claim in the developing world is being observed with renewed interest. China is becoming an emerging power and its economic influence is increasing. China’s presence in the Asia-Pacific region is significant and is being watched closely. China’s influence is extending beyond its borders, reaching into other regions of the world. China’s economic growth is driving global trade and investment, and its political influence is felt throughout the world. China’s relations with other countries in the region, including ASEAN and other countries in Southeast Asia, are密切 related. China is keen to develop economic ties with these countries, and it has been actively seeking to establish closer relationships with them. This has been evident in the recent visits of Chinese leaders to some of these countries. China’s influence in the region is increasing, and it is becoming a major player in global politics. China is also working to improve its image in the international community, and it is becoming more active in promoting its values and interests. This has been evident in the recent developments in the region, including the Belt and Road Initiative and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

In conclusion, China is an emerging power with a growing influence in the world. Its economic growth is driving global trade and investment, and its political influence is felt throughout the world. China’s relations with other countries in the region, including ASEAN and other countries in Southeast Asia, are closely related. China is keen to develop economic ties with these countries, and it has been actively seeking to establish closer relationships with them. This has been evident in the recent visits of Chinese leaders to some of these countries. China’s influence in the region is increasing, and it is becoming a major player in global politics. China is also working to improve its image in the international community, and it is becoming more active in promoting its values and interests. This has been evident in the recent developments in the region, including the Belt and Road Initiative and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
EU tells UK single market access requires full free movement

LONDON/BRUSSELS — European Union leaders met for the first time without Britain on Wednesday less than a week after it voted to leave, delivering a tough message that London can access the bloc’s lucrative single market only if it agrees to allow free movement for EU workers.

Last week’s shock referendum vote to leave the EU has caused global financial market turmoil, sent the pound tumbling and wiped billions off the value of British shares. Britain’s giant financial services sector, roughly 8 per cent of economy, relies crucially on access to the EU market.

Prime Minister David Cameron, who campaigned to stay in the EU and lost, has announced his resignation and left it up to his successor to negotiate the terms of Britain’s exit.

But leaders of the victorious Leave campaign have not spelled out in detail what sort of relationship they hope to build with Brussels, creating uncertainty about the future for both Britain and the rest of the bloc.

Cameron, staying on as caretaker until a successor is found, told EU leaders at his final summer summit on Tuesday that he believed the referendum was lost over the principle of unrestricted travel among EU citizens.

But free movement of workers is one of “four freedoms” — along with movement of capital, goods and services — that the EU says must be maintained by any country that wants access to its common market. The 27 leaders added a line to their summit statement at the last minute emphasizing that principle.

They also called on Britain to trigger the EU’s exit clause by notifying them of its intention to withdraw, which would start a two year clock to negotiate its exit.

“There can be no negotiations of any kind before this notification has taken place,” the statement said. Cameron wants time for his successor to formulate a strategy and sound out European colleagues before beginning the countdown. —Reuters

US says Russian ship raised false signal in incident

BERLIN — The United States on Wednesday accused Russia of deliberately displaying the wrong naval signals and interfering with a US aircraft carrier in the Mediterranean Sea, in the latest salvo about a June incident that both countries blame on each other.

Captain Danny Hernandez, spokesman for US European Command, said the Russian warship Neustrashimy (FF 777) conducted unsafe and unprofessional maritime manoeuvres, which could have led to miscalculation, injury or even death.

A number of Cold War-style incidents have occurred at sea and in the air in recent months, with the militaries of Russia and the United States accusing each other of dangerous actions in international waters and airspace.

“This most recent incident comes on the heels of other unsafe and naval incidents on the part of the Russian military,” Hernandez said in a statement to Reuters.

He said such action had the potential to unnecessarily escalate tensions between the countries.

In April, the US military said Russian SU-24 bombers simulated attack passes near the USS Donald Cook in the Baltic Sea.

Russia and the United States blame each other for unsafe manoeuvres in the 17 June incident which occurred less than two weeks after officials from the two countries met in Moscow to discuss ways to avoid incidents at sea.

The Russian Defence Ministry said a US destroyer approached dangerously close to a Russian ship, in what it said was a flagrant US violation of rules to avoid at-sea collisions.

A US official countered that the Russian ship carried out “unsafe and unprofessional” operations near two US ships.

On Wednesday, Hernandez said the Russian ship raised the “ball-diamond-ball” signal on its mast when it was two nautical miles away from the USS Gravely, a US destroyer operating in the Mediterranean with the USS Harry S. Truman aircraft carrier.

That combination of simple geometric shapes is used to indicate that a ship’s ability to manoeuvre is restricted.

Russia identified its ship as the Russian Navy frigate Yaroslav Mudry.

Hernandez said the Russian ship manoeuvred to get closer to the Gravely, changing course and signal as if the US ship did, which he said showed it was not in fact restricted in its ability to manoeuvre, and was thus intentionally displaying a false international signal.

As a result, he said, the US destroyer believed the Russian ship was intentionally trying to interfere with Harry S. Truman operations. —Reuters

India testfires new medium-range, surface-to-air missile

NEW DELHI — India successfully test fired a new medium-range, surface-to-air missile on Thursday from a military base off the coast of the eastern state of Odisha, sources said.

The missile MR-SAM, developed jointly with Israel, was test fired from a mobile launcher in the Integrated Test Range (ITR) at Chandipur this morning and it met all the targets, the sources said.

The missile was tested over the Bay of Bengal and fishermen in the area were asked not to venture into the sea to avoid any kind of undependable incident, they said.

The missile has been developed by state-owned Defence Research Development Laboratory and Israel Aerospace Industries. Some 100 missiles will be produced in India every year, the sources said. —Xinhua

Taiwan, Japan to discuss fishing near Okinotori next month

TAIPEI — Representatives from Taiwan and Japan will meet in Taipei next month to discuss fishing near Okinotori, the southernmost point of Japanese territory, the island’s Foreign Ministry said on Thursday.

Tsai Ming-yao, secretary general of the Association of East Asian Relations, the Taiwanese body in charge of ties with Japan in the absence of formal diplomatic relations, told a press conference that the two sides will hold the first round of official talks to discuss the establishment of a dialogue mechanism for cooperation on maritime affairs. —Kyodo News

Australian teenager pleads guilty to planning ANZAC Day terror offence

SYDNEY — An Australian teenager on Thursday pleaded guilty to planning a terror attack which involved beheading a police officer and attaching explosives to a kangaroo at commemorations of the ANZAC landings at Gallipoli during World War I.

Sevdet Besim, 19, had planned to attack police at the Melbourne ANZAC day parade on 25 April, 2015 but his scheme was uncovered by police in Britain who found messages on the phone of a 15-year-old British boy to a man in Australia.

The British boy last year pleaded guilty to inciting an attack on an ANZAC day parade in Melbourne, prosecutors said. —Reuters
US-led strikes pound Islamic State in Iraq, kill 250 fighters

WASHINGTON — US-led coalition aircraft waged a series of deadly strikes against Islamic State around the city of Falluja on Wednesday, US officials told Reuters, with one citing a preliminary estimate of at least 250 suspected fighters killed and at least 40 vehicles destroyed.

If the figures are confirmed, the strikes would be among the most deadly ever against the jihadi group. The officials spoke on condition of anonymity to describe the operation and noted preliminary estimates can change.

The strikes, which the officials said took place south of the city, where civilians have also been displaced, are just the latest battlefield setback suffered by Islamic State in its self-proclaimed “caliphate” of Iraq and Syria.

The group’s territorial losses are not diminishing concerns about its intent and ability to strike abroad though. Turkey pointed the finger at Islamic State on Wednesday for a triple bombing and gun attack that killed 41 people at Istanbul’s main airport.

State officials said took place south of the city, where civilians have also been displaced, are just the latest battlefield setback suffered by Islamic State in its self-proclaimed “caliphate” of Iraq and Syria.

The group’s territorial losses are not diminishing concerns about its intent and ability to strike abroad though. Turkey pointed the finger at Islamic State on Wednesday for a triple bombing and gun attack that killed 41 people at Istanbul’s main airport.

CIA chief John Brennan told a forum in Washington the attack bore the hallmarks of Islamic State “depravity” and acknowledged there was a long road ahead battling the group, particularly its ability to incite attacks.

“We’ve made, I think, some significant progress, along with our coalition partners, in Syria and Iraq, where most of the ISIS members are resident right now,” Brennan said. “But ISIS’ ability to continue to propagate its narrative, as well as to incite and carry out these attacks — I think we still have a ways to go before we’re able to say that we have made some significant progress against them.”

On the battlefield, the US-led campaign against Islamic State has moved up a gear in recent weeks, with the government declaring victory over Islamic State in Falluja.

An alliance of militias have also launched a major offensive against the militant group in the city of Manbij in northern Syria.—Reuters

Russia will countenance an Assad exit in Syria, but not yet

MOSCOW — Russia will countenance Syrian President Bashar al-Assad leaving office, but only if it is confident a change of leader will not trigger a collapse of the Syrian government, sources familiar with the Kremlin’s thinking say.

Getting to that point could take years, and in the meantime Russia is prepared to keep backing Assad, regardless of international pressure to jettison him, those sources said. Such steadfast support is likely to further complicate already stalled peace talks with Assad’s opponents and sour relations with Washington which wants the Syrian leader gone. “Russia is not going to part company with Assad until two things happen,” Sir Tony Brenton, Britain’s former ambassador to Russia, told Reuters.

“Firstly, until they are confident he won’t be replaced with some sort of Islamist takeover, and secondly until it can be guaranteed that their own position in Syria, their alliance and their military base, are sustainable going forward.”

The Kremlin, which intervened last year to prop up Assad, fears turmoil in his absence, thinks his regime too fragile for major change, and believes there’s much fighting to do before a transition, say multiple Russian foreign policy sources.

Russia and the United States are co-sponsors of peace talks between the warring sides in the Syria conflict. Those talks, currently on hold, have so far carefully skirted the question of whether a peace deal would require Assad’s departure, so negotiations could theoretically limp along despite the contradictions between the positions of Moscow and Washington.

Moscow has signaled its support for Assad has limits. Russian diplomats have said the Kremlin is backing the Syrian state, not him personally. President Vladimir Putin has said it would be worth considering how members of the opposition could be incorporated into Syrian government structures.

Such talk has fueled Western hopes that Russia might help broker Assad’s exit sooner rather than later. But sources close to the Kremlin say there are no meaningful signs Russia is ready to cut him loose anytime soon.

“I don’t see any changes now (in Russia’s position on Assad),” said Elena Suponina, a senior Middle East analyst at the Moscow-based Russian Institute for Strategic Studies, which advises the Kremlin. “It’s the same and why change it?”—Reuters
Urging tougher stance, UN adds 2,500 peacekeepers to Mali

The United Nations Security Council agreed on Wednesday to add just over 2,500 peacekeepers to the U.N. peacekeeping mission in Mali, which has been hit by a series of deadly attacks and has become the deadliest place to serve for U.N. peacekeepers.

The French-drafted resolution, which was approved unanimously by the 15-nation council, said the Mali peacekeeping mission (MINUSMA) should “take all necessary means to carry out its mandate ... (and) to move to a more proactive and robust posture.”

The increase will bring the force’s maximum size to 13,289 military personnel and 1,920 police.

A peace deal signed last year by Mali’s government and various separatist groups has failed to prevent periodic violence in northern Mali by Islamist militants, who have also staged assaults on high profile targets in the capital Bamako, Burkina Faso and Ivory Coast. French U.N. Ambassador Francois Delattre, council president this month, said implementation of that peace agreement was now one of MINUSMA’s strategic priorities, along with taking a tougher stance to protect civilians in the face of a “resilient terrorist threat.”

At Pacific Alliance summit, Chile warns against isolationism

PUERTO VARAS, (Chile) — Member nations of Latin America’s Pacific Alliance trade bloc must strengthen their relationships and keep clear of the isolationist path represented by Britain’s exit from the European Union, Chile’s foreign minister said on Wednesday.

“At a time that seems dominated by the discord and disintegration brought by ‘Brexit’ and by the lamentable attack in Turkey, what we are doing is constructing realistic, flexible and pragmatic integration,” Foreign Minister Heraldo Munoz said as the Pacific Alliance kicked off its summit, backed by snow-capped volcanoes and azure waters.

“Thus, any move is with our neighbour- hood that we belong to and that we want to keep belonging to, and that’s the Mercosur. Thus, any move is with the Mercosur,” he said.

The Pacific Alliance summit, backed by snow-capped volcanoes and azure waters where it will lie at the consign supplies to Egypt of spare parts for F16 warplanes in Egypt for consultations.

After a heated debate, the vote in the Italian Senate aimed at putting pressure on Cairo for consultations.

Matteo Renzi’s Democratic Party, said the vote was aimed at putting pressure on Egypt for consultations.

With Wednesday’s vote in the Italian Senate marking the first commercial steps taken against Cairo. After a heated debate, the upper house of parliament passed the so-called Regeni amendment by 159 to 55.

Regeni, who was doing postgraduate research into Egyptian trade unions, was last seen by his friends on 25 January. His body, which showed signs of torture, was found in a roadside ditch on the outskirts of the Egyptian capital on 3 February.

Nicola Latorre, a senator from Prime Minister Matteo Renzi’s Democratic Party, said the vote was aimed at putting pressure on Egypt to help “the truth emerge more quickly” over the killing. Centre-right law-and-order groups have complained that Egyptian authorities have not cooperated to find those responsible for the 28-year-old student’s death, and in April it withdrew its ambassador to Egypt for consultations.

However Wednesday’s vote in the Italian Senate was hailed as a success.

“The Pacific Alliance is one of two large trade blocs in Latin America. Member nations Chile, Colombia, Mexico and Peru have moved to reduce trade tariffs between them since forming the bloc in 2011,” Munoz said. The group represents 38 per cent of Latin America’s gross domestic product, and starting in May, 90 percent of commerce between its member states has been free of tariffs. That has piqued the interest of nations far outside the bloc, with 49 different observer states eyeing possible trade agreements with the group.

The countries seen closest to becoming integrated into the bloc are Costa Rica and Panama.

Argentina, a member of Mercosur, Latin America’s other trade bloc, is looking to bring itself closer to the Pacific Alliance.

“We have a neighbour- hood that we belong to and that we want to keep belonging to, and that’s the Mercosur. Thus, any move is with the Mercosur,” he said.

The Pacific Alliance summit, backed by snow-capped volcanoes and azure waters, is expected to discuss trade, security and energy issues.

UN peacekeepers patrol in Kidal, Mali, in 2015. Photo: Reuters

At Pacific Alliance summit, Chile warns against isolationism

Minister of Foreign Affairs of Chile, Heraldo Munoz speaks during a news conference at The 46th General Assembly of the Organisation of the American States in Santo Domingo, on 15 June 2016. Photo: Reuters

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EgyptAir black box data downloaded; evidence suggests fire on board

CAIRO — Investigators have downloaded data from one of the black box flight recorders on EgyptAir Flight MS804 and are preparing to analyse it, bringing them closer discovering what caused the jet to crash. Egypt’s investigation committee said on Wednesday.

The Airbus A320 plunged into the eastern Mediterranean Sea en route from Paris to Cairo on 19 May, killing all 66 people on board. The cause of the crash remains unknown.

“Preliminary information shows that the entire flight is recorded on the FDR since its takeoff from Charles de Gaulle airport until the recording stopped at an altitude of 37,000 feet where the accident occurred,” Egypt’s Aircraft Accident Investigation Committee said in a statement. Search teams have salvaged both of the so-called black box flight recorders. Investigators are now preparing to analyse data from the flight data recorder. “Recorded data is showing consistency with ACARS messages of lavatory and avionics smoke,” the committee said, referring to the aircraft communications and reporting system, which routinely downloads maintenance and fault data to the airline’s operator.

The plane had sent a series of warnings indicating that smoke had been detected on board through ACARS. Recovered wreckage from the jet’s front section showed signs of high temperature damage and soot, the committee said. Those were the first physical signs that fire may have broken out on the A320 airliner, in addition to maintenance messages indicating smoke alarms in the avionics area and lavatory. The committee said these findings would need further analysis to discover the source and reason for the marks, however.

The second black box, the cockpit voice recorder, is still being repaired in laboratories belonging to France’s BEA aircraft accident investigation agency, where the data chips from both recorders were sent after the devices were retrieved from the Mediterranean earlier this month. — Reuters

A flight recorder retrieved from the crashed EgyptAir flight MS804 is seen in this undated picture issued on 17 June, 2016. Photo: Reuters

Trump’s opposition to trade deals fuels internal party opposition

WASHINGTON — Presidential candidate Donald Trump on Wednesday lashed out at the US Chamber of Commerce’s call for more criticism of his stance on trade, highlighting divisions within the Republican Party that threaten unity ahead of the 8 November election.

At a campaign rally in Maine on Wednesday, Trump called the nation’s largest business association “controlled totally by various groups of people who don’t care about you what-soever.”

He said new trade deals should be negotiated because foreign countries are taking advantage of America.

“Every country that we do business with us look at us as the stupid people with the penny bank,” Trump said Wednesday at the rally in Bangor, Maine.

The Washington-based lobbying group, which represents the United States’ largest companies and business interests, is typically a reliable backer of Republican policies.

But on Tuesday it took issue with Trump’s vocal opposition to trade deals, calling his proposals “dangerous” ideas that would push the United States into another recession.

Trump said the Chamber’s argument that his policies would cause a trade war were incorrect because the United States was already at a deficit.

“We’re already losing the trade war, we lost the trade war,” Trump said.

“Nothing can happen worse than is happening now.”

In speeches on Tuesday, Trump called for renegotiating or scrapping the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) with Canada and Mexico, calling it a job killer, and reiterated his opposition to the Trans-Pacific Partnership among the United States and 11 other Pacific Rim countries. He also lambasted China’s trade and currency policies.

The Chamber has consistently backed trade deals.

The public squabbling between the presumptive Republican nominee and the business group was unusual, one of a series of reminders that Trump still struggles to unite his party behind his campaign. The Republicans and many business leaders tend to share policy goals and work in lockstep, and many business leaders have traditionally been big donors to Republican candidates.

So far, the Chamber’s political action committee has donated $134,000 to federal candidates or their committees, with $127,500 of that total going to Republican candidates, according to US government campaign finance records. Billionaire Republican donor Paul Singer, who bankrolled an effort to try to defeat Trump during the campaign’s nominating phase, said on Wednesday that a Trump presidency and his trade positions would almost certainly lead to a global depression.

“The most impactful of the economic policies that I recall him coming out for are these anti-trade policies,” Singer said during a panel discussion at the Aspen Ideas Festival in Colorado, according to CNBC.

But opposing trade deals has proven a winning strategy for Trump among voters concerned about the loss of manufacturing jobs.

Art Laffer, an economic adviser to President Ronald Reagan who supports Trump, said he did not like the tone of Trump’s speech on Tuesday but thought it was an improvement over his past comments on trade.

“It’s not terribly alarming to me,” Laffer said. “I didn’t see any 45 per cent tariffs across the board. … I saw negotiating better trade deals rather than throwing away all the trade deals we have now. He points out the flaws in these trades, and that’s all true.”

Laffer said: “I don’t like the tone of it, but I dislike the tone less today than I did three weeks ago.”

Peter Navarro, a Trump trade policy adviser, defended the candidate’s position.

“Here’s the central point to understand: The White House has been utterly and completely soft on China’s illegal trade practices,” said Navarro, a professor at the University of California, Irvine. “The status quo is the worst of all possible worlds for the United States.”

Trump also took fire for his positions on trade from Democrats.

In a call organised by rival Hillary Clinton’s presidential campaign, US Senator Mark Warner of Virginia, a former businessman and tech entrepreneur, said that while the country needed to do a better job protecting workers, more resources should be put into training them for a new economy.

He also noted that it was unusual to see a Republican standard-bearer and the Chamber divide.

“…You’ve really got a special circumstance when the US Chamber of Commerce” responded to Trump’s economic plan with a “full-fledged onslaught,” Warner said. “No one could have predicted this kind of election season.” — Reuters

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV CARMENITA VOY NO (0330)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV CARMENITA VOY NO (0330) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 1.7.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T. T.A. where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S CHUN AN SHIPPING PTE LTD

Phone No: 2301928

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV SINAR SOLO VOY NO ()

Consignees of cargo carried on MV SINAR SOLO VOY NO () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 1.7.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of H.P.T where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S SAMUDEERA SHIPPING LINE

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV KING WHEAT VOY NO (001)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV KING WHEAT VOY NO (001) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 1.7.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P.L where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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Phone No: 2301928
Became an actor by accident: Johnny Depp

LOS ANGELES — “Pirates of the Caribbean” star Johnny Depp said that he became an actor by accident.

The 53-year-old actor appeared on the “Jonny’s Jukebox” radio talk show alongside his band members from the “Hollywood Vampires” - Matt Sorum, Robert DeLeo and Bruce Witkin.

Depp revealed that he tripped into acting while trying to pursue music as a teenager, reported People magazine.

“I’ve (been a musician) since I was little. I have played since I was 12. I started playing clubs when I was like 13 in Miami,” Depp said.

“I needed to pay rent. Somebody said, ‘Why don’t you go meet an agent. My agent is with Nick Cage,’ so she sent me on an audition for something and I got it,” he added.

The “Sleepy Hollow” star said it wasn’t until his band broke up that he considered acting full-time.

“It seemed like a good way to pay the rent for a minute,” he said.---PTI

Scarlett Johansson named highest grossing actress ever

LOS ANGELES — “Avengers” star Scarlett Johansson has been named the highest grossing actress of all time.

According to Box Office Mojo, the 31-year-old’s work has garnered an impressive domestic box office revenue of USD 3.3 billion dollars.

Not only is Johansson the only female in the top ten on the prestigious list and is on the tenth spot, it should be noted but she’s the youngest actor named.

Harrison Ford, Samuel L. Jackson, Morgan Freeman, Tom Hanks, Robert Downey Jr, Eddie Murphy, Tom Cruise, Michael Caine and Johnny Depp all round out the rest of the highest-ranking celebs.

The second-highest grossing female on the list is Cameron Diaz, who comes in at 9. Helena Bonham Carter, Cate Blanchett, Julia Roberts, Elizabeth Banks, Emma Watson and Anne Hathaway (who are members 26, 29, 30, 31, 32 and 50, respectively).

Johansson, who starred in “The Jungle Book”, “Hail, Caesar!” and “Captain America: Civil War this year”, had spoken about the gender pay gap in Hollywood.---PTI

Sweetie darling! Patsy and Edina return in ‘Absolutely Fabulous’ movie

LONDON — Get the champagne out, Patsy and Edina are back. The champagne-swigging, chain-smoking duo, who love to shop and of course party, return for more antics in “Absolutely Fabulous: The Movie”, a big screen adaptation of the hit 1990s British television comedy show.

Stars Jennifer Saunders and Joanna Lumley reprise their roles as raucous fashion PR agents Edina Monsoon and her best friend, magazine editor Patsy Stone, alongside other original cast members and plenty of famous names in the highly-anticipated film. This time the duo, known for their disastrous shenanigans and calling everyone “sweetie” and “darling” through it all, see their glamorous London lives turned upside down after accidentally pushing model Kate Moss into the River Thames. Seeking to escape a media frenzy over Moss’s presumed death, they flee to the French Riviera to try to get back into the glitzy high life.

“What don’t we get up to in the film,” Saunders told Reuters at the film’s premiere in London on Wednesday. “They do everything you’d expect them to do and more. They manage to kill a supermodel, I don’t know how much worse it gets than that.”

“Absolutely Fabulous”, which was born from a sketch by Saunders and her comedy partner Dawn French, originally aired for three series starting in 1992 before being revived again in 2001. The movie, has been eagerly awaited by fans, many of whom wore Patsy and Edina face masks at the premiere.

“We thought we’d be lucky if we got a second series,” Lumley said. “The extraordinary thing is knowing that this is going around the world and the fact that the world seems to know about ‘Absolutely Fabulous’ is thrilling.” On top of Moss, the movie features dozens of other famous names — models, designers as well as various celebrities — mostly playing themselves. Among those walking the gold carpet at the premiere were model Jerry Hall and designer Stella McCartney, as well as pop star Kylie Minogue, who sings the series’ theme tune for the film soundtrack. Asked if there could potentially be a sequel to the movie, Saunders said: "Well I said yes just now so we’ll wait and see. I’m never going to say no." “Absolutely Fabulous: The Movie” begins its cinema roll-out from Friday.---Reuters

Oscars organisers invite new members in diversity push

LOS ANGELES — Organisers of the Oscars, facing an outcry over the lack of diversity on its voting board for the film awards, said on Wednesday it has invited nearly 700 new members with a focus on female and minority talent.

Actors Idris Elba, America Ferrera, Oscar Isaac, John Boyega, Eva Mendes and this year’s Best Actress Oscar winner Brie Larson were among the 683 potential new members, the academy said in a statement.

Forty-six per cent of those invited are female and 41 per cent are people of colour, aged 24 to 91, said the organisation, whose members also include directors, producers, cinematographers and composers.

“This class continues our long-term commitment to welcoming extraordinary talent reflective of those working in film today,” Academy President Cheryl Boone Isaacs said in the statement.

“We encourage the larger creative community to open its doors wider, and create opportunities for anyone interested in working in this incredible and storied industry.”

All 20 acting Oscar nominees this year were white for a second consecutive year, prompting criticism with the online hashtag #OscarsSoWhite. Oscars host Chris Rock provided biting commentary during the awards show, which was boycotted by director Spike Lee and actress Jada Pinkett Smith.

The largely white, male and older roster of film industry professionals who belong to the academy has long been cited as a barrier to racial and gender equality at the Oscars.

The organisation responded by announcing a sweeping affirmative action programme, pledging to double female and minority membership by 2020.---Reuters
Giant diamond fails to sell at auction, trade interested

LONDON — The biggest uncut diamond to be discovered in over a century failed to sell at a Sotheby’s auction on Wednesday, but the chief executive of Lucara Diamond Corp., the company that found the gem, said there was interest from buyers in the diamond trade.

Bids for the 1,109-carat, tennis-ball-sized stone topped out at $61 million — an amount that fell short of the undisclosed minimum reserve price.

Sotheby’s had estimated that the diamond, found last November at Lucara’s mine in Botswana, would sell for more than $70 million.

“The fact that the stone didn’t sell, yes, it is disappointing but it doesn’t change anything for Lucara as a company,” Lucara CEO William Lamb said in a telephone interview from London.

“There is definitely demand for the stone. It is just demand from the people who we would normally sell the stone to,” he said.

Shares in Vancouver-based Lucara ended down 14.5 per cent at C$3.35 on the Toronto Stock Exchange after news of the failed sale.

“The result is a disappointing one, and potentially calls into question the sale method chosen,” BMO analyst Edward Sterck said in a note to clients.

The public auction route is unusual for large, rare diamonds, which are usually offered for sale to small groups of sophisticated diamond dealers.

Lucara chose the auction route, Lamb said, because it wanted to have “access to as many ultra-high net worth individuals as possible, those people who had bought very expensive items in the past.”

Lucara had not yet decided what to do with the stone, he added, but possibilities include loaning it to museums to increase its exposure and to help educate the public about diamonds.

“We don’t have to sell it because ... we have an exceptionally strong balance sheet. We have well over $150 million to $160 million in cash, we have no debt,” Lamb said.

The Lesedi la Rona, which means “our light” in the Tsswana language spoken in Botswana, is the world’s second-biggest gem quality diamond ever recovered, and the largest in more than a century.

“The biggest is the Cullinan diamond, a 3,106-carat stone found in South Africa in 1905. Lucara last month sold a 1,122.77-carat uncut diamond named “The Constellation,” which it found at the same Botswana mine as the Lesedi la Rona, for $63.1 million. A Dubai-based firm was the buyer, according to media reports.— Reuters

Japanese teen wins top prize in global pre-college science contest

TOKYO — An 18-year-old self-trained engineer from Chiba near Tokyo has received the highest award in engineering mechanics in the world’s largest pre-college scientific research contest.

Takahiro Ichige, a third-year student at Chiba Municipal Chiba High School, won this year’s award for a simple power-saving controller for stepper motors used in air conditioners and other devices, at the International Science and Engineering Fair held in the United States in May.

Approximately 1,700 students took part in the event.

Ichige, the second Japanese to become a category winner, is making preparations to file for patent protection on his work.

When he was a child, Ichige was intrigued by motors used to move plastic models, especially four-wheel-drive cars.

He began to read specialised books on them when he became a junior high-school student.

“Theoretical studies are an extension of engineering work,” Ichige said. “I like applying engineering principles to things close to us.”

Ichige drew attention when, as a first-year high school student, he won third prize for his studies on how to stabilise the rotation of motors in a science contest for high school students.

He participated in Intel ISEF for the first time the following year and won fourth prize.

After returning from the event, Ichige began to study in earnest to reduce stepper motors’ consumption of electricity, spending 16 hours per day on experiments at his home during the summer vacation.

Though a good hurdler, he skipped summer training to concentrate on his studies.

Ichige qualified to participate in Intel ISEF for the second year in a row after winning first prize in a domestic contest.

Winning the best category award at Intel ISEF, “I felt relieved because I was worried about whether I would be able to get across to the judges in English,” he said.

Ichige dreams of becoming an automobile designer. “I want to produce electric vehicles that people will love and that can contribute to the reduction of global warming,” he said.— Kyodo News

Ornamental square watermelon shipments begin from western Japan

TAKAMATSU (Japan) — This year’s crop of rare cube-shaped watermelons, to be used as ornaments rather than eaten, started shipping Wednesday from western Japan at a wholesale price of around 10,000 yen ($97) per fruit. The watermelons, produced exclusively in Zentsuji, Kagawa Prefecture, are grown in square plastic containers. They are inedible as they are harvested unripe.

The linked cubes are an attractive item has also caught on among people older than 70 years old. A 10-centimetre cube sells for about ¥3,000 at the market.

Takamatsu-based Iwai Agriculture Cooperative, which has been growing the watermelons since 1999, said they are growing well this year after having a poor harvest in 2015 due to bad weather.

Iwai expects to produce a total of 100,000 watermelons this year, with sales to start in early July.

Takahiro Ichige points to a simple power-saving controller for stepper motors he has developed in May 2016. He received the highest award in the category of engineering at the Intel International Science and Engineering Fair in the US city. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS
Phelps doing it his way on Road to Rio

Phelps doing it his way on Road to Rio

OMAHA, (Nebraska) — Determined to exit swimming on his own terms, Michael Phelps cleared a major hurdle on the road to Rio on Wednesday, qualifying for a fifth Olympics with a victory that has paved the way to more Games glory.

Inspired, motivated and sober, Phelps heads to Rio thanks to his 200 metres butterfly win at the US Olympic trials with the goal of adding to his staggering record total of 22 medals, including 18 gold, and pen a happy new chapter in his own terms, Michael Phelps
termined to exit swimming on retirement that he is determined journey is more important than

Phelps won four gold and overall 14,000 at the CenturyLink Centre.

At London, which he had declared to be his last Games, Phelps won four gold and overall six medals but walked away with the regret that he simply went through the motions.

He subsequently talked of a golf career but eventually found himself testing the waters of a swimming comeback which was interrupted by a second drink driving arrest in 2014 and a stint in rehab that laid the foundation for Phelps’ transformation from a party boy to a family man.

For Phelps, this Olympic journey is more important than the destination, a trip into retirement that he is determined to share with his fiancee Nicole and infant son Boomer, who were among the sellout crowd of 14,000 at the CenturyLink Centre.

I wanted to go over, and I’ve always given my family my flowers and stuffed animal. I guess that’s his (Boomer’s) first stuffed animal from a race,” said Phelps, who will have Nicole and Boomer join him in Rio despite the Zika threat. “I just wanted to share that with them.”

“I don’t see him every day. I try to, but if I do it for a very short moment, so any time I have with him is always very special.”

While Phelps, who will celebrate his 31st birthday on Thursday, has turned his life around away from the pool, in the water he remains as demanding and critical as ever.

Aside from the result, very little in his 200m swim on Wednesday reported that pleased Phelps, the winning time of 1:54.84 well off his world record mark of 1:51.1.

“Awful,” declared Phelps after his 300m win when asked to assess the last part of his swim. “The piano felt pretty hard.”

“I think with everything that has happened and being able to come back that was probably harder than any swim I have had in my life.”

—Reuters

Giggs ‘set to leave’ Manchester United

LONDON — Ryan Giggs has rejected an offer to stay at Manchester United and is ready to end his association with the club after 29 years, a British newspaper reported on Thursday.

Giggs, who played 963 times for United after joining the club as a 14-year-old, worked as a coach under David Moyes and Louis van Gaal.

The Daily Mail said he has decided against taking up an offer of a reduced role from new manager Jose Mourinho.

“Giggs’ representatives are now in negotiations with United over a pay-off for the final year of his contract,” the Mail said.

But the Daily Mail said he has decided against taking up an offer of a reduced role from new manager Jose Mourinho.

“Giggs has not spoken directly to Mourinho, who starts work at United on Monday. Giggs is likely to be questioned about his future on British television on Thursday when he starts work as an ITV pundit ahead of the Euro 2016 quarter-final between Poland and Portugal.”

—Reuters

Federer plays cameo role to end Willis fairytale

LONDON — Few players have reduced the great Roger Federer to a role as secondary attraction on Wimbledon’s Centre Court but for one hour and 25 minutes on Wednesday he had just a walk-on part in the Marcus Willis fairytale.

The seven-times champion enjoys too much deep-rooted affection at the All England Club to be cast as a real pantomime villain, but for once the cheers were all behind the 25-year-old local hero on the other side of the net.

Federer’s 81st Wimbledon match, of course, ended in victory.

Even the most over-egged Hollywood script could not have had him losing to world number 772 Willis, whose transformation from a 30 pounds ($40.30) an hour tennis coach Wimbledon native has turned the imagination of the sporting world. But the swaggering Swiss was at least made to break sweat under the closed roof before claiming a 6-0, 6-3, 6-4 victory.

Willis had his photo taken with Federer, 34, before the warm-up and could hardly stop grinning.

He even celebrated a practise session, where his friends went through their song-list at court side.

The support he got, the great points he played. In some ways, I enjoyed it as much as I possibly could, but I also had to put my head down and focus hard to get the lead.”

Federer broke for a 5-2 lead in the second and closed it out two games later but was pushed harder in the third as Willis, who survived six qualifying rounds before stunning Lithuania’s Ricardas Berankis in round one, kept his nose in front.

Federer, moving well after missing the French Open with a back injury, looked a touch relieved when he broke at 4-4 in the third set, though, and claimed victory when Willis sliced a backhand long in the next game.

—Reuters