President, First Lady, State Counsellor attend religious ceremony at Eternal Peace Pagoda

A CEREMONY to erect the circular flower pole at the Eternal Peace Pagoda built on Yazathingaha Road near Gangawpan roundabout, Dekkhinathiri Township, Nay Pyi Taw was held yesterday morning. The event was attended by President U Win Myint, First Lady Daw Cho Cho and State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.

Pagoda Ovacariga Sayadaws led by State Ovacariga Pyinman Maha Visutarama Zaygon Monastery Presiding Sayadaw Abbhidhaja Maharattha Guru Dr. Bhaddanta Kavihara graced the event which was attended by Vice President U Myint Swe and wife Daw Khin Thet Htay, Union Ministers, Union Auditor-General, Nay Pyi Taw Council Chairman, Deputy Ministers, Nay Pyi Taw Council members and their spouses, donors and departmental officials.

Before the ceremony, State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi offered Soon (meal), fruits, flowers and water to the Buddha image in the Dhammayone (congregation hall).

During the first part of the ceremony, President U Win Myint, First Lady Daw Cho Cho, State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, Vice President U Myint Swe and wife Daw Khin Thet Htay and guests took the nine precepts from the Ovacariga Pyinman Maha Visutarama Zaygon Monastery Presiding Sayadaw Abbhidhaja Maharattha Guru Dr. Bhaddanta Kavihara.

Next, donors offered paritta flowers, water, thread and sand to the Members of the Sangha. The audience then listened to the Sanghas reciting the parittas after which donors sprinkled the paritta water, spread sand all over the pagoda compound and tied paritta thread around the compound.

Afterwards President U Win Myint and First Lady Daw Cho Cho presented the upper stage of the circular flower pole to be erected on top of the pagoda and offerings to the State Ovacariga Sayadaw Abbhidhaja Maharattha Guru Bhaddanta Kavihara.

Next State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi presented the middle stage of the circular flower pole and offerings to Lewe Pun Myaing Monastery Sayadaw Abbhidhaja Maharattha Guru Bhaddanta Kavihara.

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Shwe Parami Tawya Monastery Sayadaw Ashin Sandadika, President U Win Myint, First Lady Daw Cho Cho and State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi attend the ceremony to erect the circular flower pole atop the Eternal Peace Pagoda in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

Union Ministers, Nay Pyi Taw Council Chairman and donors presented offerings to Sayadaws and Sanghas.

After presenting the offerings, President U Win Myint, First Lady Daw Cho Cho, State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and the audience listened to the sermon and shared merits for donations made.

SEE PAGE-3
Advisory Forum on National Reconciliation and Peace concludes

THE second-day of the Religions for Peace (RfP) Advisory Forum on National Reconciliation and Peace in Myanmar was held at Myanmar International Convention Centre II in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

At the Advisory Forum, Ms. Piyamal Pichaiwongse, Deputy Liaison Officer from International Labour Organisation, U Aung Naing Oo from Joint Monitoring Committee, RfP Myanmar Women of Faith Network Chairman Daw Yin Yin Maw, Nyein Foundation Executive Director Din Syamsuddin of Asian Conference of Religions for Peace discussed under the title “Our Common Future and Our Common Efforts.”

Afterwards Union Minister for Religious Affairs and Culture Thura U Aung Ko, RfP Chairperson U Myint Swe and RfP Hon. President Bishop Gunnar Stalsett delivered closing remarks about Religions for Peace Advisory Forum on National Reconciliation and Peace in Myanmar. —MNA

Anti-Corruption Commission to hold forum, Anti-Corruption Day ceremony in Yangon

MYANMAR Anti-Corruption Commission is conducting a forum titled “take up increased responsibility to prevent corruption” and International Anti-Corruption Day ceremony jointly with Myanmar based UNDP (United Nations Development Programme) and UNODC (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime) at Rose Garden Hotel, Yangon on 6 and 7 December.

Before holding the International Anti-Corruption Day ceremony, a forum titled “take up increased responsibility to prevent corruption” will be held on 6 December.

In the morning session on 6 December economist U Myint, Professor Dr. Aung Tun Thet, U Khin Maung Nyo (Economics) and Dr. Tin Maung Than (Thint Ba Wa) will hold talks and discussions. In the afternoon session on that day, Professor Dr. Aung Tun Thet will moderate a talk circle consisting of representatives from government, business, media and civil service organisations.

The International Anti-Corruption Day to be held on 7 December will see union level government members, members of the governments of states/regions, heads of international organisations, ambassadors of Myanmar based embassies, representatives of non-government organisations active in the anti-corruption field, private business persons, representatives of civil service organisations, officials from all levels of administration and commission office staffs in attendance. —MNA

Rakhine State Chief Minister discusses regional development with people in Gwa Township

RAKHINE State Chief Minister U Nyi Pu together with state ministers, Hluttaw representatives, state and district level departmental officials met with local populace in Dani Village tract, Thit Kauk Village and discussed regional development matters yesterday morning.

The Chief Minister and party met with departmental officials and local populace in Dani Village tract, Thit Kauk Village and explained about the Union Government’s programs, ongoing works and future work processes.

Local populace in Dani Village tract then asked about upgrading the Ma Kyay Ngu-Dani-Thit Kauk road that was completed this year but was damaged during the rainy season to an all-season road, laying of a telephone line into the region, getting electricity through solar power and an all-season road, laying of irrigation water to which state ministers and departmental officials provided sector wise explanations.

Next, state government donated Ks 1.8 million to conduct regional development works and the Chief Minister provided additional explanations to matters raised by the local populace.

In the afternoon, the Chief Minister and party met with local populace in Ma Kyay Ngu sub-middle school. At the meeting locals spoke about the difficulties faced by over 60 local farmers. Over 400 acres of farmlands of these farmers were flooded by Fishery Department to breed salt water fish and paddy but since the project was not successful, the lands were returned to the farmers. However, the farmers didn’t get form-7 and thus were unable to obtain agriculture loans. Local populace also spoke about insufficient meter boxes for electricity and other requirements and the Chief Minister and departmental officials provided sector wise explanations.

Later in the evening Rakhine State Chief Minister and party went to inspect the 100 acres special monsoon rice field at Yahaing model village where all round high technologies were used to cultivate paddy. —Zin Oo (Myanma Alinn) (Translated by Zaw Min)

Chief of Myanmar Police Force attends 87th Interpol Conference

CHIEF of Myanmar Police Force Police Lt-Gen Aung Win Oo and party attended the 87th Interpol Conference from 18 to 21 November in Dubai, United Arab Emirates (UAE).

The 87th Interpol Conference was attended by chiefs and deputy chiefs of police forces from 194 member countries, senior officials from ASEANPOL, EUROPOL, AMERI-CAPOL and AFRIPOL, President, Vice Presidents and General Secretary of the Interpol.

During the conference, overview of crime events in 2018 all over the world, possible type of crimes that can occur in 2019 along with preparations were discussed.

Chief of Myanmar Police Force, Police Lt-Gen Aung Win Oo met with President of the Interpol Mr. Kim Jong Yang, General Secretary of the Interpol Mr. Jurgen Stock, head of Australia Federal Police and head of federal law-enforcement agency and police of the Russian Federation separately and discussed cooperation in security and law enforcement sectors, upgrading and capacity development of the police force and using technologies expertly, exchanging information to combat terrorism and combating drugs. —MNA

U Kyaw Moe Tun concurrently appointed as Ambassador of Switzerland

The President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has appointed U Kyaw Moe Tun, Permanent Representative of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to the United Nations, Geneva, as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar concurrently accredited to the Swiss Confederation. —MNA

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THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR
President, First Lady, State Counsellor attend religious ceremony at the Eternal Peace Pagoda in Nay Pyi Taw

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Next the ceremony of erecting the circular flower pole was continued. President U Win Myint, First Lady Daw Cho Cho, State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, Vice President U Myint Swe and wife Daw Khin Thehtay and the audience carried the upper stage, the middle stage and the original stage of the circular flower pole and walked around the Pagoda clockwise after which they conveyed these to the Kuthotaw pandal.

Afterwards the State Counsellor, the First Lady, wife of the Vice President, Union Ministers, the Auditor General of the Union and their wife and the audience sprinkled scented waters on the upper stage, the middle stage and the original stage of the circular flower posts and sent it up with the ceremonial flying chariot.

At the designated auspicious time, Shwe Parami Tawya Sayadaw Ashin Sandadika, President U Win Myint, Vice President U Myint Swe, Nay Pyi Taw Council Chairman and donors erected the upper stage, the middle stage and the original stage of the circular flower pole to be placed at the top of the pagoda in accordance with the rituals prescribed in the ancient texts.

After the Sayadaw and Sanghas had finished reciting the Aung Mingala Zeya religious verses, the ceremony came to a successful conclusion. —MNA (Translated by Win Ko Ko Aung)

People enjoy charity food on fullmoon day of Tazaungmone in Mandalay

MANDALAY is crowded with Satuditha (charity food) offering on the fullmoon day of Tazaungmone which is a special day for Myanmar Buddhism.

Seasonal and traditional food such as vermicelli soup (Kya Zan Hin Ga), mote lone and Mezali-bud salad are traditionally offered in the streets of the wards and in the Dhammayone (prayer hall). Seasonal festivals are held throughout Myanmar but foods offered are different. “In Yangon, mote-lone-yay-paw (sticky rice balls) is offered in Thingyan Festival, but in Mandalay it is mostly offered in this Tazaungdine Festival,” said U Kyaw Min Lwin, a resident of Mandalay.

The traditions of in Mandalay Tazaungdine Festival are the donation of Mathoe robes to the Mahamuni Pagoda at dawn and then people visit other famous pagodas throughout Mandalay while enjoying Satuditha (charity food) around Mandalay. —Min Htet Aung (Mandalay Sub-printing house) (Translated by Myat Thandar Aung)
Villagers in Bago make watch-towers to protect paddy fields from wild elephants

VILLAGERS from Bago Region have set up watch-towers this year to protect their paddy crops from wild elephants. Elephants have been entering paddy fields from 16 November, said villagers.

“This year, the number of elephants invading the paddy fields has declined compared to last year. The elephants usually come to feed on paddy crops around midnight. Therefore, we have constructed watch-towers to drive them away. We will finish harvesting paddy by the end of this month,” said U Mya Maung from Milaunggone Village in the Kywepoke Village-tract.

“Officials set up electric fences around fields and conducted awareness training to prevent human-elephant conflicts this year. The government is aware that the number of wild elephants in Myanmar has declined. According to official statistics, Myanmar’s total wild elephant population stands at 1,000 at present. Many elephants are being killed in the Ayeyawady Region as well as in regions near the Bago Yoma. Authorities have asked villagers to inform Nay Pyi Taw directly if they see any elephant hunters,” said a member of a wildlife protection group.

Cooperation between villagers residing near Bago Yoma, law enforcement officials, and conservationists has increased recently, resulting in fewer elephant killings, he said. —Than Htet
(Translated by Hay Mar)

Cruise ship Silver Muse to arrive at Thilawa port

SILVER Muse, a cruise ship, is expected to arrive at the Thilawa port, Yangon, on 6 December, according to the Myanmar Port Authority. The ship, carrying about 600 passengers, will be the 15th cruise ship to arrive in Myanmar this year.

Recently, the MS Azamara Quest docked in Myanmar for four days. It was the 14th ship to come to the country this year and the second ship to arrive to the country this season. The MS Azamara Quest from Azamara Club Cruises is operated by US-based Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd. It arrived at Thilawa port on 18 November and left for Phuket, Thailand, on 21 November. A total of 608 passengers and 391 crew members were on board the ship, which came from the Habantota Port in Sri Lanka. Most of the passengers were from the United States and the United Kingdom.

The ship’s passengers visited Bagan, Inle, Thalainyin, Kyauktan, Bago, and downtown Yangon during their stay in Myanmar. The arrival of the ship was arranged by the Myanmar Port Authority under the Ministry of Transport and Communications with the support of the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism. The ship arrived in Myanmar through an arrangement with the Myanmar Voyages Travel Company.—GNLM
(Translated by Hay Mar)

Illegal consignment of timber seized in Pinlebu Township

ACTING on a tip-off, a combined team of officers and staff from the forest department searched the forest near Pinton Village in Pinlebu Township, Sagaing Region, on Wednesday and seized an illegal consignment of timber valued at Ks 2.1 million.

The team recovered 58 Tamalan logs weighing 7 tons, and the forestry department is conducting further investigations to find the owner of the logs, said U Thaw Maw Khan, an officer with the township’s forest department.—Lu Aung (Katha)
(Translated by Hay Mar)

One pilgrim killed, nine injured in road accident in Kalewa

A 63-year-old woman was killed while nine others sustained minor injuries after their vehicle overturned on the Thetkyiin-Phaungyin road near Aungsetkyi Pa-goda to attend a religious ceremony, when the vehicle they were travelling in turned turtle. The vehicle’s driver, identified as Moe Win, alias Hla Myo Aung, 40, was reportedly speeding.

Daw Win Yee of Naungkauk Village died on the spot. Nine other passengers who received minor injuries were taken to the Kalewa People’s Hospital for treatment. Police have filed a case against the driver for reckless driving and are continuing their investigations in the case.—Thet Han (Kalewa)
(Translated by Khin Aung)

Fire destroys two-storey home in Kyaukme, no casualties

A fire reportedly gutted a two-storey home around 1 a.m. on Thursday morning in Mongngaw Town, Kyaukme District, northern Shan State, said police.

The fire reportedly started at the home of Sai Aung Zaw Lynn Naing also known as Naing Naing after some cooking equipment was left unattended. The blaze destroyed house No.130 on Lanthwe-1 in Zay Ward, Mongngaw Town. Residents and firefighters, including members of a reserve fire brigade, managed to put out the fire around 3 a.m with the help of two fire engines. There were no casualties.

The fire caused losses to the tune of approximately Ks2.5 million, according to the Township Fire Services Department.

The police have filed a case against Sai Aung Zaw Lynn Naing for negligence and are continuing their investigations. —Thein Tun Aung
(Translated by Khin Thanda Lynn)
Myanmar’s exports to Hong Kong outperform imports in mini-budget period

By Nyein Nyein

THE value of trade between Myanmar and Hong Kong totalled US$338 million in the mini-budget period (April to September this year), with Myanmar’s exports surpassing imports, according to data released by the Ministry of Commerce.

Myanmar shipped goods worth $230 million to Hong Kong, and imported goods worth $8.5 million.

Myanmar mainly exports precious stones, agricultural products, fishery products, and garments to Hong Kong, while it imports telecommunications equipment and optical goods.


Myanmar showed a keen interest in strengthening economic ties with Hong Kong through its second Myanmar Investment Promotion Seminar held on 16 October 2018, at the Island Shangri-La, Hong Kong.

Hong Kong is one of the world’s leading financial centers and logistics hub, and serves as an international legal and dispute services center for Asia. It has positioned itself to play a prominent role in facilitating trade and investment and economic integration between Hong Kong and ASEAN countries, including Myanmar.

Economic interaction between Myanmar and Hong Kong has been increasing rapidly. Hong Kong has emerged as the third-largest investor in Myanmar, following Singapore and China. Between 1988 and August 2018, 152 enterprises from Hong Kong have brought foreign direct investments of $7.76 billion to Myanmar, according to the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration.

Myanmar has granted visa exemption to Hong Kong and Macau SAR passport holders from 1 October this year to promote tourism. — GNLM

(Translated by Ei Mon)

Chin State plans to give land grants to hotels

By Nyein Nyein

THE Chin State government is planning to give state-owned land to entrepreneurs for operating hotels in the state, said Dr. Min Zaw Oo, the Director of the state’s Office of the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA).

“The state government is planning to give land-use privileges and ownership to entrepreneurs planning to set up hotels in the state. It is hoping the move will attract investors to the sector. Those who are given such grants will be legally required to construct hotels. If they fail to do so, their privileges may be withdrawn,” he said.

Last year, 12 businesses sought permits from the Chin State government to run hotels in the state. “About 12-13 businesses sought permits from the government in November 2017. But their projects ran into some land issues. With encouragement from us, the government has now agreed to lease land to investors. But investors cannot build, operate, and transfer. They will not be able to recover returns on their investment even if the project has a concession period of 50 years,” said Dr. Zaw Min Oo.

Chin State has potential for eco-tourism. The state’s hotel and tourism sector is ranked second by foreign investors planning to invest in the state, he said.

The Chin State government invited hotel developers in the end of 2016 and 12 entrepreneurs have been selected to run hotels in Paletwa, Matupi, Haka, Tiddim, and Falam. However, some entrepreneurs gave up the projects, while some were terminated by the state government. Only eight projects remain.

The government has land for grant, but red-tape has hindered the projects. The Directorate of Hotels and Tourism does not allow businesses who have not obtained land grants to seek hotel permits from the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism, according to the Chin State’s research report on opportunities and challenges for local business development.

Chin State also has more complicated land tenure issues than those in other regions and states, said Dr. Min Zaw Oo. (Translated by Ei Mon)
People celebrate Sāmaṇñaphala Day at pagodas in Yangon

PUBLIC sector exports of manufactured goods declined by $60 million

Myanmar-Indonesia trade up 13 per cent

Pagodas in Nay Pyi Taw crowded on fullmoon day of Tazaungmone
Senior General visits Mingun, offers Kathina robes to monks

COMMANDER-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and wife Daw Kyu Kyu Hla paid homage to Pahtodawgyi in Sagaing Region, Mingun area yesterday morning.

After making donations for all-round repair and maintenance work for the pagoda the Senior General and wife went to Tipitaka Nikaya monastery. The Senior General, wife and party took the nine precepts from Shwe Yatu Tipitakadara Dhammabhandagarika Bhaddanta Vamthapala Linkara Sayadaw and listened to the recitation of the parittas.

Next the Senior General and wife offered Kathina robe and offerings to the Sayadaw while high-ranking Tatmadaw officers and the regional commander offered offerings to the Sanghas.

 Afterwards the Senior General, wife and guests listened to the sermon of the Sayadaw, shared merit for donations made and offered “soon” (day meal) to the Sanghas. From there the Senior General and party went to Dhamma Dana monastery, paid homage and offered offerings to Sayadaw Tipitakadara Dhammabhandagarika Bhaddanta Gandamala Linkara.

Later the Senior General and wife donated cash which was accepted by a member of the trustee who in return presented a photo of the Mingun Tipitaka Sayadaw and certificate of appreciation. At the Mingun Tipitaka centenary monastery they observed the images of the Mingun Tipitaka Sayadaw and the records of religious works shown.

The Senior General and party also went to the Mingun Buddhist home for the aged and greeted the senior citizens there and donated cash to the chairman of the home for the aged.

Following this, the Senior General and party visited the Mingun Bell, according to the news released by the Office of the Tatmadaw Commander-in-Chief. —MNA

Mandalay enjoys festivities in Tazaungdine Festival

PAGODAS in the Mandalay region follow different traditions when celebrating the Tazaungdine Festival. At the Shwe Saw Lu Pagoda in Amarapura Township, the Buddha Pujaniya Festival, 1,500 lamps are floated in the Dottawadi River, barges are paraded around the river, and boat races are held.

The Shin Mar Le Pagoda, which is located at the north entrance of the Mahamuni Pagoda, was built during the reign of Min Shin Saw. Here, devotees offer only lotus flowers during the festival.

The pagoda festival starts from the evening of the 14th waxing day of the Tazaungmone. During the festival, several kinds of lotus such as white lotus, red lotus, and brown lotus are offered.

Milk and food are offered to Buddha at the dawn of the Full Moon Day. “The festival is held with the belief that the pagoda festival will thrive as long as the Buddhist Era exists,” said a member of the Festival’s Supervisory Team.

The Shin Mar Le Pagoda Festival coincides with donations of Mathoe robes at the Mahamuni Pagoda and the pagoda is especially crowded with devotees during this time. — MNA

(Translated by Myat Thandar Aung)

Fire breaks out in Ayadaw Township

A FIRE caused by an electric short circuit broke out at Damathinkha Monastery in Kantha Village, Ayadaw Township, Monywa District in Sagaing Region at 7 pm on 21 November.

U San Lwin, 45, had connected a car battery and an inverter to power the lighting for the Buddha image at the monastery. The electric wire overheated and resulted in a wire shock that caused the fire.

The fire was put under control by the help of the police force from Ayadaw Myoma Police Station and Township fire fighters at 8 pm.

Action is being taken against U San Lwin under Penal Code 285 for negligence. —GNLM (Translated by JT)

Landmine blast injures one in Phakhant

A WOMAN was injured when an old landmine blasted on 21 November near Sabaw Village in Phakhant Township, Kachin State, according to police source.

Daw Ma Ywe Si, 54, and another woman were returning to Sabaw Village after fishing in Kyin Haung Lake at the precious gems mining company, located two miles east of their village, when she stepped on an old landmine and triggered an explosion.

Daw Ma Ywe Si sustained minor injuries and is receiving medical treatment at a hospital. —GNLM

(Translated by JT)
Myanma ten Traditional Arts and Crafts need to be cherished and preserved

By Zeyar Tun (Gyobingpauk)

In an anecdote on “Education can help people overcome prejudice and discrimination. It is only through education that we can promote a culture of peace that ensures mutual respect,” she added. In an anecdote on diversity of faiths, when people of different views approached him, the Buddha remarked, “Let us set aside our differences, let us give attention to what we can agree on and let us put the common core which we agree upon into practice.”

Due to terrorism, our fundamental right “to live in safety and in peace” is being increasingly challenged in ways we have never seen before. Why quarrel?” This wise counsel still retains its value today.

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Over the years, some grey shadows hover over the Myanma ten traditional arts and crafts hinting the possible extinction in the foreseeable future.

Myanmar ten Traditional Arts and Crafts

Over the years, some grey shadows hover over the Myanma ten traditional arts and crafts hinting the possible extinction in the foreseeable future. In Gyo Bin Township of Tharrawaddy District, some crafts of the categories such as ‘ho-dy’ and ‘ba-pa’, ‘ho-ma’ and ‘ho-bu’, and ‘ba-dein’ have been reported to be extinct. The list continues. As the beautiful pieces are crafted out of natural materials of the country, most of the tourists across the globe purchase with pure passions while they visit many places in Myanmar, yet these beautiful works, the income source creating job opportunities for the locals, is declining. The art of making wooden utensils such as umbrella, table legs, and the legs of the bed and rotary seats and raintrees of stairs is also declining. The art of making wooden utensils such as umbrella, table legs, and the legs of the bed and rotary seats and raintrees of stairs is also declining.

Due to terrorism, our fundamental right “to live in safety and in peace” is being increasingly challenged in ways we have never seen before. Why quarrel?” This wise counsel still retains its value today.

Anxiety can only be eradicated by its opposite which is pure love, patience, and forgiveness. Anxiety cannot be eradicated by anxiety. Violence begets violence. Only through the non-violence can it be ceased. Hatred begots hatred. It can only be conquered through pure love. This is the eternal law.

Let’s set aside our differences, let’s move towards our goal of peace and national reconciliation which can guarantee a future where we can be assured of a worthwhile existence and a world that we can leave to coming generations with confidence and hope.

CONFLICTS and tragedies are playing out almost everywhere in the world today. There is an urgent for us to identify the common problems so we can reach the right solutions and help ensure peace and stability in the world.

Extremists across the world are using religion to incite violence and justify acts of terrorism.

Now is the time for us to reaffirm our common commitment to end the scourge of extremism and terrorism.

Due to terrorism, our fundamental right “to live in safety and in peace” is being increasingly challenged in ways we have never seen before.

Why quarrel?” This wise counsel still retains its value today.
Khashoggi murder: Trump ignores US leverage over Riyadh

Riyadh—US President Donald Trump has doubled down on his partnership with Saudi Arabia, calling it an indispensable ally after a journalist’s grisly murder, but critics say his position ignores Washington’s enormous leverage over Riyadh. Trump on Tuesday gave Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman a pass on Jamal Khashoggi’s murder, glossing over the Central Intelligence Agency’s reported conclusion that the kingdom’s de facto ruler had authorised the killing.

“Maybe he did and maybe he didn’t!” Trump said, implying Prince Mohammed’s culpability in Khashoggi’s killing in the Saudi consulate in Istanbul on 2 October hardly matters. What does, he asserted, was the Gulf kingdom’s role as a buttress against rival Iran, its multi-billion dollar investments in the US — including several arms deals — and its perceived stranglehold on global oil prices. Trump was widely pilloried for what critics called his mercantile priorities that made him appear more like a lobbyist for the oil-rich kingdom, raising the prospect of strong congressional action against Saudi Arabia. But Trump’s firm backing of the kingdom in the face of global outrage reinforced what officials in Riyadh often say: the US-Saudi relationship is too big to fail.

“Structural ties — intelligence, counterterrorism cooperation and energy — really are too big not only to fail but to place at risk,” said Hussein Ibish, a scholar at the Arab Gulf States Institute in Washington. “But transactional aspects of the relationship — weapons sales, investments that are valued by Trump — shouldn’t become an excuse to make a Faustian pact and turn a blind eye to justice.”

Substantial leverage

Trump’s stance ignores what the Washington-based Center for International Policy says is America’s “substantial leverage over Saudi behaviour”. “The Saudis need US weapons and equipment more than we need to sell them,” former US Middle East negotiator Aaron David Miller wrote for CNN’s website. “It would be very difficult and expensive for the Saudis to make good on their periodic threats to ‘buy foreign’ if they can’t get what they want from the United States.” Experts say Riyadh is more susceptible to American pressure than Trump asserts, as its economy is intertwined with that of the US. —AFP

Death toll in C. Africa clashes rises to 60: UN

BANGUI (Central African Republic)—The death toll has risen to at least 60 from clashes last week between Christian and Muslim-dominated militias in a restive Central African Republic town, an internal UN report said Wednesday. The bloodshed was sparked in the central town of Alindao on 15 November between Christian militiamen, known as anti-Balaka, and the Union for Peace in CAR (UPC) Muslim militia.

Other sources reported an even higher death toll on Wednesday but AFP could not confirm the information. The number of dead had previously been reported as 48, including two priests, in the latest surge of sectarian violence in the country.

Alindao’s church, a convent and a camp for displaced people were torched. Pictures seen by AFP showed burnt bodies in the fire. The town lies on a critical route traversing the south and east of the country and is in the heart of a region with numerous gold and diamond mines that have helped fuel conflict.

People affected by the fighting have fled to the south of the city, close to the village of Datoke, according to the UN report. It said a local NGO premises had been “looted”. “We are back to square one,” Najat Rochdi, coordinator of the UN Humanitarian Affairs Office in the Central African Republic (OCHA), said in a statement. More than 50,000 people have been affected by the violence in Alindao and Batangafo to the north, OCHA said. Three days of national mourning have been declared in the country.

One of the world’s poorest nations despite a rich supply of diamonds and uranium, the CAR has struggled to recover from a 2013 civil war that erupted when President Francois Bozize, a Christian, was overthrown by mainly Muslim Seleka rebels.

In response, Christians, who account for about 40 percent of the population, organised vigilante units dubbed “anti-Balaka” in reference to a local machete.

UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres on Saturday said the latest attack was attributed to the UPC militia, which has its roots in the Seleka group. However, the UPC accused “both Muslim and Christian bandits” of being behind the incident. —AFP

Afghan Taliban not serious about peace, says govt chief

PARIS—The Taliban in Afghanistan have not yet shown any sign they are serious about ending their 17-year insurgency despite US efforts to push a fresh peace process, the country’s de facto prime minister told AFP. Abdullah Abdullah, who serves as “chief executive” of the unity government in Kabul, struck a far more sceptical tone about the prospects of a deal than his political rival, President Ashraf Ghani, and his Western counterparts. Ghani said earlier this month it was “not a question of if, but when” an agreement would be reached with the Taliban, while the US envoy to the country even raised the possibility of a breakthrough before presidential elections in April.

“Recently there are renewed efforts in terms of the international community and especially the US,” Abdullah told AFP during a wide-ranging interview in Paris that also covered his own political ambitions. “We are not judging it too prematurely, but I would say that our experience as of now has been that they (the Taliban) have not shown any intention to get seriously engaged in the peace negotiations,” he added. The comment on Wednesday came after the latest atrocity targeting civilians in Kabul when a bomber killed 55 people at a banquet hall at a ceremony to mark the birthday of the Prophet Mohammed. Abdullah, a political veteran of the fight against Soviet forces in the 1980s and Taliban rule in the 90s, called it “beyond comprehension.” Beleaguered Afghan security forces are also suffering an unprecedented level of casualties across the country where the Taliban and the Islamic State group are stepping up attacks.

US President Donald Trump has given Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman a pass on Jamal Khashoggi’s murder. PHOTO: AFP

Abdullah Abdullah downplayed any suggestion of a pre-election breakthrough with the Taliban. PHOTO: AFP

Presidential candidate?

Returning to Kabul on Thursday after a three-day trip to France, Abdullah said he expected to be briefed fully about the latest round of talks between US envoy Zalmay Khalilzad and the Taliban, which are believed to have taken place in Qatar last week.

Whatever the outcome, he argued that Afghanistan should hold its presidential election as scheduled next April despite a recent upsurge in violence and suggestions from some that it should be delayed. “My idea is to stick to the timing, make it work, because it’s part of the system and legitimacy of the system depends on the elections,” he said. “At the same time, continue the efforts on peace with full vigour.”

He downplayed any suggestion of a pre-election breakthrough with the Taliban. “It will be very surprising if that happens, but should it happen ... that would be welcomed by the people of Afghanistan,” he added. Abdullah has kept up suspense about his own political ambitions after twice running for president in 2009 and 2014 in campaigns that ended bitterly amid accusations of fraud. After being beaten in 2014 by Ghani, Abdullah agreed to become prime minister of the unity government in a US-brokered deal — but the rivalry between the two men continues. “I will actively be involved in negotiations,” he added. The comment on Wednesday came after the latest atrocity targeting civilians in Kabul when a bomber killed 55 people at a banquet hall at a ceremony to mark the birthday of the Prophet Mohammed. Abdullah, a political veteran of the fight against Soviet forces in the 1980s and Taliban rule in the 90s, called it “beyond comprehension.” Beleaguered Afghan security forces are also suffering an unprecedented level of casualties across the country where the Taliban and the Islamic State group are stepping up attacks.

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President?

Abdullah Abdullah downplayed any suggestion of a pre-election breakthrough with the Taliban. PHOTO: AFP
WASHINGTON (United States)—US troops stationed on the border with Mexico ahead of the expected arrival of a Central American migrant caravan can intervene to quell violence but will be armed only with batons, Defense Minister Jim Mattis said on Wednesday.

The White House has given almost 5,800 troops posted along the frontier guidance that they can come to the aid of any Customs and Border Protection agents who come under attack, Mattis told reporters.

But even if migrants try to force their way through border posts, they will likely be met by military police with shields and batons, with “no armed element going in,” he added.

In all, some 8,000 migrants are currently crossing Mexico in several caravans, according to the Mexican interior ministry. They are mostly fleeing poverty and unrest in Central America’s “Northern Triangle” – El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras, where brutal gang violence has fueled some of the highest murder rates in the world.

President Donald Trump ordered troops to the border in a move critics decried as a costly political stunt to galvanize supporters ahead of tough midterm elections earlier this month.

Trump declared the exodus a “national emergency” and an “invasion” – suggesting US troops could shoot migrants if they throw stones at the US border – but he has since been less vocal on the issue.

The US military is not allowed in almost any case to get involved in domestic law enforcement and the border mission has put the supposedly non-political military in an uncomfortable spotlight.

Mattis said he had taken no decision on the duration of the deployment, initially expected until 15 December, because that would depend on how the mission developed, he said.

The estimated cost is currently $72 million but “I am confident that number will go up,” the Pentagon chief said. — AFP

Japan to pave way for raising working age limit to 70

TOKYO – The Japanese government wants to raise the working age limit to 70 from the current 65 as part of efforts to promote economic growth in the fast-graying country, a draft plan compiled by a government panel showed Thursday. The draft mid-term report by the committee responsible for coming up with the government’s growth strategy also calls for making big firms disclose the ratio of different age groups among employees, a move aimed at promoting mid-career employment among companies, which tend to heavily recruit people freshly out of school. — Kyodo News

6 killed in oil tank truck fire in southern Viet Nam

HANOI—A petrol tank truck fire broke out Thursday morning in Viet Nam’s southern Binh Phuoc province, leaving at least six people, including a family of four, killed and dozens of others injured, local media reported. The fire broke out after the truck crashed into a stone-carrying three-wheeled vehicle in Chon Thanh district, about 453 km northeast of Bhopal, the capital city of Madhya Pradesh, “This morning a tourist bus collided with a school van here killing seven children and van driver on spot,” a police official said. The victims in the school van were aged between seven and 14 years. —Xinhua
Dead sperm whale in Indonesia found with 6 kg of plastic in stomach

Jakarta (Indonesia) — A sperm whale has been found dead in Indonesia with 115 plastic cups and 25 plastic bags in its stomach, raising concern among environmentalists and throwing the spotlight on the country’s rubbish problem.

The items were part of nearly six kilograms (13 pounds) of plastic waste discovered in the 9.5-metre (31-foot) carcass when it washed ashore in Wakatobi National Park, in South-east Sulawesi province, on Monday.

Other debris included flip flops and ripped tarpaulins, the head of Wakatobi tourism, La Ode Saleh Hanan, told AFP on Wednesday.

Conservation group WWF Indonesia said on social media its staff found four plastic bottles and 3.26 kilograms of raffia rope, as well as the plastic bags and cups.

The exact cause of the whale’s death is not yet known but there are signs that “plastic waste might have triggered it”, WWF Indonesia marine species conservation coordinator Dwi Suprapti told AFP.

Wakatobi district, a picturesque collection of four main islands surrounded by a marine reserve, has urged Indonesia’s central government to help tackle the problem of marine debris.

Indonesia is the world’s second biggest contributor to marine debris after China.

“India is the world’s fastest growing major economy and offers more opportunity for Australian business over the next twenty years than any other single market,” Morrison said in a media release on Thursday. “Our work will focus on greater economic engagement targeting ten Indian states and ten key sectors, while providing practical support for Australian businesses entering or expanding operations in India,” Australian Trade Minister Simon Birmingham said.

The meeting coincided with Morrison confirming he would adopt recommendations in a report written by Peter Varghese, the former secretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), on cementing Australia-India trade ties. —Xinhua

Australia, India to promote bilateral economic relationship

Canberra — Australia and India have committed to boosting their economic ties following a meeting between leaders of the two nations. Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison on Thursday met with Indian President Ram Nath Kovind, the first Indian president attending the opening of the Australian chapter of the Confederation of Indian Industry.

“India is the world’s fastest growing major economy and offers more opportunity for Australian business over the next twenty years than any other single market,” Morrison said in a media release on Thursday. “Our work will focus on greater economic engagement targeting ten Indian states and ten key sectors, while providing practical support for Australian businesses entering or expanding operations in India,” Australian Trade Minister Simon Birmingham said.

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INVITATION FOR PRICE QUOTATIONS

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar has received financing from the International Development Association (IDA) towards the cost of the National Community Driven Development Project (NCDDP). The IDA N° of the financing agreement is No H814MM. The Department of Rural Development (DRD) of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation, in its role as implementing agency of the NCDDP, intends to apply a portion of the proceeds of this financing towards eligible payments under the Purchase Order/Contract G-92.1 for the supply of Pick-Up Double Cab Vehicles. DRD now invites eligible suppliers to express their interest in supplying the following items:

Reference Number: G 92.1 – Pick-Up Double Cab Vehicles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference No.</th>
<th>Lot No.</th>
<th>Item No.</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>G 92.1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Pick – Up Double Cab Vehicles</td>
<td>9 vehicles</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Supply to: Department of Rural Development, Office No.(36), Nay Pyi Taw

Expressions of Interest must be submitted in a written form to the email address below and clearly indicate the reference number above. Eligible suppliers having expressed interest will receive an INVITATION TO QUOTE (ITQ).

Sealed Quotations will be submitted to the address below at the latest at the dead line of Wednesday 19 December 2018 at 10:00 am Myanmar time, after which no Quotations will be accepted.

The goods will be contracted in 1 (one) contract. Suppliers will be selected following the Shopping Method as per the “Guidelines for Procurement of Goods, Works and non-Consulting Services under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits & Grants by World Bank Borrowers” dated January 2011.

Please submit your Expression of Interest for receiving the Invitation to Quote (ITQ) to: Ms. Nyo Nyo Win, Deputy Director General, Department of Rural Development, Office No.(36), Nay Pyi Taw. For detailed information please contact U Kyaw Swa Aung, Director, Procurement and Logistic Section, Mobile phone 0943434333 or office phone 067409071/ Email: procurement@ncddmyanmar.org Please indicate your e-mail address as only electronic copies of the ITQ will be send. For more information on the NCDD Project please also visit Website: www.cdd.drmyanmar.org.
Researchers measure carbon footprint of Canada hydroelectric dams

HAVRE-SAINT-PIERRE (Canada)—Squatting on spongy soil, a climate scientist lays a small cone-shaped device to “measure the breathing” of a peat bog in the northern part of Canada’s Quebec province. Michelle Garneau, a university researcher and a member of the UN’s Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), is collecting the first data on areas flooded to build the new Romaine hydroelectric dam in a bid to assess the project’s impact on the region. While renewable hydroelectricity itself is considered to be one of the cleanest sources of energy on the planet, there is currently no proven model for calculating the greenhouse gas emissions released by flooding huge areas behind new dams.

With construction of four new dams on the Romaine River in northern Quebec nearly complete, researchers saw an opportunity to try out new techniques to measure its carbon footprint. The team led by Garneau zeroed in on a swamp—a mere stone’s throw from the raging river in the wilds of Canada’s boreal forest, an area accessible only by helicopter. After landing, she takes several boxes out of the belly of the aircraft and places them next to some solar panels and a portable weather station that she and her students installed over this summer. The devices are expected to produce sample data within two years.

“Every 20 minutes, the cone will capture and measure the breathing of the soil,” she explains, placing a transparent device that resembles a handbell on the lichen, as wild geese honk and cackle overhead. She takes a few steps further on the unstable ground and places a box that connects to sensors already sunk into the ground.

“This automated device to measure the photosynthetic activity records the CO2 and methane emissions every three minutes, for hours,” the researcher says. Carbon dioxide (CO2) and methane emissions are the main sources of global warming. Another team is measuring carbon dioxide emissions from artificial lakes created by flooding lands behind dams, for eventual comparison.—AFP

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**CLAIM’S DAY NOTICE**

MV UNI ANGEL VOY. NO. (0268-483 W/E)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV UNI ANGEL VOY. NO. (0268-483 W/E) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 23-11-2018 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: MS EVERGREEN SHIPPING LINES**

Phone No: 2301185

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**CLAIM’S DAY NOTICE**

MV KUO TAI VOY. NO. (114 N/S)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV KUO TAI VOY. NO. (114 N/S) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 23-11-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of MLP 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: MS SILKAGO LOGISTICS PTE LTD**

Phone No: 2301185

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**PESTICIDES DISTRIBUTOR CHANGING**

We, LIMIN CHEMICAL CO., LTD. would like to change the Distributor of the following products, which registered under Pesticide Registration No Trade Name Active Ingredient Registration No. 1 DOUBLEZOLE 300 EC Difenconazole 150 g/L + Propiconazole 150 g/L EC P2017-4022 Experimental 2 SUPERADI 325 SC Azoxystrobin 200g/L + Difenconazole 125 g/L SC P2017-4023 Provisional 3 FARMERZIM 50 SC Carbendazim 50% SC P2017-4024 Provisional 4 LINKONIL 75 WP Chlorothalonil 75% WP P2017-4025 Provisional 5 FARMERCYNIL 25 WP Cymoxanil 25% WP P2017-4026 Provisional 6 MANCYNIL 72 WP Mancozeb 64% + Difenconazole 12.5 g/L SC P2017-4027 Provisional 7 FARMERFOSE 80 WP Fosetyl-Aluminium 64% + Metalaxyl 8% WP P2017-4028 Provisional 8 FARMROUND 41 SL Glyphosate 41% SL P2017-4029 Provisional 9 FARMERIMID 10 WP Imidacloprid 10% WP P2017-4030 Provisional 10 MANTAXIL 72 WP Mancozeb 64% + Metalaxyl 8% WP P2017-4031 Provisional 11 FARMERZEZ 80 WP Mancozeb 80% WP P2017-4032 Provisional 12 FARMERTAI 25 WP Metalaxyl 25% WP P2017-4033 Provisional 13 SUPERCOL 70 WP Propineb 70% WP P2017-4034 Provisional

**TRADEMARK CAUTION**

Kanbawza Bank Limited, a company incorporated and existing under the laws of Myanmar, and having its registered office at 615/1, Paya Road, Ward (2), Kamayut Township, Yangon, The Republic of the Union of Myanmar, hereby declares that the Company is the Owner and Sole proprietor of the following Trademarks:

**MYANMAR PORT AUTHORITY**

**AGENT FOR: MS SILKAGO LOGISTICS PTE LTD**

Phone No: 2301185

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**ADDRESS:**

CLOSE FRIEND CO., LTD

Add No.827/A, Thu Mingalar Road, South Okkalapa Township, Yangon, Myanmar

Tel: 01 8500424, 09 421032105, 0943135303, 09 401534797

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**PHOTO:** AFP

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**SPECIAL SECTION**

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

23 NOVEMBER 2018

ENVIROMENT

13
Looted Byzantine mosaic goes on display at Cyprus museum

NICOSIA—A centuries-old mosaic of Saint Mark has gone on display at a Cyprus museum that now plans to reunite it with the 11 other apostles decades after it was looted in the island’s Turkish-held north. The mosaic dating back more than 1,600 years was returned to the Mediterranean island this week after being tracked down by a Dutchman dubbed the “Indiana Jones of the art world.”

The director of the Byzantine Museum in Nicosia, Ioannis Eliades, was delighted to see it on display Wednesday next to the mosaic of Saint Andrew which was also repatriated this year.

“We’re thrilled about it because it arrived three days ago,” Eliades told AFP. “It’s the last one of the 12 pieces that we have here in the museum.”

The mosaic was looted from the church of Panayia Kanakaria in northern Cyprus following the Turkish invasion in 1974. According to the antiquities department, it was “violently detached and stolen from the church, between 1977-78 by the Turkish looter and art dealer Aydin Dilmen” along with other mosaics. Cyprus has been divided since 1974 when Turkey invaded and seized its northern third in response to an Athens-engineered coup to unite the island with Greece. Visitors to the museum were excited to see the apostles on show.

“It think it is an exceptional and rare discovery, for this mosaic and others,” said Elpis Skardasi, a retired teacher from Athens.

“It’s the dream of all Cypriots and Greeks to see their heritage return to them,” the 77-year-old told AFP. Dutch art investigator Arthur Brand tracked down the mosaic in Monaco in the possession of a British family who he said had bought it “in good faith more than four decades ago”.

It was handed over to the antiquities department and the Church of Cyprus during a private ceremony in The Hague last week and was returned to the island on Monday.

“We are thrilled that he managed to find the place that it was hidden,” said Eliades.

“We are thankful also to the family who... gave it back without asking for money or making problems and having any legal action taking years.”

Eliades said the museum plans to restore the two newly returned mosaics and to put them on a reconstructed apse of the Panayia Kanakaria church by May next year.

Eventually, he hopes Cyprus will be reunited and all of the recovered artefacts will be returned to the churches they originally came from in the north of the island.—AFP

In Picture
Highlight of Arab Fashion Week in Dubai

A model displays a creation during the Arab Fashion Week in Dubai, the United Arab Emirates, on 21 November 2018. The Arab Fashion Week is held in Dubai from 21 to 28 November. PHOTO: XINHUA

After years of silence, music fills streets of Iraq’s Mosul

MOSUL (Iraq)—For centuries, it was a magnet for artists across the region and churned out Iraq’s best musicians—but recent years saw Mosul suffer a devastating musical purge.

For three years until last summer, the sprawling northern city was under the brutal rule of the Islamic State group.

In imposing a city-wide ban on playing or even listening to music, the jihadists smashed and torchd instruments. “It was impossible to bring my instrument with me whenever I left the house,” said city resident Fadel al-Badri, who hid his precious violin from the rampaging fighters.

Foreshadowing IS’ repression, the 2000s saw Al-Qaeda and other groups impose an ultra-conservative interpretation of Islam in several districts of the city. But with Mosul freed from the grip of IS in July 2017, Iraq’s second city is embarking on a musical comeback.

“After the liberation, songs are back where they truly belong in Mosul,” said Badri, welcoming the return of evening celebrations and festivals. The 45-year-old violinist now has the pleasure of playing in public once more to an audience that claps hands and sings along to traditional local tunes.

After IS, ‘we sing’

Mosul has a rich musical history. It is the home city of Zeyyab, a musician who introduced the oud—the oriental lute popular across the Arab world—to Europe in the 9th century. One of its more recent musical prodigies is Kazem al-Saher, the Iraqi crooner-turned-talent judge known around the region. The city even has its own special genre of Arabic ballads, recognised across Iraq and beyond.—AFP

History lied about Vincent Van Gogh, says Willem Dafoe

LONDON—Actor Willem Dafoe, who plays acclaimed artist Vincent van Gogh in “At Eternity’s Gate”, says the character came across a more hopeful person, contrary to what has been written about him in the history.

The 63-year-old actor portrays the 19th century Dutch Post-Impressionist painter in the Julian Schnabel’s feature and like most of the people, he also considered the artist a “tortured soul”. “He felt like he was painting in a new way. One of the things that changed for me in making this movie was the joyous part of him that we don’t see. He’s usually depicted as the poster boy for the tortured artists, but I would definitely say he’s a hopeful character. History lies!” he told The Guardian in an interview.

The “Florida Project” actor believes flexibility is an essentiality for an artist to explore different realms of art.

“Flexibility is important for an actor. Otherwise, corruption sets in. You get stuck in certain patterns, and a certain kind of performing language that keeps you from a kind of sense of discovery or danger or mystery,” he added.—PTI
Probiotics no help to kids with stomach flu: studies

TAMPA (United States) — Probiotics are a multibillion dollar international industry, but new research Wednesday showed they don’t help children recover from stomach flu any better than a placebo.

The results of two randomized clinical trials—which came to the same conclusions—were published in the New England Journal of Medicine.

“Probiotics had no effect on the children,” said co-author Philip Tarr, a professor of pediatrics at Washington University in St. Louis, adding that the findings were “not ambiguous.” “Parents are better off saving their money and using it to buy more fresh fruits and vegetables for their children.” Probiotics are surging in popularity, with the global market predicted to expand from $37 billion in 2015 to $64 billion by 2023, according to the report.

Five of 12 leading medical groups worldwide currently endorse their use, as a way to promote gut health by restoring intestinal flora, building up so-called “good bacteria” in children’s bodies. Those recommending probiotics include the European Society for Pediatric Gastroenterology Hepatology and Nutrition, the Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Center and the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners. For one study in the United States, researchers tested a popular brand of probiotic, sold under the name Culturelle.

A total of 971 children between three months and four years old were enrolled in the study. All sought emergency room care for gastroenteritis, an intestinal condition that can be caused by a virus or a bacterial infection—with symptoms including vomiting and diarrhea.

The children were randomly assigned to either receive a five-day course of a placebo or Culturelle, which contains the bacterium Lactobacillus rhamnosus GG. A pack of 30, promoted as a “number one pediatrician-recommended daily probiotic,” costs around $20. But researchers found that kids who took the probiotic showed no difference in the length of illness or the severity of symptoms, compared to kids given a sugar pill.

A ‘clear message’

The second study, carried out in Canada, used a product called Lacidofil Strong, containing Lactobacillus rhamnosus GG01 and L. helveticus R0052. More than 800 children were randomized to receive either a five-day course or a placebo. The difference was so slight, researchers said it was not statistically significant. “Moderate-to-severe gastroenteritis within 14 days after enrollment occurred in 108 of 414 participants (26.1 per cent) who were assigned to probiotics and 102 of 413 participants (24.7 per cent) who were assigned to placebo,” said the report.

The group that received probiotics did not experience less vomiting or diarrhea, shorter length of illness, fewer follow-up visits to doctors or any fewer complications. The latest findings are in line with at least one smaller, earlier study, although most studies to date have been generally favorable to probiotics.

Co-author Stephen Freedman, pediatric emergency medicine physician with Alberta Health Services, said that is because most of these studies have been small and industry-funded. —AFP

Silent plane with no moving parts makes ‘historic’ flight

PARIS (France) — The blue glowing jets of science fiction spacecraft came a step closer to reality on Wednesday as US physicists unveiled the world’s first solid-state aeroplane powered in flight by supercharged air molecules.

More than a century on from the Wright brothers’ first artificial flight, scientists hailed the “historic” test of the new technology, which could potentially slash greenhouse-gas emissions from aviation. Ever since Orville and Wilbur Wright’s momentous glide in the winter of 1903, aircraft have been driven by propellers or jets that must burn fuel to create the thrust and lift needed for sustained flight.

A team of experts from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology managed to unlock a process known as electroaerodynamics, previously never seen as a plausible way to power an aircraft. They were able to fly the new plane, with a wingspan of five metres (16 feet), a distance of 55 metres at a speed of 4.8 metres-per-second. That’s hardly supersonic, but the implications of this unprecedented mode of flight could be stratospheric.

“The future of flight shouldn’t be things like propellers and turbines,” said Steven Barrett, who designed the prototype. “It should be more like what you see in Star Trek with a kind of blue glow and something that silently glides through the air.”

At first glance, the plane itself doesn’t look light-years away from other renewable aircraft, such as the Solar Impact II craft that in 2015-16 used energy from the Sun to fly around the world.

Unlike Solar Impact, Barrett’s plane doesn’t have any propellers or solar panels— or any moveable parts whatsoever.

Instead of engines, it is powered by a system comprising two main sections.

At the front of the plane sit a series of parallel electrodes made up of lightweight wires that produce an enormous voltage—20,000—supercharging the air around it and splitting away negatively charged nitrogen molecules known as ions. —AFP

NASA’s Mars lander to touch down in five days

LOS ANGELES— NASA’s InSight spacecraft is scheduled to touch down on Mars next Monday, after a six-month, 300 million mile (480 million kilometers) journey.

Launched on May 5, InSight marks NASA’s first Mars landing since the Curiosity rover in 2012 and the first dedicated to exploring underground.

The touchdown is scheduled at approximately 3 p.m. EST on November 26, according to NASA. “InSight is going to Mars to study the deep interior of Mars to understand how the land is formed,” Bruce Banerdt, InSight principal investigator, told a press briefing on Wednesday.

“Each planet is different. Mercury has a sun-baked surface. Mars is pretty cold today. Earth is a nice place to take a vacation. We really like to know why one planet goes one way, and another planet goes another way,” he said.

“They are the sum of the details of the structure that formed very early in the planet history,” Banerdt added.

After touching down, NASA’s InSight will spread its solar panels, unfold a robotic arm, and stay put. Unlike the space agency’s rovers, InSight is a lander designed to study an entire planet from just one spot.

It will detect geophysical signals deep below the Martian surface, including marsquakes and heat. Scientists will also be able to track radio signals from the stationary spacecraft, which vary based on the wobble in Mars’ rotation, according to NASA.

InSight is part of NASA’s Discovery Program, managed by the agency’s Marshall Space Flight Center in Huntsville, Alabama. Lockheed Martin Space in Denver built the InSight spacecraft, including its cruise stage and lander, and supports spacecraft operations for the mission.

A number of European partners, including France’s Centre National d’Etudes Spatiales and the German Aerospace Center, are supporting the InSight mission. —Xinhua
Myanmar teams placed in Groups F, G of AFC Cup 2019

Myanmar's Yangon United and Shan United were placed in Groups F and G during the drawing ceremony of the 2019 AFC Cup held yesterday at the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) House in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Besides Yangon United, teams participating in Group F include Hanoi FC from Vietnam, Tampines Rovers FC from Singapore, and Nagaworld from Cambodia. Likewise, Shan United will compete together with Viet Nam Club Becamex Binh Duong, a club from the Philippines Cere Negros or Davao Aguilas, and the champion or third place team from the Indonesian club, according to yesterday's draw.

Yangon has advanced to the zonal semi-final stage once out of six times in the AFC Cup. The group stage matches will begin 26 February 2018 and will be played on a home-and-away basis.—Lynn Thit(Tgi)

Myanmar team heads for AFF Suzuki Cup decisive match

Myanmar's national football team left for Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, yesterday to play a decisive group match for the AFF Suzuki Cup 2019.

The match, which takes place Saturday night, is an important one for Myanmar. The country's team need to score at least a draw against Malaysia to advance to the next stage of the Suzuki Cup.

A total of 23 players, along with nine member's from the football association, including coaches, left for Malaysia yesterday.

In the Group A standing table, Myanmar is in the third place with 7 points, followed by Viet Nam, also with 7 points, but with goal differences from Myanmar. Malaysia is in the third place with 6 points.

In the earlier matches in the Group A, Myanmar beat Cambodia 4-1, Laos 3-1, and tied with Viet Nam 0-0. Meanwhile, Malaysia beat Cambodia 1-0, Laos 3-1, and lost to Viet Nam 0-2.—Nyi Myat Thawdar

Translating by Kyaw Zin Lin

Daniels Bracciiali banned for life over tennis match-fixing

LONDON — Daniele Bracciiali has been banned from tennis for life and fined $250,000 for match-fixing offences, the Tennis Integrity Unit announced on Wednesday.

Bracciiali reached a career-best 27 and a career-best 40 in doubles.

The 40-year-old Italian, ranked 95 in doubles, was found guilty of match-fixing and associated offences relating to the ATP World Tour 500 tournament played in Barcelona in April 2011.

He was also found to have facilitated betting relating to the Barcelona doubles match.

"The finding of guilt and imposition of the lifetime suspension means that with immediate effect Mr Bracciiali is prohibited from playing in or attending any sanctioned events organised or recognised by the governing bodies of the sport," said a statement from the Tennis Integrity Unit (TIU). Bracciiali reached a career-best doubles ranking of 21 in June 2012. As a singles player his highest ranking was 49.

In a separate ruling, former Italian player Potito Starace has been banned from involvement in the sport for 10 years and fined $100,000 after being found guilty of match-fixing.

Starace, 37, reached a career-best singles ranking of 27 and a career-best 40 in doubles.

His offences also relate to the Barcelona tournament, where he played in the singles.

The Italian tennis federation banned Bracciiali and Starace for life for match-fixing in August 2015 but Starace’s suspension was lifted later the same year and Bracciiali’s ban reduced to 12 months. The TIU is an initiative of the Grand Slam Board, the International Tennis Federation, and the ATP and the WTA tours,

African great Drogba retires from football

LONDON — Ivory Coast and Chelsea great Didier Drogba announced his retirement on Wednesday after a 20-year career.

Drogba most recently played for Phoenix Rising in the United Soccer League.

I wanna thank all the players, managers, teams and fans that I have met and made this journey one of a kind," he wrote in a statement on Twitter.

"If anyone tells you your dreams are too big, just say thank you and work harder and smarter to turn them into a reality."

Drogba played club football in six different countries in total, with the majority of his success coming in France and England.

He won the Premier League Golden Boot in 2006-07 and 2009-10, netting 104 times in the English top flight in total, and also scored a dramatic late equaliser when Chelsea beat Bayern Munich on penalties in the Champions League final six years ago.

Drogba’s last game was Phoenix’s 1-0 loss to Louisville City in the USL Cup final on 8 November. —AFP