

President U Thein Sein receives Daewoo delegation

PAGE 3



Myanmar observes International Women's Day 2016

PAGE 3



ANALYSIS

Rights and duties are correlated and interdependent

PAGE 8

ROLLING OUT THE NEW GONGS

16 foot tall metal gongs available in Mandalay

IRON metal gongs standing at a height of 16 feet can be cast in Myanmar where gongs are used as a musical instrument and a craft for decorative purposes as well, said U Than Zaw, a bronze casting specialist in Tamawady, Mandalay.

Following an experiment in which a 16-foot-tall iron metal gong that can make sound was built, we can cast a metal gong with a height of up to 16 feet to be used as a musical instrument or decorative craft, he said.

Only gongs which were three feet high could produce sound previously, he added.

According to the bronze casting specialist, a three-foot gong cast in bronze will cost K1.3 million but a three-foot iron metal gong will cost K350,000 only.

"Traditional gongs are cast in iron metal as tourists are unwilling to buy expensive bronze gongs."

According to sources, Myanmar successfully tested casting of iron metal gongs last October, and measures are being taken to gain access to foreign markets.

Although bronze gongs have been widely used in Myanmar since days of yore, there has been a sharp decline in the sale of bronze gongs in the market due to the rising bronze price and scarcity of bronze, causing some bronze casting businesses to close their doors, said U Than Zaw.—Maung Pyi Thu (Mandalay)



A worker is doing the finishing touches on a huge gong. PHOTO: MAUNG PYI THU (MANDALAY)

Yangon Railway Station Complex Project to launch in May next year

Soe Win (SP)

THE Yangon Central Railway Station comprehensive development project is expected to launch in May, 2017, according to an announcement from Myanmar Railways (MR).

MR will finalise the selection of winners for the project in May, said U Tun Aung Thin, General Manager of Myanmar Railways (Lower Myanmar).

Fifteen companies including

five from Myanmar, two from Singapore, two joint-venture companies with the US, two from Korea and three from China sent Expression of Interest (EoI) for the project when MR invited the tender for the second time in July last year.

For the first time, Myanmar Railways invited Expressions of Interest (EOI) in April, 2014, for the project that is to be implemented over more than 62 acres of Myanmar Railways land and

urged local and international or joint venture developers/investors to undertake design-and-build work for the project after one month.

Investment in the Yangon Central Railway Station area comprehensive development project will reach US\$2-2.5 billion, according to the announcement in April, 2015.

According to sources, the area where Yangon Central Railway Station area compre-



Artist's impression of the Yangon Railway Station Yard.

PHOTO: AYE MIN SOE

hensive development is sited is not included in the restricted area of high-rise buildings in which the height of buildings are restricted to 470 metres

above the sea level.

So far, the Resettlement Action Plan and the Conceptual Plan for the project have already been drawn, according to MR sources.

Pyithu Hluttaw



Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U Win Myint. PHOTO: MNA

Second Pyithu Hluttaw session continues

THE second Pyithu Hluttaw's first regular session continued for its 15th day with the presentation of a report on the Union Peace Dialogue Joint Committee (UPDJC) meeting and action taken against a letter of complaint by Defense Services personnel Pyithu Hluttaw representatives to a Member of Parliament's discussion on an urgent motion.

First, Chairman of the Pyithu Hluttaw Ethnic Affairs and Internal Peace-making Com-

mittee U Khun Maung Thaung, who took part in the fifth UPDJC meeting, presented a report to the Parliament, calling for government to seize the moment for peace.

The chairman also suggested that the UPDJC should be formed with parliamentarians—three from the Pyithu Hluttaw (Lower House) and two from the Amyotha Hluttaw (Upper House)—in the time of the next government.

Next, Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U Win Myint announced that points related to the Letpadaung copper mining and property of Defense Industry No (20) included in discussions of MP U Kyaw Aung Lwin on the MP Daw Khin Sann Hlaing's urgent motion were deleted in accord with the 2013 Pyithu Hluttaw rules and regulations 158 (c).

The second Pyithu Hluttaw session continues for 16th day today. — Myanmar News Agency

Fifteen Yangon townships to receive normal water supply today

WATER supply will return to some wards of 15 townships in Yangon starting from 8 pm today as the leaking Hlawga water pipe is set to be fixed by 9 March, according to Engineering Department (Water & Sanitation) of the Yangon City Development Committee.

The Hlawga water pipeline suffered a leak in Mayan-

gon Township at about 4 pm on Monday, causing water supply disruption in townships in Yangon—Mingaladon, Insein, Shwepyitha, Hlinethaya, Mayangon, Tamway, Yankin, Bahan, Mingalataungnyunt, Thakayta, Pazundaung, Botahtaung, Pabedan, Hline and Kamayut. The pipeline which is 66 inches in diameter is the main source of

water supply to Yangon.

Waterworks were forced to stop operation following the pipe line leak, according to the department.

Despite water disruption in some townships, other townships are being supplied with water from the Gyo Pyu, Ngamoeyeik and Pu Gyi dams, added the department. —Ko Moe

National Workshop on ESCAP Transport Facilitation Models held



Experts participate in National Workshop on ESCAP Transport Facilitation Models. PHOTO: MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT

ORGANIZED by Ministry of Rail Transportation jointly with United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific (UNESCAP) the UN regional commission based in Bangkok, a National Workshop on ESCAP Transport Facilitation Models was

held in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

The participants discussed challenges to cross border and transit transport, connectivity in Myanmar. Opening the workshop, Director General of Road Transport Administration Department U Chit Ko Ko thanked ESCAP

for organizing the workshop saying that the workshop would be very useful for road transport and other authorities engaged in cross border and transit transport.

Ms Virginia Tanase, Chief of Transport Facilitation and Logistics Section of UNESCAP emphasized importance of having transport and transit rights as a prerequisite for efficient regional and international road transport. Around 50 participants from various ministries including rail transportation, trade, customs department and representatives from private sector attended the workshop.

UNESCAP was requested to provide assistance in enhancing capacity of Myanmar officials in handling and transportation of dangerous goods. Request was also made to help Myanmar in establishing integrated intermodal transport system in Myanmar. —Myanmar News Agency

Golf contest for the disabled to be held

THE 26th Golf Contest for people with disabilities will be held at the Tatmadaw Golf Course on the 13th March at 6 am. The event has been organised by the Myanmar Disabled Sports Fed-

eration, Ministry of Sport.

Disabled persons who wish to participate in the contest can register through the following phone numbers: 09 450015794 - U Sein Whet, 0955459666 - U

Min Naing Oo and 01 58369, number of the Myanmar Disabled Sports Federation office. Sportsmen need to arrive the Golf Course by 5:30 am. —Kyaemon

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker meets ambassadors



Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than meets Sri Lankan Ambassador to Myanmar Mr. K.W.D Karanaratne. PHOTO: MNA

SPEAKER of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw and Amyotha Hluttaw Mahn Win Khaing Than received Turkish Ambassador to Myanmar Mr. Murat Yavuz Ates, Sri Lankan Ambassador to Myanmar Mr. K.W.D Karanaratne and French Ambassador to My-

anmar Mr. Oliver Richard separately in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

Also present at calls were Deputy Speaker of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw and Amyotha Hluttaw U Aye Tha Aung and officials of Amyotha Hluttaw Office. — Myanmar News Agency

Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker receives ambassadors



Speaker U Win Myint meets French Ambassador to Myanmar Mr. Oliver Richard. PHOTO: MNA

PYITHU HLUTTAW Speaker U Win Myint met French Ambassador to Myanmar Mr. Oliver Richard, Sri Lankan Ambassador to Myanmar Mr. K.W.D Karanaratne and Turkish Ambassador to Myanmar Mr. Murat

Yavuz Ates separately in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

Also present at the calls were Deputy Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat and officials of Pyithu Hluttaw Office. — Myanmar News Agency



President U Thein Sein welcomes Mr Kim Young Sang, Chief Executive Officer and President of Daewoo International Corporation. PHOTO: MNA

President receives Daewoo delegation

PRESIDENT U Thein Sein received Mr Kim Young Sang, Chief Executive Officer and President of Daewoo International Corporation of the Republic of Korea, at the Presidential Palace in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

During the meeting, they

discussed matters on investment in hotel, energy, mining, steel and building modern rice mills in Myanmar.

Also present at the meeting were Union ministers U Wunna Maung Lwin, U Soe Thane, U Zeyar Aung and officials concerned.—Myanmar News Agency

Appointment of Ambassador agreed on

THE Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has agreed to the appointment of H E Mr Francisco Vaz Patto as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Portuguese Republic to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar with residence in Bangkok.

Mr Francisco Vaz Patto was born on 7 October 1966 in Beira, Mozambique. He attained a law degree and a post-graduate degree in European Studies from the Catholic University of Lisbon. He joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Portuguese Republic in 1990. He then served at the respective Portuguese Embassies in Bonn, Berlin and Luanda from 1995 to 1999. He also served as a Head of European Institutions Department, as a chief of cabinet of the Secretary of State for European Affairs and as the Director-General for Administration at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Since November 2015, he has been serving as an Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Portugal to the Kingdom of Thailand.—Myanmar News Agency

Myanmar observes International Women's Day 2016

INTERNATIONAL Women's Day 2016 was observed at the Myanmar International Convention Centre-2 in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

The International Women's Day commemorative event held under the theme "Planet 50-50 by 2030: Step It Up for Gender Equality" was attended by Honourary Patron of Myanmar Women's Affairs Federation (MWAFF) Daw Khin Aye Myint, wife of Vice-President U Nyan Tun, Union ministers and deputy ministers, members of the MWAFF and Myanmar Maternal

and Child Welfare Association, representatives from the UN agencies and guests.

In her address, Union Minister Daw Myat Myat Ohn Khin elaborated on the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement's undertakings on the empowerment of women in cooperation with local and international non-governmental organisations, speaking on the ongoing implementation of the National Strategic Plan for Advancement of Women-NSPAW (2013-2022) in the country.

The Union minister called

for equal participation of women in shaping the nation into a modern democracy in accordance with the theme of the 2016 International Women's Day.

Next, a UN official read out the message sent by the United Nations Secretary General on the occasion of the day.

After the ceremony, those present viewed documentary photos. The earliest Women's Day observance was originated by the 1908 strike of garment workers in New York City, USA.—Myanmar News Agency



Honourary Patron of Myanmar Women's Affairs Federation Daw Khin Aye Myint and Union ministers visit booth displaying documentary photos. PHOTO: MNA

Appointment of Ambassador agreed on

THE Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has agreed to the proposed appointment of Mrs. Tone Tinnes as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Kingdom of Norway to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar in succession to H.E. Mrs. Ann Ollestad.

Mrs. Tone Tinnes was born on 8th November 1961. She obtained a Master of Economics from the University of Oslo in 1988. She served in the Ministry of Industry as an advisor and then as Assistant Director from 1989 to 1996. She joined Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD) as an economist in 1996. She served as an Economist/Counsellor in the Norwegian Embassy in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania from 1999 to 2003. She became Head of Unit of NORAD's public Financial Management and Budget Support from 2003 to 2006. She joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 2006 and served as a Senior Advisor in the Development Minister's Policy Analysis Unit till 2007. She then served as an Assistant Director up to the post of a Director in the International Development Policy Section of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs from 2007 to 2014. Mrs. Tone Tinnes has been serving as Norwegian Ambassador to South Sudan since 2014.

She is married with two children.—Myanmar News Agency

Ladia Brand painted taxis provide free service to Yangon women on International Women's Day

LADIA Brand Myanmar conducted a one-day free taxi service for women in Yangon in commemoration of International Women's Day yesterday.

A number of Ladia Brand painted taxi cabs kicked off the free taxi service programme at Myakyuntha Park in Bahan Township yesterday morning, and toured around Yangon to

provide the service to women.

"I was invited to take part in this programme as a driver by one of my customers", said a 47-year-old female taxi driver, taking great delight in observing International Women's Day as a Myanmar woman. Taxi cabs advertising Ladia Brand are set to run on roads and streets in Yangon for one year.—Win Win Maw



People having fun under splash of water during water festival. PHOTO: MYANMAR TRAVEL.CO

Water usage to be reduced in Mandalay Thingyan Festival

THE water festival management committee in Mandalay will allow only 30 million gallons for this year's Thingyan Festival in order to raise awareness of water shortages in the moat. The amount of water has been reduced by half the amount from last year for the Mandalay Thingyan, according to Mandalay City

Development Committee.

There were a total of 24 water-throwing stages in 2015 using over 59 million gallons. The authority plans to reduce the usage of water. A total of ten stages will be kept at each moat of Mandalay this year.

To reduce the use of water at the festival the size of water pipes,

nozzles, pumps and fire hydrants will be limited at the festival, said U Tun Win, Water and Clean Department Head, Mandalay City Development Committee.

The authorities will also take action against stages which do not abide by the rules, it has been learned.—*Min Htet Aung (Man Ko Pwar)*

Arrest of suspects, seizure of narcotic drugs in February

A TOTAL of 806 suspects— 701 men and 105 women— were arrested under article 557 narcotic drug-related cases in February 2016, according to the Myanmar Police Force.

Thanks to the combined efforts of

the Tatmadaw, region/state police forces, anti-narcotic drug task forces, the railway police force and the border guard police force, narcotic drugs including 44.3 kilos of opium in 28 cases, 4.1 kilos of heroine in 200 cases, 8,341,966 yabba pills

in 282 cases, 24.6 kilos of marijuana in 18 cases, 0.0318 kilos of low-grade opium in three cases, 0.0925 litres of opium oil in one case and 10 ecstasy pills were seized, according to the MPF.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Paper toys to be displayed at art exhibition

MYANMAR traditional paper toys will be showcased at art exhibitions to promote artistic skills in the country. "The aim is to show our creations which combine Myanmar traditional paper toy making techniques and fine arts" said U Aung Than, a toy maker.

Paper handicrafts are not just simple toys but are created in detail with fine arts like mak-

ing sculptures. These toys appear colorful but the artist does not paint exclusively. He uses waste paper printed in various colours, he added. It takes four or five days to make the paper carvings especially for unique designs such as the two fighting cocks, a dancing peacock and dancing actor and actress. There is time difference based on the design of toy, he said. —*Thi Thi Min*



Myanmar traditional hand-made paper toys. PHOTO: SEIM KHET

Crime NEWS

Ammunition, weapons seized in Mae Sot

WEAPONS and ammunition, including ten M-16 assault rifles and seven AK-47's were seized in Mae Sot by Thai authorities on 5 March. The guns belonged to a Thai police officer who fled the authorities, according to Thai media.

According to an investigation, a suspicious-looking vehi-

cle drove away when Thai police asked them to stop at the Mea Sot entrance gate. Police later stopped the vehicle in Kan Phit Ban ward in Mae Sot. The vehicle was owned by a former police officer who was recently expelled from the force. Police are in hot pursuit of the suspect.—*Tin Win Hlaing (Kawkareik)*



Weapons and ammunition seized in Mae Sot in Thai. PHOTO: TIN WIN HLAING (KAWKAREIK)

Twenty four illegal motorbikes seized in Kyunhla

LOCAL police from Kyunhla township confiscated 24 illegal motorbikes from a 12-wheel vehicle in Thityarmaing ward, Kyunhla township, Sagaing region on 6 March. Acting on a tip off, the police discovered a 12-wheel vehicle being driven by one Min Min Soe, 28, from Myay Mon village along with Zin Myo Naung, 17, from Htanuang Kaine village. They were carrying 24 illegal motorbikes on board. Local police have filed charges against Min Min Soe and Zin Myo Naung.—*Myo Win Nyo (Kyunhla)*



12-wheel vehicle carrying 24 illegal motorbikes seen in Kyunhla. PHOTO: MYO WIN NYO (KYUNHLA)

46 illegal Myanmar nationals arrested in Kanchanaburi

POLICE in Sai Yok district on Sunday arrested a total of 46 undocumented Myanmar migrants in two vehicles. The police at the Phu Noi checkpoint stopped two pickup vehicles for searching. Twenty-one migrant workers including the driver were found in

the first vehicle while another 18 Myanmar migrants were found in the second vehicle.

The police searched a bus and found another seven undocumented Myanmar nationals on board. All of the undocumented Myanmar nationals were

charged with illegal entry. The two drivers have been charged with people smuggling. Police found that the Myanmar nationals paid 2,000 Bahts each to the traffickers, according to the Bangkok Post.—*Kyaw Soe (IPRD)*

LOCAL Business



A worker waters muskmelon plants in an organic farm in Nay Pyi Taw. PHOTO: AYE MIN SOE

Yangon's organic produce lacks own market

ORGANICALLY cultivated produce is failing to reach consumers because of a lack of a separate market, according to sellers of organic produce.

It is known from U Kyaw Htun Win, CEO of Agarwin Keystone, that commerce of organic produce is mainly conducted through consumers picking their own produce in the organic crops fields themselves as there are good connections between agriculture produce companies and those consumers wishing to purchase organic products.

"There are people out there wishing to purchase and eat [organic food] having come to a real understand of what organic food means. There are also

those who want to sell organic produce. There's still some discrepancies between consumers and traders - consumers are only from one class of society. There isn't an established area of trading yet and one can't go and sell produce in the outskirts of town. A bundle of watercress can be bought for K100-200 but if it's organic then whatever the vegetable, it's not going to cost less than K500," he said.

There is currently neither educational awareness, on the health benefits of cultivating crops sprayed without chemicals or pesticides, nor the market to directly sell organic produce to consumers in Yangon, it is known.

Furthermore, as organic produce is over thirty percent more expensive than regularly cultivated crops, despite an interest from consumers, high prices have prevented the market from expanding, according to U Hla Min, chair of the Myanmar Organic Organization.

"Organic produce is rarely found in supermarkets or food stores because of few consumers. A lack of purchasers of organic produce because of price differences means that sellers have to sell to customers directly," he said.

The Myanmar Organic Organisation has made it known that they will strive to make a submission to the Yangon

City Development Committee (YCDC) for space to be provided for the establishment of a separate organic-only produce market in a bid to resolve the issue of a lack of connection between consumers and traders. It is known that organic produce are currently sold every Saturday in Yangon on Myay Paday Thar Island.

Organic produce is not sprayed with chemicals or fertilizers during cultivation, resulting in a short shelf life after purchase of just a couple of days. Natural fertilizers, animal manure and bio polymer are used while mulch acts as an organic pesticide, it is known.—*Myit-makha News Agency*

Flower market on Mandalay-Pyin Oo Lwin motorway booming

SALES of Chrysanthemum is gaining higher demand than Eugenia and Mesua Ferrea at floral market near Thalekone village on Mandalay-Pyin Oo Lwin Road, Patheingyi Town, Mandalay Region. The market is crowded daily with sellers and purchasers.

There are many Chrysanthemum sellers in the market because the flower gains a better price, from about K500 to K1300 per flower bouquet.

Farmers selling directly with motorbike can be seen in

the market. They provide the flowers at a wholesale price for resellers in the wards, said a wholesale purchaser from Mandalay.

There are various varieties of Chrysanthemum such as Kway-phyu, Pale-phyu, Chatsein and Dahlia. With the better price of Chrysanthemum, farmers are doing well with their daily income, said one growing Chrysanthemum in Ywarshay village, Patheingyi Township.—*Than Zaw Min (IPRD)*

Metro Group considers entry into new markets

METRO Group has announced yesterday it is considering entry into two markets, Myanmar and Iran. Metro's Cash & Carry business has been performing well, enjoying its 10th consecutive quarter of positive growth, with same store sales increasing by 0.2% in Q1 2015/16.

Following this, the Group is studying the feasibility of launching in Iran and Myanmar via its Cash & Carry banner, and will make this decision by the end of 2016. CEO, Olaf Koch said "Myanmar is benefitting from opening

up politically and has high growth potential. We're also examining what opportunities Iran will offer with the end of Western sanctions." Both markets could offer significant long term growth opportunities for the retailer, with Asia an important growth region for the Group. However, Metro has recently recommitted to strengthening on its core markets, and disposing of anything superfluous to this, i.e. its exit of Vietnam in 2014. In order to remain focused on its core markets, it will need to consider this move carefully.—*Metro*

Pea merchants and farmers face difficulty from lower prices

Soe Soe Yu

WITH lessening demand from Indian merchants, local pea merchants and pea growers are bracing for the difficulty as the local price of the humble pea has dropped to K300,000 per tonne.

Farmers store green grams without selling to merchants after harvesting them, said Dr. Myat Soe, the information-officer-in-charge from the Myanmar Pulses, Beans and Sesame seeds Merchants Association. At early harvest time, the price of the pea export market to India was higher. It has now become lower and it costs around K1,280,000 per ton of green gram.

Farmers in Wundwin Township, Mandalay Region will sell out the pea they store when they gain higher prices. The price went up at the end of last year. The merchants gained high profits as green grams reached up to K2 million per ton at the export market to India in September, 2015.

I only got K 30,000 per basket when I sold to the purchasers. The merchants gain profits during the high season period. I will store and sell out when I am offered a better price to pay back my loans, said Daw Khin Win from Pyar-mut village.

The merchants offer K50,000 per basket of Pigeon Pea and K42,000 per basket of green gram. The price of export is set at K1,280,000 for green gram, K1,250,000 per ton of Pigeon Pea and K120,000 per bag of mung bean weighing 60 visses (a viss is approximately 1.6 kilograms).

India is the only major buyer after harvesting. Demand has become lower following the Indian government's intervention in the pea market allowing them up to 200 tonnes per warehouse.

Myanmar's exports in this fiscal year of 2015-2016 reach 396,893 tonnes of green gram valued at US\$391.165 million, 14,299 tonnes of lima pea (Pelun-phyu) valued at US\$9.751, 234,501 tonnes of green gram valued at US\$238.468, 23,280 tonnes of gram valued at US\$11.32 and 144,450 tonnes of pigeon pea worth US\$144,450, it has been learned from the Myanmar Peas and Sesame Association.

China says South China Sea among world's freest shipping lanes

BEIJING — The South China Sea is one of the world's freest and safest shipping lanes, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi said on Tuesday, arguing that Beijing's control over the disputed waters was justified because it was the first to "discover" them.

China has come under fire from the United States and its allies in recent months over its land reclamation activities in the South China Sea, through which \$5 trillion in ship-borne trade passes annually.

The US Navy has carried out freedom of navigation exercises, sailing near disputed islands to underscore its rights to operate in the seas.

Those patrols, and reports that China is deploying advanced missiles, fighters and radar equipment on islands there, have led Washington and Beijing to trade accusations of militarising the region.

The freedom of navigation does not equal the "freedom to run amok", Wang told a press briefing on the sidelines of China's annual parliament meeting.

"In fact, based on the joint



A Chinese Coast Guard vessel is pictured on the disputed Second Thomas Shoal, part of the Spratly Islands, in the South China Sea on 29 March 2014. PHOTO: REUTERS

efforts of China and other regional countries, the South China Sea is currently one of the safest and freest shipping lanes in the world," Wang said.

"China was the earliest to explore, name, develop and administer various South China Sea islands. Our ancestors worked diligently here for generations," Wang said.

"History will prove who is

the visitor and who is the genuine host," he said, adding that China would "consider inviting" foreign journalists to islands under its control when the conditions are right.

Beijing claims almost all of the South China Sea, but Brunei, Malaysia, the Philippines, Taiwan and Vietnam have overlapping claims.

US Defence Secretary Ash

Carter has warned of "specific consequences" if China takes "aggressive" action in the region.

He has said the US military was increasing deployments to the Asia-Pacific region and would spend \$425 million through 2020 to pay for more exercises and training with countries in the region that were unnerved by China's actions.—Reuters

South Korea issues new sanctions against North, bans ships via North ports

SEOUL — South Korea said on Tuesday it would impose new sanctions against 40 individuals and 30 entities because of suspected links to North Korea's weapons programme and would ban vessels that had stopped at North Korean ports in the past 180 days.

The new measures are designed to discourage shipping firms and trading companies from doing business with the North to further isolate it, South Korea said.

The decision to issue more unilateral sanctions against the North follows a UN Security Council resolution triggered by the isolate state's fourth nuclear test in January and a long-range rocket launch last month.

Tension in the region is high as South Korean and US troops began military exercises on Monday in an annual test of their defences against the North, which called the drills "nuclear war moves" and threatened to respond with an all-out offensive.

The individuals subject to financial sanctions announced on Tuesday include a Singaporean and a Taiwan national who are heads of a shipping firm and a trading company, the government said.

South Korea also blacklisted a Thai shipping firm called Mariner's Shipping & Trading and Taiwan company Royal Team Corporation.

South Korea will ban those on the list from engaging in financial transactions with South Korean entities and freeze assets that are held in the country, the government said.

After the North's rocket launch last month, South Korea suspended operations at the Kaesong industrial zone, just on the North Korean side of their common border, which had been run jointly with the North for more than a decade.—Reuters

Indonesian province declares emergency as forest fires flare

JAKARTA — Indonesia's western province of Riau has declared a state of emergency over forest and land fires blazing on the island of Sumatra, a government official said on Tuesday.

The fires, which send choking smog over Southeast Asia every year, raged uncontrollably across several provinces last year, costing an estimated \$16 billion, and pushed average daily greenhouse gas emissions above those of the United States.

"The governor has declared an emergency now, to be able to pre-

vent a repeat of the haze that occurred in 2015," said provincial government spokesman Darusman, adding that life in the province continued to be normal.

About 500 military and police personnel and a water-bombing helicopter have been deployed to help fight the fires but the haze had not yet reached urban areas, he said. The fires are often set by plantation companies and smallholders to clear land, and were particularly bad in 2015 because of a prolonged dry season caused by the El Niño weather pattern.

Indonesian President Joko Widodo has urged authorities to contain so-called hotspots, where fires start and spread to their surroundings. This year, Widodo set up an agency to restore around 2 million hectares (5 million acres) of carbon-rich peatlands which typically produce more smog than forest fires. But past efforts by Indonesia and neighbouring countries to prevent the fires, or put them out once started, have shown little success. Last year's fires ended only when the rainy season arrived to douse them.—Reuters

Top Philippine court allows embattled senator to run for presidency

MANILA — The Philippine Supreme Court ruled on Tuesday to allow an embattled senator to run for the presidency in an election on 9 May, dismissing questions on her citizenship and residency as required by the Constitution.

With a 9-6 result, the 15-member high tribunal rejected petitions, earlier affirmed by the Commission on Elections, to disqualify Sen. Mary Grace Poe-Llamanzares, popularly known as Grace Poe, from the presidential race for her alleged failure to meet the minimum 10-year residency and natu-

ral-born citizenship requirements.

Poe, 47, has been leading pre-election independent polls despite being an independent candidate and her being a neophyte in politics. Her first elective position was as a senator, which she won in 2013. Prior to that, she was appointed by President Benigno Aquino as chairman of the Movie and Television Regulatory and Classification Board.

"I thank the Supreme Court for giving recognition to the truth, justice, and most of all, protection for all the oppressed among our countrymen," said Poe, whose citi-

zenship issue is anchored on her being a "foundling" — she was found in a church and adopted after being born to unknown biological parents. Poe's critics say that as such, she lacks proof of bloodline that would classify her as a natural-born Filipino citizen, a specific requirement under the Constitution for a Philippine president.

Furthermore, she allegedly would not have been a 10-year resident of the country by 9 May, 2016, also required by the Constitution. Poe lived in the United States from 1991 and became a naturalized US citizen 10 years lat-

er. In July 2006, she reacquired her Philippine citizenship, and four years later, renounced her US citizenship.

At least one of the petitioners said an appeal on the decision will be filed before the Supreme Court.

Poe is up against Vice President Jejomar Binay, Davao City Mayor Rodrigo Duterte, former Interior Secretary Mar Roxas, and Senator Miriam Defensor-Santiago for a six-year term in the presidency that Aquino's anointed candidate is Roxas.—Kyodo News

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Victims' families fault MH370 probe statement for lacking detail

KUALA LUMPUR — Family members who hoped an international investigating team would shed light on missing Malaysia Airlines flight MH370 were disappointed by a much-awaited statement released Tuesday to mark the second anniversary of its disappearance.

"It's three pages of nothing! It tells us nothing that we have not heard before. It's disappointing," said Grace Nathan, 28, who lost her mother Ann Daisy in the tragedy.

The interim statement was prepared by the Malaysia-led "safety investigation team" that includes representatives from seven international air disaster investigation bodies from Australia, Britain, China, France, Indonesia, Singapore and the United States.

Under International Civil Aviation Organisation regulations, an interim statement must be issued on each anniversary detailing the progress of the investigation and any safety issues raised.

The three-page, seven-paragraph statement, which can be accessed at www.mh370.gov.my, compares with a nearly 600-page report issued one year ago on the first anniversary of the plane's disappearance, which gave a detailed look at the events leading to the disappearance of the Boeing 777 and the search that ensued.

Then and now, however,



Family members of passengers aboard missing Malaysia Airlines Flight MH370 seek their return in Beijing on 8 March. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

the team failed to shed light on what caused the plane, carrying 239 people of 14 nationalities, to vanish in the early hours of 8 March, 2014.

Family members have long been unhappy over what they claim to be lack of transparency displayed by authorities over the tragedy, as well as shoddy treatment by the government and the airline company.

According to the interim statement, "A final report will be completed in the event wreckage of the aircraft is located or the search for the wreckage is terminated, whichever is earlier."

It said the team is working on finalizing its analysis and safety recommendations on eight areas: diversion from filed flight

plan route; air traffic services operations; flight crew profile; airworthiness and maintenance and aircraft systems; satellite communications; wreckage and impact information (following the discovery of a flaperon of the aircraft); organisation and management information of the Department of Civil Aviation and MAS; and aircraft cargo consignment.

The Boeing 777, carrying 227 passengers and 12 crew, vanished while flying above the South China Sea en route to Beijing from Kuala Lumpur. Based on satellite and radar data, experts calculate that the flight ended in the southern Indian Ocean.

After a two-year of search led by Australia in an area span-

ning 120,000 square kilometres, the only confirmed evidence was a wing part known as the flaperon that washed ashore on the French island of Reunion, east of Madagascar, last July, some 3,700 km away from the designated search site.

The find, experts said, is consistent with the drift pattern analysis.

In the past week, another wing fragment was found on Reunion Island, while a tail part was discovered on the coast of Mozambique.

Transport Minister Liow Tiong Lai said Malaysian officials sent to Mozambique had taken custody of the part and will work with their Australian counterparts to identify if it belongs to MH370.

As for the new find on Reunion, he said they are waiting for the French court to decide within the next two days who should get custody of the debris, Malaysia or France.

Meanwhile, Malaysia marked the second anniversary of the plane's disappearance with lawmakers in the lower house of Parliament observing a minute of silence.

Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak issued a statement earlier reaffirming Malaysia's commitment to find the jumbo jet.

"The disappearance of MH370 was without precedent, and the search has been the most challenging in aviation history,"

he said, "We remain committed to doing everything within our means to solving what is an agonizing mystery for the loved ones of those who were lost. On this most difficult of days, our thoughts and prayers are with the families of those who will never be forgotten."

The current search operation is expected to end in June.

"We remain hopeful that MH370 will be found in the 120,000 square kilometres not, then Malaysia, Australia and China will hold a tripartite meeting to determine the way forward," Najib said.

Australian transport minister Darren Chester, in a statement released Tuesday, said around 90,000 square km of the 120,000 square km search zone has been completed, with vessels using sonar and underwater technologies to search the ocean floor reaching depths of 6,000 metres.

"As we search the remaining 30,000 square km zone in the days and months ahead, Australia, Malaysia and the People's Republic of China remain hopeful the aircraft will be found," he said.

Referring to the families of the victims, he said, "We owe it to their memory, and to the loved ones who mourn them, to honor the undertaking to complete the search of the area experts have determined as most likely to contain the missing aircraft."—Kyodo News

Bangladesh central bank says US account hacked: Fed denies breach



Commuters pass by the front of the Bangladesh central bank building in Dhaka on 8 March. PHOTO: REUTERS

DHAKA/NEW YORK — Bangladesh's central bank said on Monday its account at the US Federal Reserve had been hacked and money was stolen, but that some of the funds were traced to the Philippines and recovered.

The New York Fed, which manages the account, denied that its systems were breached but did not say whether funds

had been drained from the account, citing confidentiality.

Bangladesh Bank said it was working with anti-money laundering authorities in the Philippines. It did not say how much money had been stolen and a spokesman declined to comment.

Bangladesh's central bank has around \$28 billion in foreign currency reserves.

"To date, there is no evidence of any attempt to penetrate Federal Reserve systems in connection with the payments in question, and there is no evidence that any Fed systems were compromised," a New York Fed spokeswoman said.

She declined to comment on whether the US central bank's New York branch was investigating the claim by its overseas counterpart.

Some 250 central banks, governments, and other institutions have foreign accounts at the New York Fed, which is near the centre of the global financial system.

The accounts hold mostly US Treasuries and agency debt, and requests for funds arrive and are authenticated by a so-called SWIFT network that connects banks.

Fed computers have been hacked in the past including charges in 2014 against a British citizen for breaching central bank servers and publicly posting information from internal users.—Reuters

Malaysia says Islamic State militants plotted to kidnap PM Najib last year

KUALA LUMPUR — Malaysian police foiled a plot by the Islamic State (IS) militant group to kidnap Prime Minister Najib Razak and other senior ministers last year, the country's deputy premier said on Tuesday.

Ahmad Zahid Hamidi, who is also the home minister, said the militants also planned to carry out attacks in the administrative capital, Putrajaya, for which explosives had been prepared and tested.

"On 30 January, 2015, there were plans by 13 people linked to Daesh (Islamic State) to kidnap the country's leaders including the prime minister, the home minister and the defence minister," Ahmad Zahid said in response to a question about the government's efforts to tackle the threat posed by IS.

"There was also a plan to carry out an attack in Putrajaya. To this end, the group had prepared and tested explosives," Zahid said.

"Although there is no proper Daesh (IS) establishment in the country, those here (in Malaysia) were being influenced and have

been receiving orders from the IS network in Syria," he added.

Muslim-majority Malaysia has not experienced any significant attacks, but it has arrested at least 160 people since January 2015 suspected of being involved in militant activities, including seven believed to have been part of an IS cell.

The country has been on high alert since IS-linked militants carried out an armed attacks in Jakarta, Indonesia on 14 January.

Zahid said between September 2014 and May 2015, IS members had planned four major attacks across the country, including in the capital Kuala Lumpur, Putrajaya, and the state of Kedah.

The plans had included stealing weapons from military camps, the making of bombs and explosives, stealing cash for funding attacks and kidnapping state leaders for ransom, Zahid said.

The targets for attacks included entertainment centres and religious buildings including a Shiite mosque, a Buddhist temple and a Freemasons' lodge.—Reuters

OPINION

Rights and duties are correlated and inter dependent

Khin Maung Aye

It is said man is a social animal. His physical, mental and moral needs force him to have a craving for group life. He seeks to realise his needs and purposes in life through concerted and associated action. Groups and associations have thus come into existence to fulfil the multifarious needs of human life. In this regard, the state is the most powerful and most important of all groups and associations. It is in the nature of group organisations that it embodies the principle of reciprocity. This being so, one of the main consequences of group life has been the correlation and interdependence of rights and duties.

A state is known from the rights it provides to its citizens. Rights are maintained and enforced by the state. The enjoyment of rights involves fulfilment of certain obligations. All rights involves an obligation to use them in a proper way. In fact, people are vested with the powers to enable them to perform their duties. The correlation of rights and duties is the result of our social existence. Everybody owes to the society as much as he demands from it in the form of rights.

Nowadays, the idea of citizenship includes not only the civil and political dimensions but also a social component. Nevertheless, it would be imprudent to assume that the different components of rights of modern citizenship are equally guaranteed by the state. Not only are the civil and social rights founded on different principles and basis, there may exist some tension with each other. It is worth remembering that the social rights are always threatened by the civil rights.

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"THE TRAVALLER'S GUIDE" A BRIEF HISTORY OF YANGON

Than Zaw

MANY Many years ago yangon was a very small fishing village named "DAGON".

In this past century, kings and queens came down there to pray Shwedagon pagoda.

Once upon a time, a very religious devotee queen of Mon ethnic by the name of Shin Saw Pu had happened to come and dwelled at the village. She set up the Dagon City and constructed the palace and had been paying respected and worship the

Shwedagon pagoda for ever since 1460.

To see : The ashes of the late Shin Saw Pu queen, still remained housing in Shin Saw Pu pagoda in San chaung, western side of Shwedagon pagoda.

1755: King Alongpaya, of kone baung, upper Myanmar, captured the Mon Kingdom, renamed as "YANGON" as no more enemy left to fight. He expanded the city, developed the port and made it the administrative centre for lower Burma.

To see: The statue of Alonghpaya out side the National Mu-

seum.

1800: Yangon become a major residence of many foreign traders. They made Teak Stockade Stockade surrounding 75 aeras town, made of wood and bamboo buildings. It was along Sulay pagoda, Strand, Shewbontha and Bo Aung Kyaw street.

1824: Brifish, the colony, had an aim to fight and take over control of Northeastern India, let to a British Naval force of 10,000 men entering Yangon Habour and that was the start 1 st Englo-Burmese war.

It ended in 1826 with Brit-

ish. They retained the port and 100 miles of territory around it 1852: The 2nd Englo-Burmeses war broke out again over trade in Yangon.

The battles took place there Shwedagon Pagoda was occupied again. So Yangaon came into British possession.

To see; Signal (Ahlanpya) pagoda was used as a singnalling station for vessels on the river. A British water storage tank was built in the pagoda compound till now.

1853: The war had Ruined the town. So, DR. W. Mongom-

ary and Lt.A. fraser ereated a new Rangoon City Plan.

To see: Down Town streets-plan remained unchanged up to now a days.

The names: Dhalakoussi, fraser, Mongomary were changed to Mahabandula, Anawrahta and Bohgyoke street respectively in down town. The strand and Merchant street are undranged.

1885: The 3rd Englo Burmese war bagan as king Thibaw to abdicate and they brought him to Rangoon before exiling him in India.

Burma became a British colony and YANGON was renamed as "Rangoon".

To see: the "Lion Throne" of king Thibaw shown at the Natonal Museum.

1920: The first university students strike took place as a part of the nationalist government which spread out the whole country.

To see: U Ariya monastery where the meeting took place for the 1st students bouycott committee.

1941: Japanese bombed the city on 23rd Dec and occupied the city until 1945 when the Burma National Army, let by General Aung San fought against Japanese supported by the British.

1948: Burma gained Independence on the 4th January after 2 years negotiations made by general Aung San (our national patriot).

To see: British Governor set sail on the "HMS BIRMINGHAM from Rangoon port back to Britain after handing over power to U Nu (To 1st prime minister of the Union of Burma)

Yangon city can be devided in to four main areas.

1. Down Town : The main



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If you go on and on you'll get to your destination.

If you question much you'll get the information.

Don't be down hearted, keep on going.

International Women's Day and Women Rights

Dr. Khine Khine Win

EVERY March 8, millions of people around the world celebrate the International Women's Day (IWD). It has been observed since in the early 1990s. It is a day when women are recognized for their achievements without regard to divisions, whether national, ethnic, linguistic, cultural, economic or political. Thousands of events occur celebrating International Women's Day - large global gatherings, conferences, awards, exhibitions, festivals, corporate events, concerts and performances, key speaker events, online digital gatherings and more. Events are held by many types of groups including women's networks, corporations, charities, educational institutions, government bodies,

political parties and the media.

International Women's Day first emerged from the activities of labor movements at the turn of the twentieth century in North America and across Europe. As a result of the Copenhagen initiative, International Women's Day was marked for the first time in Austria, Denmark, Germany and Switzerland, where more than one million women and men attended rallies. In addition to the right to vote and to hold public office, they demanded women's rights to work, to vocational training and to an end to discrimination on the job.

The Charter of the United Nations, signed in 1945, was the first international agreement to affirm the principle of equality between women and men. Equality of rights for women is a basic principle of the United Nations and the Preamble to the Charter of the United Nations reaffirmed "faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women". And article 1 proclaims that one of the purposes of the United Nations is to achieve international cooperation in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction.

To date, the United Nations has organized four world conferences on women. These took place in Mexico City in 1975, Copenhagen in 1980, Nairobi in 1985 and Beijing in 1995. In 1979, in recognition the importance of women rights, UN Generally Assembly adopted the Convention on the

Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) by UN member States and is often described as an International Bills of Women Rights. Myanmar ratified the CEDAW in July 1997 and since then Myanmar became the State Party of CEDAW. By accepting the Convention, States commit themselves to undertake a series of measures to end discrimination against women in all forms. In fact, Countries that have ratified or acceded to the Convention are legally bound to put its provisions into practice. They are also committed to submit national reports, at least every four years, on measures they have taken to comply with their treaty obligations. As of May 2015, 189 states have ratified or acceded to the treaty CEDAW.

The 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing marked a significant turning point for the global agenda for gender equality. The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, a historic roadmap signed by 189 governments, adopted an agenda for women's empowerment and considered the key global policy document on gender equality. It sets strategic objectives and actions for the advancement of women and the achievement of gender equality in 12 critical areas of concern: Women and poverty, Education and training of women, Women and health, Violence against women, Women and armed conflict, Women and the economy, Women in power and decision-making, Institutional mechanism for the advancement of women, Human

rights of women, Women and the media, Women and the environment and The girl-child. To date the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action play crucial role in realizing gender equality and human rights of women.

Globally, In July 2010, the United Nations General Assembly created UN Women, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. In doing so, UN Member States took an historic step in accelerating the Organization's goals on gender equality and the empowerment of women. The creation of UN Women came about as part of the UN reform agenda, bringing together resources and mandates for greater impact. Gender equality is not only a basic human right, but its achievement has enormous socio-economic ramifications.

Regionally, for ASEAN countries, ASEAN Commission on Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Child (ACWC) was established in 2010. ACWC's primary purpose is to promote and protect the human rights and fundamental freedoms of women and children in ASEAN and tasked with upholding rights contained in the Convention on the Elimination of Violence against Women (CEDAW) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), which all ten ASEAN Member States have ratified.

Regarding the Women, Peace and Security and related resolutions, United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 was adopted unanimously on 31 October 2000 before ten years establishment of UN Women. It was the first formal and legal document from the United Nations Security Council that required parties in a conflict to prevent violations of women rights, to support women's participation in peace negotiations and in post-conflict reconstruction,

and to protect women and girls from sexual and gender-based violence in armed conflict. It was also the first United Nations resolution to specifically mention women.

Many of you know that conflict affects entire communities adversely, but women and girls suffer disproportionate negative impacts economically and socially. And also women and children make up a large majority of the world's refugees. Women have little representation in formal peace talks, and are often excluded from decision-making that affects their safety when displaced by conflict. In fact, women lack of participation in decision-making processes increases their vulnerability to sexual and other forms of violence.

Nowadays women comprise more than half of the world's population and are primary caretakers for most of the children and elderly. Actually the women rights movements had a long and good history, women are still fighting for their rights and far more progress is needed to foster real gender equality and empowerment. They must enjoy the right to participate fully in the social and political lives of their countries if we want freedom and democracy to thrive and endure. They should exercise their rights and gain the knowledge, skills, and information they need, they can become powerful agents of change.

There is no doubt that women will never gain full dignity until their human rights are respected and protected.

Here, we need to understand that there is no formula for how women should lead their lives. This why we must respect the choices that each woman makes for herself and her families. Being a woman, I totally agree the following quote by Hillary Rodham Clinton. "If women are healthy

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Russia, Philippines have most female business leaders, Japan ranks lowest



Office workers pass the hazy skyline of Singapore's business district in 2013. PHOTO: REUTERS

LONDON — With 45 per cent of senior management positions held by women, Russia has once again topped a ranking of countries with the highest percentage of women in senior business roles, followed by the Philippines and Lithuania, a report published yesterday said.

Japan, where only 7 per cent of senior leadership roles are held by women, remained at the bottom of the list. Germany and India ranked slightly higher, with 15 per cent and 16 per cent of women in senior management, respectively.

Globally, only a quarter of senior management positions are held by women, up from 22 per cent a year before, according to "Women in Business" published by the US-based audit and tax firm Grant Thornton.

The number of businesses with no women in senior management has increased to 33 per cent from 32 per cent in 2015, the report, which surveyed 5,520 businesses in 36 countries, said.

"Companies across developed nations have talked the talk on diversity in leadership for long enough," Francesca Lagerberg, global leader for tax services at Grant Thornton International said in a statement.

"It's time to put their promises into practice and deliver results." With more than a third of senior roles in the region held by women, eastern European countries, among them Estonia, Latvia and Poland, topped the diversity rankings.

Meanwhile, 39 per cent of businesses in G7 countries (Canada, Germany, Italy, France, Ja-

pan, Britain and the United States) had no women in senior management positions.

"Despite considerable efforts by governments and campaigners across the world's best-developed economies to ensure best practice they continue to lag behind emerging markets in (the diversity) area," Lagerberg said.

"This poor performance seems to be at least partly a result of entrenched societal norms. In the UK and US in particular, there are still plentiful examples of a 'command and control' approach to leadership which is not necessarily attractive to women."

Eastern European countries owed some of their diversity to the legacy of the communism and its principles on equality, the report said.—Reuters

US first lady Michelle Obama to attend funeral for Nancy Reagan

WASHINGTON — First lady Michelle Obama will attend the funeral on Friday of Nancy Reagan, who will be buried next to her husband, former President Ronald Reagan, at his presidential library in California, officials said on Monday.

Reagan will lie in repose at the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library on Wednesday and Thursday. A private funeral is planned for Friday, the Ronald Reagan Presidential Foundation said.

"First lady Michelle Obama will be attending Mrs. Reagan's funeral," a White House official said on Monday.

Reagan, the former actress who was fiercely protective of

her husband through a Hollywood career, eight years in the White House, an assassination attempt and his Alzheimer's disease, died on Sunday at age 94.

The cause of death was congestive heart failure, said a spokeswoman for the Reagan presidential library. She died at her Los Angeles home.

In Washington, President Barack Obama ordered that US flags be flown at half-staff at the White House, public buildings, military posts and other facilities as a mark of respect, the White House said on Monday.

Reagan became one of the most influential first ladies in US history during her Republican husband's presidency from

1981 to 1989.

Her husband, who affectionately called her "Mommy," while she called him "Ronnie," died in 2004 after a long struggle with Alzheimer's, the progressive brain disorder that destroys memory.

Obama, a Democrat, and his wife, Michelle, said Nancy Reagan redefined the role of first lady. "Nancy Reagan once wrote that nothing could prepare you for living in the White House," the Obamas wrote in a joint statement on Sunday. "She was right, of course. But we had a head start, because we were fortunate to benefit from her proud example, and her warm and generous advice."—Reuters

NEWS IN BRIEF

Iran Revolutionary Guards conduct ballistic missile test

DUBAI — Iran's Revolutionary Guards test-fired several ballistic missiles from silos across the country as part of a military exercise on Tuesday, the ISNA news agency reported.

The test was intended "to show Iran's deterrent power and also the Islamic Republic's ability to confront any threat against the (Islamic) Revolution, the state and the sovereignty of the country", ISNA said.—Reuters

Netanyahu says declined to meet Obama due to US election campaign

JERUSALEM — Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said on Tuesday he had declined an offer to meet US President Barack Obama at the White House later this month because of the heated US election campaign.

The White House first announced on Monday that Netanyahu had turned down the meeting — a move that was seen as the latest episode in a fraught relationship that has yet to recover from deep differences over last year's US-led international nuclear deal with Israel's foe Iran.

A White House spokesman said on Monday Israel had requested a meeting and that two weeks ago Netanyahu was offered a 18 March encounter, but US authorities later learned from media reports that Netanyahu had canceled the visit.

A statement issued by the Prime Minister's office said that while Netanyahu "appreciated Obama's willingness to meet him", he decided "not to go to Washington at this time, at the height of the primary election campaigns in the United States".

Netanyahu was widely seen as favouring Republican challenger Mitt Romney in the 2012 US election, and Israeli political sources said he was eager to avoid giving any impression of favouritism in the current race.—Reuters

Swedish diplomat visits US student detained in North Korea

WASHINGTON — A Swedish diplomat acting on behalf of the United States last week visited a US student who has been held by North Korea since early January, the US State Department said on Monday.

According to North Korean official media, Otto Warmbier, a student at the University of Virginia, was detained for trying to steal a propaganda slogan from his Pyongyang hotel and has confessed to "severe crimes" against the state.

State Department spokesman John Kirby told reporters that a representative from the Swedish embassy in Pyongyang, which acts as the "protecting power" representing US interests in North Korea, had visited Warmbier on Wednesday.

"We are in regular, close coordination with the Swedes and I have nothing additional to add," Kirby said.

The United States and North Korea do not have diplomatic relations and are at odds on many issues, including the North's pursuit of nuclear weapons and its proliferation of nuclear and missile technologies.

US and South Korean troops began annual military exercises on Monday to test their readiness against North Korea, which called the drills "nuclear war moves" and threatened to respond with an all-out offensive.—Reuters

Emergency declared in 15 municipalities, 710 homes flooded

BELGRADE — About 710 households have been flooded and 118 people have been evacuated amid heavy rainfall which caused a state of emergency to be declared in 15 municipalities, the Ministry of Interior (MIA) said in a release on Tuesday.

A state of emergency has been declared in the municipalities of Cacak, Novi Pazar, Kraljevo, Arilje, Lucani, Topola, Pozega, Bajina Basta, Ivanjica, Raska, Ljig, Raca, Kosjeric, Trstenik and in parts of the municipality of Prijepolje.

A total of 118 people have been evacuated, the release said.

Overflowing rivers have flooded around 710 homes in Serbia — in Ivanjica (20), Lucani (45), Gornji Milanovac (5), Arilje (9), Bajina Basta (9), Pozega (35), Cajetina (2), Bujanovac (2), Cacak (150), Novi Sad (70), Uzice (3) and Kraljevo (360). —Tanjug

Now you're talking: human-like robot may one day care for dementia patients

SINGAPORE — With her brown hair, soft skin and expressive face, Nadine is a new brand of human-like robot that could one day, scientists hope, be used as a personal assistant or care provider for the elderly.

The 1.7-metre tall Nadine was created in the likeness of its maker, Nadia Thalmann, a visiting professor and director of Singapore's Nanyang Technological University's Institute of Media Innovation who has spent three decades researching into virtual humans.

Nadine's software allows the robot to express a range of emotions and recall a previous conversation. Nadine is not commercially available, but Thalmann

predicted robots could one day be used as companions for people living with dementia.

"If you leave these people alone they will be going down very quickly. So these people need to always be in interaction," Thalmann said, adding Nadine could provide conversation, tell a story or play a simple game.

Thalmann and her team are also working on emotive robots that can play with children. The project is still in the early development stage and no prototype is available yet.

The child robot would be able to respond to questions, display emotions and recognize people. Aside from being a social companion, the child robot could



A student talks to Nadine, a humanoid created by Nanyang Technological University's (NTU) Professor Nadia Thalmann and her team, at their campus in Singapore, on 1 March. PHOTO: REUTERS

supervise unattended children and inform a parent or nanny if something went wrong, Thalmann said.

There are plans to program the child robot to speak different languages so that it can serve as an

educational tool for children, she said. "A child has toys but they are usually passive. This robot will be an active toy which interacts with the child," said Thalmann. "It will be able to remember what the child likes."—Reuters

First US woman with uterus transplant looks forward to pregnancy

NEW YORK — A 26-year-old woman who received the first transplanted uterus in the United States said on Monday she was looking forward to getting pregnant next year.

"I was told at 16 I would never have children. From that moment on I prayed that God would allow me the opportunity to experience pregnancy," said Lindsey, who did not give her last name to protect the privacy of her three adopted sons.

Lindsey, who was born without a uterus and received a womb from a deceased donor in her 30s, read a brief statement to reporters at a news conference. She was in a wheelchair and is still staying at the hospital for monitoring. The transplant, done in a nine-hour surgery on 24 February, was the first of 10 uterine transplants planned as part of a clinical trial at the Cleveland Clinic, which has screened 250 potential recipients.

The Cleveland team of surgeons who are conducting the trial said they worked closely with doctors in Sweden, where five babies have been born since 2014 to mothers with transplanted wombs.

Women who get a womb transplant in Cleveland will stay in the hospital one to two months following surgery, then return home and lead a fairly normal life on immunosuppression medications to keep their bodies from rejecting the transplanted organ, doctors said at the news conference. Lindsey must wait a year to get pregnant, until she is on a lower dose of anti-rejection drugs, the doctors said. After one or two babies, the uterus will be removed so that she does not have to spend her whole life on anti-rejection drugs, the doctors said. Embryos from her eggs and her husband's sperm will be implanted in her uterus. She cannot conceive through intercourse because the uterine transplant does not include the fallopian tubes.

The baby will be delivered by cesarean section as close as possible to its due date, the doctors said. "Uterus transplant is not just about a surgery and moving a uterus from here to there. It's about having a healthy baby and that goal is still a couple of years away," said obstetrics and gynecology surgeon Rebecca Flyckt, referring to the year-long wait before trying to get pregnant, and the nine-month pregnancy.

The women who will participate in the trial include some born without a uterus — which happens to one in 5,000 women — and others who had a hysterectomy due to cancer or other problems.—Reuters

BioCryst's Zika drug shows promise in mice

NEW YORK — BioCryst Pharmaceuticals Inc said on Monday a dose of its experimental antiviral drug improved survival rates in mice infected with the Zika virus in a preclinical study. Two doses of the drug, BCX443, were tested

against a placebo and an oral antiviral called ribavarin for their effect on survival of immune-deficient mice infected with Zika.

Seven out of eight mice that received the "standard" dose survived but none of the other mice

that received either a low dose, the placebo or ribavarin were alive after 28 days.

The study was conducted at Utah State University under an ongoing programme run by the National Institute of Allergy and In-

fectious Diseases (NIAID), which is part of the National Institutes of Health. The mosquito-borne Zika virus has been linked to brain damage in thousands of babies in Brazil. There is no proven vaccine or treatment for the virus.—Reuters

Being 'out of shape' ups diabetes risk regardless of weight



An overweight woman sits on a chair in Times Square in New York, in 2012. PHOTO: REUTERS

NEW YORK — For adolescents, low cardiorespiratory fitness and poor muscle strength increase their risk for type 2 diabetes later in life, regardless of body weight, according to a study of young men in Sweden.

"Not only were both low aer-

obic and muscular fitness linked with a higher long-term risk of diabetes, but this was true even among those with normal body mass index," said lead author Dr. Casey Crump of the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai in New York City.

These risk factors had a synergistic effect. In other words, the combination of low aerobic and muscular fitness increased diabetes risk more than the sum of the two individual risks, Crump told Reuters Health by email.

The researchers used data on more than one million 18-year-old military conscripts in Sweden between 1969 and 1997, without a history of diabetes.

The researchers followed these men until 2012, identifying type 2 diabetes diagnoses using national hospital and outpatient registries.

About 2%, or 34,000 men, were diagnosed with diabetes during follow-up, which lasted into middle age for most. Half were diagnosed after age 46.

Those who were least fit as 18-year olds were three times more likely to be diagnosed with diabetes than those with better measures of aerobic capacity and strength, even for young men with a healthy body mass index, as reported in the *Annals of Internal Medicine*, 7 March.

"This study showed that fitness traits were important for the prediction of future diabetes at any body weight so it should not be ignored," said Peter T. Katzmarzyk of Pennington Biomedical Research Centre in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, who wrote

an editorial accompanying the study.

But "every study uses a different definition of 'fitness' and it is not really possible to come up with a single number that can define fitness level, especially given the known difference across ages and between men and women," he told Reuters Health by email.

Activity level and genetics are major determinants of physical fitness, but activity level is the most important modifiable factor, Crump said.

"More studies will be needed that measure physical fitness as well as diet and BMI at other time points across the lifespan to examine age windows of susceptibility to these factors in relation to diabetes," he said.

These should include women and other populations, he said.

"Young people should maintain regular exercise and both aerobic and muscular fitness, and avoid barriers to this such as screen time," Crump said.

Current guidelines recommend 60 minutes of exercise daily, most of which should be aerobic activity, but should also include muscle-strengthening activities at least three days per week, he said, but only about half of US children and youth meet these guidelines.—Reuters

EU welcomes Turkey plan to stop migrants, defers decision

BRUSSELS — European Union leaders welcomed Turkey's offer on Monday to take back all migrants who cross into Europe from its soil and agreed in principle to Ankara's demands for more money, faster EU membership talks and quicker visa-free travel in return.

However, key details remained to be worked out and the 28 leaders ordered more work by officials with a view to reaching an ambitious package deal with Turkey at their next scheduled summit, on 17-18 March.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel and British Prime Minister David Cameron among others hailed the surprise Turkish proposal at an emergency summit in Brussels as a potential breakthrough in Europe's politically toxic migration crisis.

More than a million people fleeing war and poverty in the Middle East and beyond have flooded into the EU since early 2015, most making the perilous

sea crossing from Turkey to Greece, then heading north through the Balkans to Germany.

Turkish Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu told EU leaders that Ankara was willing to take back all migrants who enter Europe from Turkey in future, including Syrian refugees, as well as those intercepted in its territorial waters.

"With this game-changing position in fact our objective is to discourage illegal migration, to prevent human smugglers, to help people who want to come to Europe through encouraging legal migration in a disciplined and regular manner," he told a news conference after the summit. In exchange for stopping the influx, he demanded doubling EU funding through 2018 to help Syrian refugees stay in Turkey and a commitment to take in one Syrian refugee directly from Turkey for each one returned from Greece's Aegean islands, according to a document seen

by Reuters. He also asked to bring forward EU visa liberalisation for Turks to June from end-2016 and to open five more negotiating chapters in Turkey's long-stalled EU accession process.

The EU leaders agreed to the earlier target date for visa-free travel provided Ankara meets all the conditions including changing its visa policy towards Islamic states and introducing harder-to-fake biometric passports.

They left open how much additional aid they would provide for refugees in Turkey and made only a vague reference to preparing for a decision on opening more areas of membership talks — a particularly sensitive issue for Cyprus.

European Council President Donald Tusk, who chaired the summit, said the outcome would show migrants that there was no longer a path into Europe for people seeking a better life.

"The days of irregular migration to Europe are over," he told a joint news



Turkish Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu (C) poses with European Union leaders during a EU-Turkey summit in Brussels, as the bloc is looking to Ankara to help it curb the influx of refugees and migrants flowing into Europe, on 7 March 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

conference with Davutoglu.

Merkel, who requested the special summit to show results before regional elections in Germany next Sunday, said: "The Turkish proposal is a breakthrough, if it is implemented, to break the chain from getting into a boat to settling in Europe."

Desperate to end the influx of Syrians, Iraqis, Afghans and others, EU leaders brushed off warnings from the UN High Commissioner for Refugees that the EU

should not shut its doors and should be willing to take in hundreds of thousands more refugees from Turkey.

Davutoglu said the summit showed how indispensable Turkey was for Europe, and Europe for Turkey.

At a preparatory meeting with Merkel and Rutte on Sunday night, he demanded double the 3 billion euros (2.30 billion pounds) earmarked so far to support Syrian refugees in Turkey.

Diplomats said Merkel

and Rutte pressed hard for a deal on the Turkish plan but met resistance from central European states opposed to taking refugee quotas, as well as from Greece and Cyprus which have conditions for the Turkish accession talks. Three days after the Turkish government seized the best-selling opposition newspaper *Zaman*, the leaders said they had discussed the situation of the media in Turkey with Davutoglu.—*Reuters*

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV PANJA BHUM VOY NO (029N)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV PANJA BHUM VOY NO (029N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 9.3.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.W.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 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 INTERASIA LINES

Phone No: 2301185

27 arrested for toxic waste dumping in north China

SHIJIAZHUANG — Police in north China's Hebei Province busted two groups responsible for discharging toxic waste, with one responsible for the death of a restaurant owner.

Twenty-seven suspects who dumped more than 3,400 tonnes of toxic waste were arrested and 20 companies were implicat-

ed as local procurators prepare a lawsuit, a spokesperson with the provincial public security department said.

On 18 May, 2015, the owner of the restaurant near a parking lot in Lixian County, Baoding City died after inhaling poisonous gas from his kitchen sewer. Investigations found that the parking lot operator

allowed illegal dumping of waste liquids, such as acid, in the lot.

The police first broke up a gang responsible for dumping waste at the lot on 17 and 18 May.

But investigations found they were not involved in the restaurant owner's death.

Later, the police captured another group of

people who dumped waste acid at different venues in the county, including the parking lot, between August, 2014, and May, 2015, and identified their waste was the cause of death.

The spokesperson said Hebei has increased efforts to crack down on polluters. In 2015, 2,025 people were arrested for environmental pollution.—*Xinhua*

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV TU SON VOY NO (02/16)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV TU SON VOY NO (02/16) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 9.3.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of S.P.W-3 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
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Swiss arrest 15 in suspected mafia case, plan extradition to Italy

ZURICH — Swiss authorities arrested 15 Italian citizens on Tuesday and plan to extradite them to their home country, where law enforcement officials accuse them of membership in the 'Ndrangheta mafia organisation.

Switzerland's Federal Office of Justice said in a statement that Tuesday's raid was carried out by agents in three cantons: urban Zurich and rural Thur-

gau, in the country's north, and mountainous Valais, in southern Switzerland.

Two of the people taken into custody have already been sentenced in Italy to prison terms of six and nine years, it added.

Two other people have been invited for questioning by Swiss authorities but are not subject to extradition unless they agree to it because they previously obtained Swiss citizenship,

authorities said.

Italy had requested the extradition of the 15 individuals starting a year ago.

Since then, Swiss federal officials said a review of the Italian documents led them to determine that activities of the group's members broke Swiss laws, fulfilling a requirement for their extradition. The crimes carry Swiss jail terms of up to five years.

Based in Calabria,

or the toe of Italy's boot-shaped peninsula, the 'Ndrangheta crime families have also set up criminal activities in northern Italy and in dozens of countries around the world.

Late last year, Italian police arrested nine people and seized 130 kg of cocaine, smashing a major smuggling ring run by the Calabrian mafia that had monopolised sales of the drug in Venice.—*Reuters*

Female farmers in 90 nations face discriminatory land laws

TORONTO —Women in more than 90 countries still lack equal rights to own land, hurting food production and efforts to tackle poverty, Rwanda’s former agriculture minister said.

Nations in eastern and southern Africa have considerably improved their laws to grant land ownership rights to female farmers, Agnes Kalibata said.

But many states in North Africa and South Asia continue to treat women as second class citizens when it comes to land ownership, she said. “In Africa, six out of 10 women depend on the land for their livelihoods,” Kalibata told the Thomson Reuters Foundation ahead of International Women’s Day on Tuesday.

“They must have access to the means of production — the land itself. If we are going to have development across the globe, women need equal access to the land.”

Up to 30 per cent of women have land access in eastern and southern Africa, compared to less than 10 per cent in northern and central Africa, she said.

Without formal land titles, women have a harder time feeding and educating their children.

Agricultural productivity also suffers as female



Rwandan tea pickers carry their load of leaves for weighing near the northern Rwandan town of Mulindi in 2004. PHOTO: REUTERS

farmers are less likely to invest in improving the land without formal ownership, making it harder to feed the 795 million hungry people worldwide.

During her tenure as Rwanda’s agriculture minister which ended in 2014, Kalibata helped enact legal changes that give a woman ownership of half the land her family owns. In many other developing countries, land titles are kept in the husband’s name.

She also made it easier for widows to inherit family plots when their husbands

died. “Incredible things are going on in Rwanda when it comes to women’s land rights,” said Rena Singer, spokeswoman for the Washington-based rights group Landesa.

“If women can’t inherit land, we see the continuation of inequality between genders. The only way most poor people get resources in their lifetime is to inherit - they don’t have the money to purchase land.”

Even in countries like Rwanda with good land laws, lax enforcement and patriarchal customs can

make it harder for female farmers to control their incomes, Kalibata said.

Governments need to invest in education, so rural women understand they have the right to own valuable land assets, she said, as many remain unaware of new laws granting them access. Data on women’s land ownership is limited, but statistics from the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation indicate women control less than a quarter of agricultural land holdings in developing countries—Reuters

Lawsuit over Flint, Michigan, crisis says 17 children have high lead levels

DETROIT — A group of Flint, Michigan, parents and their children filed a class action on Monday alleging that gross negligence by Michigan Governor Rick Snyder and others caused the city’s drinking water to become contaminated with lead.

The lawsuit was filed in Detroit federal court and seeks damages for a proposed class of “tens of thousands” of Flint residents and property owners who have suffered physical or economic injuries. The named plaintiffs are seven residents and their 17 children who lawyers say have heightened lead levels.

The state’s slow response to the water crisis drew sharp rebukes from Democratic presidential candidates Bernie Sanders and Hillary Clinton on Sunday. Both called for Snyder’s resignation. A spokesman has said the Republican governor has no intention of stepping down.

Flint, a predominantly black city of 100,000, was under the control of a state-appointed emergency manager when it switched its water source in April 2014 to the Flint River from Lake Huron. The more corrosive river water

caused lead to leach from city pipes and into the drinking water.

The city switched back last October after tests found high levels of lead in blood samples taken from children, but the drinking water has not returned fully to normal. Flint began replacing lead pipes running to homes on Friday.

Attorneys Hunter Shkolnik and Adam Slater allege in Monday’s lawsuit the governmental defendants failed to take measures required by federal law to eliminate the dangers and downplayed the severity of the contamination to residents.

Children are especially vulnerable to lead exposure, as even small amounts can stunt development, leading to lifelong academic and behavioral problems.

Current and former officials and workers in Michigan and Flint are named as defendants, along with engineering firm Lockwood, Andrews & Newnam, which was hired to assess the feasibility of using Flint River water. A firm representative said the lawsuit mischaracterized its role and it would vigorously defend its position in court.—Reuters

Invitation for Application

Myanmar Carbonix Ltd. (the “Company”) is a joint venture between Myanma Petrochemical Enterprise (“MPE”) and Air Liquide Industrial Services Ptd Ltd (ALIS) incorporated in 1996 to engage in production and distribution of gases in Myanmar. With 20 years of experiences in Myanmar, the Company is serving local public and private sectors through various industries such as food and beverages, healthcare and others. Currently the shareholders of the Company are considering to restructure the joint venture requiring the valuation of its business and shares. The Company together with its shareholders would be pleased to invite consultants (the “Applicants”) to submit a proposal to provide financial advisory service in regard to the valuation of the joint venture and its operating assets. The Applicants shall be able to illustrate deep expertise and capability in providing such service in the related industry. Those with international experiences with local staff will be preferential. The team must comprise at least a) one technical consultant having experience or thorough knowledge on carbon dioxide plant operation and b) one valuation specialist. The Applicants shall submit their application (presentation of the company, curriculum of the consultants, valuation work experience) to Myanmar Carbonix Ltd. not later than 16 March 2016. Please contact (95) 9 500 7269, (95) 9 975 451 835 or send email to myanmar.carbonix@gmail.com. The shortlisted will be announced and contacted directly with further details to provide quotes.

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THE REPUBLIC OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR MINISTRY OF ENERGY MYANMA OIL AND GAS ENTERPRISE (INVITATION FOR OPEN TENDER) (3 / 2016)

Open tenders are invited for supply of the following respective items in United States Dollars and Myanmar Kyats.

Sr.No	Tender No	Description	Remark
(1)	IFB-085(15-16)	Spares for ATLAS COPCO Compressor (8) Items	US\$
(2)	IFB-086(15-16)	Spares for 50 Ton QY 50K Mobile Crane (53) Items	US\$
(3)	IFB-087(15-16)	Assorted Sizes of Hot Bend (1) Lot	US\$
(4)	IFB-088(15-16)	Projector, Computer, Printer, Amplifier, Sound Box and Cordless Mic (5) Items	US\$
(5)	IFB-089(15-16)	Auto Voltage Regulator and Constant Speed Mixer with Microprocessor (2) Items	US\$
(6)	IFB-090(15-16)	1 1/2" Pitch Quadruple Chain (ANSI Standard) with Connecting Link Cotter Pin Type (2) Items	US\$
(7)	DMP/L-016(15-16)	Core Drilling Machine/Atomic Absorption Spectrometers & Binocular Microscope (3) Items	KS
(8)	DMP/L-017(15-16)	Dell Server and Accessories (1) Set	KS

Tender Closing Date & Time - 4-4-2016, 16:30 Hr

Tender Document shall be available during office hours commencing from 7TH March, 2016 at the Finance Department, Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise, No(44) Complex, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar.

Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise
Ph . +95 67 - 411097 / 411206

Rock band AC/DC halts 10 tour dates because lead singer risks hearing loss



Members of the rock group AC/DC (L-R) Stevie Young, Brian Johnson, Chris Slade, Angus Young and Cliff Williams perform during a rehearsal at Stadium Australia in Sydney, Australia, in November, 2015.

PHOTO: REUTERS

LOS ANGELES — Veteran rock band AC/DC has been forced to reschedule 10 dates on the US leg of its “Rock or Bust” world tour because lead singer Brian Johnson could lose his hearing if he takes the stage, the band’s publicist said on Monday.

The band known for its blazing guitars and full-throated

vocals on songs like “Back in Black” and “Highway to Hell” will reschedule dates starting with a Tuesday show in Atlanta through an April 4 date in New York.

“Brian Johnson, has been advised by doctors to stop touring immediately or risk total hearing loss,” the band’s publi-

cist said. The band will perform the shows later in the year, likely with a guest vocalist, it said.

Johnson, 68, joined AC/DC in 1980, taking over lead vocals just after former frontman Bon Scott died. The band, formed in the early 1970s, and was inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame in 2003.—Reuters

British band The 1975 score first No. 1 album on Billboard chart

LOS ANGELES — British alt-rock band The 1975 scored its first chart-topping album on the weekly US Billboard 200 chart on Wednesday, ousting Adele from the top spot.

“I Like It When You Sleep, For You Are So Beautiful Yet So Unaware Of It,” the second album from The 1975, sold 108,000 units across album and song sales and streaming activity in the past week, according to

figures from Nielsen SoundScan.

British singer Adele’s hit “25” album slipped one spot to No. 2 this week with 74,000 units sold. R&B singer Rihanna’s album “Anti” dropped one spot to No. 3 this week while rapper-producer duo Macklemore & Ryan Lewis’ latest record “This Unruly Mess I’ve Made” debuted at No. 4 with 61,000 units sold.

The only other new entry to

crack the top 10 of the Billboard 200 chart this week is thrash metal group Anthrax’s album “For All Kings” at No. 9. On the Digital Songs chart, which measures online single sales, pop singer Kelly Clarkson’s “Piece By Piece” climbed from No. 35 to No. 1 with 210,000 copies sold after the “American Idol” winner returned to the reality singing competition show last week to perform the song.—Reuters

In ‘60 Minutes’ gaffe, actress Kim Cattrall depicted as Canadian PM’s mother

TORONTO — A gaffe by the CBS show “60 Minutes,” which mistakenly aired a photo of the actress Kim Cattrall implying she was the mother of Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, was cheerfully accepted by Cattrall, who said she couldn’t be more proud.

The episode broadcast late Sunday of the widely watched television news magazine featured a profile of Trudeau, who is due to visit Washington this week and

attend a state dinner hosted by US President Barack Obama.

While a reporter on the show talked about Trudeau’s father, Pierre Trudeau, who was prime minister of Canada a generation earlier, and his mother Margaret Trudeau, a black-and-white image of the elder Trudeau and Cattrall depicted together was shown on screen.

Pierre and Margaret Trudeau each dated a string of celebrities

after their marriage broke up, and the sometimes high-profile relationships often made news in Canada, where the prime minister and his young sons were celebrated in the media. The photo of Trudeau and Cattrall was snapped by a photographer of the Toronto Star newspaper in 1981, the paper said on Monday. That was long before the Canadian actress became best known for her role in the hit HBO show, Sex and the City.—Reuters

Jury finds Nashville hotel liable in Erin Andrews stalker video case



PHOTO: REUTERS

LOS ANGELES — A jury on Monday found a Nashville hotel liable for a nude video of sportscaster Erin Andrews that went viral and awarded her \$55 million in damages to be paid by the hotel and the man who shot the video. Andrews sued the Nashville Marriott at Vanderbilt University over a 2008 video of her that was taken by a stalker in an adjoining room and posted on the Internet in 2009. Andrews, a Fox sportscaster who used to work for ESPN, had sought \$75 million in damages.

“We’re disappointed with the outcome,” defense attorney Marc Dedman told reporters. He said he would consult with his clients — the hotel owners and its former operators — on whether they would appeal.

Jurors began deliberating on Monday morning after the two-week trial concluded on Friday.

“I’ve been honored by all the support from victims around the world. Their outreach has helped me be able to stand up and hold accountable those whose job it is to protect every-

one’s safety, security and privacy,” Andrews said in a brief statement on her Twitter feed.

Andrews testified for two days during the trial, saying that since the video was seen by millions of people, she experienced serious mental injury, including depression, crying spells and sleeplessness.

Her lawyers argued that the hotel was negligent and could have prevented the incident.

The video was taken by Michael David Barrett, who pleaded guilty in 2009 to stalking Andrews and making the video. He was sentenced to 30 months in prison.

Barrett asked the hotel to put him in a room next to Andrews’ after an employee confirmed to him that she was staying there on a certain date. He rigged a peep hole to shoot the video of Andrews while she was changing.

Lawyers for the hotel argued that the responsibility was solely Barrett’s and there was no way the hotel could have foreseen what he did.—Reuters

Calvin Harris feels working with Taylor Swift will ruin their relationship

LOS ANGELES — DJ Calvin Harris is reportedly in no mood to collaborate with his girlfriend Taylor Swift.

The 32-year-old Scottish record producer politely denied the offer to join hands with the Grammy-winning songstress, reported Acshowbiz.

“Calvin’s next single is ready but the label is keen for

him to get a big female US star to collaborate on it. They floated the idea of him working with Taylor but he politely declined it. “Calvin has seen how sour things can turn when working with someone he’s dating. He is very serious about Taylor and doesn’t want to rock the boat. He’s smitten,” a source said.—PTI



DJ Calvin Harris is reportedly in no mood to collaborate with his girlfriend Taylor Swift. PHOTO: PTI

Gaza marvels at new Samson



Palestinian Mohammad Baraka, 20, nicknamed by people as Gaza Samson, pulls a water tanker by a rope attached to his teeth as he exercises in Deir al-Balah in the central Gaza Strip on 5 March. PHOTO: REUTERS

GAZA — A modern-day Samson is performing feats of physical strength in Gaza.

“Go Samson go!” yelled a crowd in the Palestinian enclave cheering on Mohammad Baraka as the 20-year-old with the Biblical nickname used a rope around his chest

to pull a 15-tonne petrol tanker.

Baraka, who prefers to be known as “The Incredible”, perhaps because he lacks the original Samson’s long hair, has been putting on displays in his hometown of Deir al-Balah for the past two years, earning a reputation as the

strongest man in the Gaza Strip.

“I was confident there was power inside me and I started to develop it,” said the body-builder and hotel management student.

Traffic came to a halt in Deir al-Balah during the weekend performance as motorists and children on

their way to school stopped to watch Baraka tow the yellow fuel truck. As an encore, he dragged a water tanker by his teeth for about 50 metres (yards).

Baraka also wowed his audience by lying on his back and having knives dropped on his bare stomach from a height of one meter (three feet). Some friends used hammers to shatter bricks placed on his chest.

“At the beginning, some people believed in him, others had their doubts — but everyone was amazed,” said his father, Kamal, a philosophy teacher.

“Mohammad’s power is hidden inside him, it has nothing to do with muscles and training.”

The Biblical Samson was an Israelite warrior who, the Old Testament says, toppled a Philistine temple in Gaza, killing himself and a crowd that had demanded their captured and blinded enemy be brought from prison to entertain them.—*Reuters*

Amid repression, art scene in Thailand’s capital blooms

BANGKOK — On a wall in a northern suburb of Bangkok “Asin Acid” puts the finishing touches to a spray-painted picture of a colourful giant chicken holding a broken loudspeaker.

“The loudspeaker represents the media. The media is trying to say something but is being interrupted,” said Asin, who uses a pseudonym for his street art to protect his identity and said he is inspired by Cranio, a graffiti artist from Brazil.

“The rainbow colours represent freedom,” he said. Thailand’s military seized power nearly two years ago and has censored media, hauled in hundreds of critics for sessions of “attitude adjustment” and snuffed out protests.

Junta leader Prayuth Chan-ocha has threatened to shut down news outlets critical of his government and regularly scolds journalists who he considers straying from the official line.

But state repression has unleashed a wave of artistic expression, say artists and art lovers, and the Thai capital’s art scene is blooming in response to life under junta rule.

“It’s because they can’t talk about it that they’re creating,” said Gili Back, a cafe and gallery owner, referring to Bangkok’s artists.

“You’ll see a lot more graffiti and street art where people are having their say on walls.”

Bangkok’s art scene has traditionally been overlooked in favour of places like Hong Kong but in recent years venues

have mushroomed with Thai and expatriate artists turning shop houses and disused spaces into galleries.

On a recent Friday night a crowd packed into a room at the WTF Bar and Gallery to see ‘This is Not a Political Act’ by Jirawut Ueasungkomsate, an exhibition on cases of enforced disappearance that have taken place under successive governments.

In the pitch-black room audience members shine flashlights on black and white photographs of people, including prominent rights activists, whose whereabouts are not known.

Though not a direct commentary on the junta, it speaks about the impunity enjoyed by state officials, said Jirawut, adding that he was initially scared about holding the exhibition.

The junta, formally known as the National Council for Peace and Order, has shut down some political lectures and talks.

“It is because I am afraid that I have to do it,” said Jirawut.

At ‘The Respectables’, an exhibition by British artist Richard Mead, paintings — of fashion models, the media and political protests — depict different forms of power. “The theme of power and ‘The Respectables’ really goes with the context of Thailand right now. Especially with the type of government we are under,” said Teerapa Pirohakul, an art lover and history lecturer at Bangkok’s Chulalongkorn University.—*Reuters*

Shipwreck found off North Carolina believed to be Civil War-era steamer

WINSTON-SALEM, (N.C) — A shipwreck discovered off the coast of North Carolina is likely one of three Confederate blockade runners known to have been lost in the area, archaeologists said on Monday.

The remains of the iron-hulled steamer were located on 27 February near Oak Island. It would be the first Civil War-era vessel found in the area in decades, said the North Carolina Office of State Archaeology.

Billy Ray Morris, di-

rector of the state’s underwater archaeology branch, said he expected to be able to positively identify the 225-foot-long (68-metre) vessel when he leads a dive team to examine it on Wednesday.

“To turn up a new wreck is a pretty big deal,” he said in a telephone interview, adding sonar images showed the vessel to be largely intact.

The shipwreck was located in the Atlantic Ocean at the mouth of the

Cape Fear River near Fort Caswell, about 30 miles (48 km) downstream from Wilmington, according to the state.

Given the wreck’s size, Morris said he suspected it is the Agnes E. Fry, which was used to elude Union naval vessels that sought to keep supplies from reaching the Confederacy at the port of Wilmington during the Civil War.

The city was the last major Atlantic port to remain under Confederate

control, before falling to Union forces in January 1865.

Two other blockade runners known to have been lost in the area but never located, the Spunkie and Georgianna McCaw, were shorter in length, Morris said.

“It is almost guaranteed to be one of those three blockade runners,” he said. “This one is spot on for where one of those runners ought to be. It’s the right shape.”—*Reuters*



(9-3-2016 07:00am ~ 10-3-2016 7:00am) MST

Today Fresh

07:03	Am	News
07:26	Am	Wet Markets in Yangon: Shwe Pa Dauk Fish Market
07:35	Am	Shrinking Footprints
08:03	Am	News
08:26	Am	Ambassador’s View: China-Myanmar Bilateral Ties
08:36	Am	Myanmar Betels
08:51	Am	Sagaing: Guitars
09:03	Am	News
09:26	Am	Local Tour Guide: Pho Khant
09:39	Am	Buddha Image Built Of Bamboo Strip
09:51	Am	Kayah
10:03	Am	News

10:27	Am	All About Orchids
10:40	Am	Around The Maha Boditahtaung
10:52	Am	Thin Byu Mat

(11:00 Am ~ 03:00 Pm)-Tuesday Repeat(07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)
(03:00 Pm ~ 07:00 Pm)-Today Repeat(07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)

Prime Time

07:03	Pm	News
07:26	Pm	Travelogue “To the coastal region (Myeik - Kawthoung)” (Part-1)
07:50	Pm	Beach Food Delivery
08:03	Pm	News
08:27	Pm	Innovative Handiworks Based On The Art Of Line Drawing
08:46	Pm	Aye Aye Soe: Myanma Pioneer Female Bodybuilder

(09:00 Pm ~ 11:00 Pm)-Today Repeat(09:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)
(11:00 Pm ~ 03:00 Am)-Tuesday Repeat(07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)
(03:00 Am ~ 07:00 Am)-Today Repeat(07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)

(For Detailed Schedule – www.myanmaritv.com/schedule)



(9-3-2016, Wednesday)

6:00 pm	8:40 pm
• Weather Report	• Cartoon Programme
• Music Programme	“BEN 10 ALIEN FORCE (Part-VII)”
6:20 pm	9:00 pm
• Pyi Thu Ni Ti	• Weather Report
6:40 pm	9:10 pm
• Music Programme	• English Premier League (Review) (Part-1)
7:00 pm	9:30 pm
• Korea TV Drama Series	• Music Programme
7:50 pm	10:00 pm
• Korea TV Drama Series	• Myanmar Video

From 8.3.2016 (Wednesday) 06:00 Pm
To 9.3.2016 (Thursday) 06:00 Pm

This schedule will be repeated four times in 24 hours.

Sharapova fails drug test, Nike suspends ties



Maria Sharapova speaks to the media announcing a failed drug test after the Australian Open during a press conference at The LA Hotel Downtown, in Los Angeles, on 7 March . PHOTO: REUTERS

LOS ANGELES — Russian tennis star Maria Sharapova said on Monday she had failed a drug test at the Australian Open due to a substance she was taking for health issues, leading longtime sponsor Nike to announce it was suspending ties

during the investigation.

The 28-year-old Sharapova, a five-time grand slam champion and the highest paid woman in sports, will be provisionally suspended starting 12 March, the International Tennis Federation (ITF) said.

She is the seventh athlete in a month to test positive for meldonium, which is used to treat diabetes and low magnesium, and was only banned by the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) as of 1 January.

"I made a huge mistake. I let my fans down and I let the sport down," said Sharapova, a teenage tennis prodigy who became the third-youngest Wimbledon champion. "I take full responsibility for it."

"I know that with this I face consequences and I don't want to end my career this way. I really hope that I will be given another chance to play this game," former world number one Sharapova told a news conference in a downtown Los Angeles hotel.

Nike, the world's largest sportswear maker, said it was "saddened and surprised" by the news and released a statement saying it was putting ties on hold with the player.

"We have decided to suspend our relationship with Ma-

ria while the investigation continues," it said.

The ITF's anti-doping programme calls for a four-year suspension for a positive test, but that ban can be reduced in various circumstances, such as for first-time offences or if the player shows no significant fault or negligence.

If a player bears no fault or negligence, there is no suspension.

According to Forbes, she earned \$29.5 million in 2015, mostly from endorsements.

Sharapova said her family doctor had been giving her mildronate, which is also called meldonium, for 10 years after she frequently became sick, had irregular EKG results, a magnesium deficiency and a family history of diabetes.

"It is very important for you to understand that for 10 years this medicine was not on WADA's banned list and I had been legally taking the medicine. But on January the first, the rules have changed and meldonium

became a prohibited substance."

WADA declined to comment until ITF issues a final decision. Meldonium is used to treat chest pain and heart attacks among other conditions, but some researchers have linked it to increased athletic performance and endurance. It is listed by WADA among its prohibited metabolic modulators, along with insulin, and some researchers say it can also help recovery.

It is not approved in the United States but is available in Russia, Latvia and other countries in that region.

Over the past month, Russian cyclist Eduard Vorganov, Russian figure skater Ekaterina Bobrova, Ethiopia-born athletes Endeshaw Negesse and Abeba Aregawi, and Ukraine biathletes Olga Abramova and Artem Tyshchenko have all tested positive for meldonium.

Sharapova is the most prominent tennis player to test positive for a banned substance in recent years.—Reuters

Premier skills comes to a close in Myanmar

YANGON — The Premier Skills initiative in Myanmar, run by the Barclays Premier League and British Council, came to a close last week with SAFC's head of international football development hailing the success of the programme.

SAFC's Graham Robinson, who delivered the final stages of the Premier Skills initiative in Myanmar, was impressed by the development of the global grassroots programme in the country that saw all 11 coaches certified fit to deliver Premier Skills training in the country.

The 11 coaches who have become qualified Premier Skills coach educators, were only the second group in Premier Skills' history and the first in Asia, to qualify with Level 1 and Level 2 certifications.

Graham, who led the final stages of the programme, said: "The planning and execution from the coaches was impeccable throughout the week. The sessions were of a fantastic standard on planning, delivery, structure and content."

"I am pleased to say we had nine Level 1 and two Lev-

el 2 certified coach educators at the end of this programme, which is a great achievement, with Myanmar only the second country to have all their candidates achieving coach educator status and the first Asian country to accomplish this.

"I have been very impressed with every aspect of football in this vibrant ever developing country and I am confident with this cohort of coach educators in Myanmar that the Premier Skills initiative is in very safe hands and will continue to thrive and grow."

The Premier Skills initiative began in 2007 and now works in 28 countries around the world.

It draws upon the Premier League's global appeal and expertise in delivering community programmes in the UK, alongside the British Council's global network, track record of delivery and world class expertise in English.

The visit to Myanmar further strengthens Sunderland AFC's long-held commitment and reputation for investing in community and education programmes.—SAFC

Carneiro demands public apology from Mourinho over departure



Former Chelsea Football Club doctor Eva Carneiro (2nd L) arrives with her husband Jason De Carteret to attend a hearing for her constructive dismissal case against the club, at London South Employment Tribunal in Croydon, London, Britain on 7 March. PHOTO: REUTERS

LODON — Former Chelsea team doctor Eva Carneiro has called for a public apology from Jose Mourinho as part of her constructive dismissal and sex discrimination claim against the Premier League champions and the club's former manager.

Carneiro's barrister also said the club and the Gibraltar-born doctor were nowhere near agreeing compensation over her departure ahead of a

hearing at an employment tribunal on Monday.

"We're not expecting a resolution today. The two sides are so far apart financially. And we want Mr. Mourinho to make a public apology," Mary O'Rourke, representing Carneiro, told ITV News.

Carneiro, who worked for Chelsea for six years until she left in September, and Mourinho clashed in the closing minutes of

the opening league match of the season against Swansea City at Stamford Bridge in August.

The 42-year-old ran on to the pitch with physio Jon Fearn after being called on by referee Michael Oliver to treat winger Eden Hazard.

After the game Mourinho described the pair as "impulsive and naive". Carneiro was relieved of her match-day duties soon afterwards.—Reuters