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THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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Daw Aung San Suu Kyi attends 30th ASEAN Summit and related meetings

STATE Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi yesterday attended the Opening Ceremony of the 30th ASEAN Summit at the Philippine International Convention Center in Manila, Republic of the Philippines, 30th ASEAN Summit, 30th ASEAN Summit Leaders' Retreat, Signing ceremony of the ASEAN Declaration on the Role of the Civil Service as Catalyst for Achieving the ASEAN Community Vision 2025, ASEAN Leaders' Interface with representatives of ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly, ASEAN Leaders' Interface with representatives of ASEAN Youth and the Closing Session of 30th ASEAN Summit.

At local standard time 10:30 a.m. State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi attended the Opening Ceremony of 30th ASEAN Summit.

First the chair of the 30th ASEAN Summit, President Rodrigo Duterte and wife welcomed the heads of state and heads of governments of ASEAN countries at the Philippine International Convention Center

Heads of state, heads of government and Ministers of ASEAN member countries Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam, ASEAN Secretary-General, Deputy Secretaries-General of ASEAN, Directors-General of ASEAN, ASEAN Permanent Representatives, members of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, invited guests, local and foreign media and responsible personnel attended the Opening Ceremony.

State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi attends the 30th ASEAN Summit in Manila, Philippines on April 29, 2017. PHOTO MNA

The ceremony was opened with the ASEAN anthem followed by a Philippine traditional dance. Afterwards President Rodrigo Duterte of the Republic of the Philippines gave an opening speech followed by entertainment with ASEAN traditional dances.

Next, the State Counsellor and heads of state and heads of government of ASEAN countries took part in a commemorative photo taking session.

The State Counsellor then attended the 30th ASEAN Summit held in the Convention Center at local standard time 11:15 a.m.

President Rodrigo Duterte of the Republic of the Philippines gave an opening speech at the summit. And then the State Counsellor and heads of state and heads of government of ASEAN countries gave speeches.

At local standard time 1:40 p.m. the State Counsellor attended the 30th ASEAN Summit Leaders' Retreat at the Coconut Palace.

Afterwards at local standard time 3:55 p.m. the State Counsellor attended the signing ceremony of the ASEAN Declaration on the Role of the Civil Service as Catalyst for Achieving the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and signed the declaration together with the heads of state and heads of government of ASEAN countries.

ASEAN Chairman President of the Republic of the Philippines then handed over the ASEAN Declaration signed by the heads of state and heads of government of ASEAN countries to the ASEAN Secretary-General.

During the evening the State Counsellor attended the ASEAN Leaders' Interface with representatives of ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly, ASEAN Leaders' Interface with representatives of ASEAN Youth and the Closing Session of the 30th ASEAN Summit Meeting.

Afterward the State Counsellor and party left Ninoy Aquino International Airport by air and arrived back to Yangon International Airport at 9 p.m. They were welcomed at the airport by Yangon Region Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thein, Ministry of the President's Office Deputy Minister U Min Thu, Yangon Mayor U Maung Maung Soe and officials. —*Myanmar News Agency*

Ayeyawady dolphin found dead with tail chopped off

AN Ayeyawady Dolphin was found dead with tail chopped off floating in the Ayeyawady River in Singu Township on 28th April.

The 6-ft long body of the dolphin was washed up on the shore of the river near Myitkangyi Village by a villager.

"We have already informed the death of the dolphin to a local Fisheries Department," said U Maung Maug Lay who found the fish.

The dwindling numbers of Ayeyawady dolphins, which are facing extinction, is attributed to electrocution fishing and becoming trapped in fishing nets.

A total of 72 dolphins were counted in 2011 and 2014, whereas only 60 dolphins were found in previous years.

According to 2016 February data, there were 65 dolphins in Mandalay and Bhamo towns, three died within 2016.

Ayeyawady dolphins can be found in rivers, lakes and seas across southern Asia, from the northwest Bay of Bengal, in India, to the south of Indonesia.

On this stretch of river in Myanmar the animals have developed a deep bond with local fishermen, who they work with in a generations-old partnership that has become the stuff of local folklore.

With careful choreography, locals call the animals using a throaty purr, splashing their oars and tapping on the side of the boat.

The dolphins signal they are ready to begin with a flick of a fin, before driving the fish towards the fishermen's boats where they are scooped up by waiting nets.— *Aung Thant Khaing*

PHOTO: WIN ZAW OO FACEBOOK

Senior General holds talks with State Secretary of Germany over bilateral relations, cooperation

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing visits Army Combat Training Center in Letzlingen Village. PHOTO: MNA

COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing held talks with Dr. Markus Ederer, State Secretary of the Federal Foreign Office of Germany, at the Federal Foreign Office in Berlin at 11 am local standard time on 28 April.

During the talks, the Senior General expressed his hope that the trip is intended to further boost relations and cooperation between the two armies, saying the move is expected to help support the relations between Myanmar and Germany. The Senior General also gave clarification over democratic transition, peace-making processes and situation in border areas in Myanmar.

Dr. Markus Ederer, State Secretary of the Federal Foreign Office of Germany disclosed that he believes relations and cooperation between the two armed forces will further strengthen and Germany will provide necessary assistance to Myanmar.

Next, the Senior General and party left Berlin Tegel Airport by Helicopter and arrived at Army Combat Training Center in Letzlingen Village where combat troops are trained in combined arms combat under near-operational condition in open terrain, using original weapon systems (with tactical engagement laser simulators, no live rounds) and involving all supporting elements of other branches of service.

At night, the Senior General and wife met with the staff from Myanmar embassy and military attaché office and presented gifts, food and clothing to them at Myanmar ambassador's residence.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Deforestation worst in forest with valuable wood

DEFORESTATION is the worst in the forest, which have the valuable wood the most.

The authorities concerned and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) will co-operate to be able to take legal action against those who are extracting timbers illegally, said an official from the environmental conservation CSO.

Unscrupulous elements are extracting Tamalan and other heard wood from the forests which are near the border areas to exported them chiefly to China, Bangladesh and India.

Deforestation in Myanmar is getting worse year by year on account of illegal timber extraction. The forestry department, local authorities and CSOs are finding effective ways to prevent the deforestation and conserve the forest, said an official from a CSO callled Green Homeland Development Association.

There are nearly 180,000 square km of forest reserve in Myanmar. Among them, 27 per cent are high-quality forests whereas over 50 per cent are low-quality forests. There are also about 50,000 square km of forest buffer; 60 per cent are high-quality forests while 20 per cent are low-quality forests. The deforestation mostly occurs in forest buffers.— *200*

Free online job preparation course to be opened

FREE online training course on 'How to Succeed in the Global Work place' will be opened free of charge on 8 May. The training course will be jointly opened by the British council and the University of Sheffield.

The training course will be held with an aim to make newly appointed employees well prepared for the workplace area. The training course will involved use o f articles, videos clips, interactive materials, exchanges programs, exercises and quizzes.

The training course will enable the attendees to have positive attitude toward their workplace, resulting in achievement of success in his future career.

Those wishing to attend the How to Succeed in the Globla Workplace free online training courses must have intermediate-level proficiency in English and have access to internet. Attendees can download the lecture and, the learning materials for mobile phones.

Those interested to attend the training course have to register their names with the following website: https://www.fitriaearm.com/courses/global-workplace.— *MMAL*

Meeting held for progress of the film industry

THERE would be lots of resourceful debates at the meeting although the extent of Myanmar movie world's development has not been measured yet, said Union Minister for Information Dr Pe Myint yesterday.

Speaking at the meeting for development of Myanmar movie world, the minister said the agenda includes the settlement of disagreements between the film industry and the censor board in connection with the freedom of filming a popular subject among the people of the profession although the industry's development was the main theme. The minister called for candid discussions which would produce fine resolutions and answers for progress of the film industry.

U Lu Min, Chairman of Myanmar Motion Picture Association-MMPA, and Daw Swe Zin Htaik, a member of the video and film censor board, expressed views on the disputable movie dialogues and scenes.

The participants gave suggestions for the development of the industry when U Thura (Zagana).invited open discussions for the theme. After the chairman of the board had made coordination on the discussions, the minister gave the concluding remarks.

Members of the parliament, the board, the MMPA, the Myanmar Media Council, the Myanmar Writers Association, the Myanmar Journalists Association and the media were the participants of the meeting held at Movie Promotion Branch of the Information and Public Relations Department in Yangon. —*Myanmar News Agency*

Union Minister for Information Dr Pe Myint addresses the meeting for development of Myanmar film industry world. PHOTO: MNA

Action to be taken if prohibited food found for sale

THE Food and Drug Administration (FDA) will take legal action against those who use prohibited medicines during the FDA license application process. The FDA has extended by three months the period for applying for licences for the food retailers and wholesale sellers so that a convenient time can be found for all who wish to apply for a license, said an FDA official.

Previously, the application deadline was 31 March. But small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are still selling food at the market during the FDA license application period. There were still inconveniences among the local SMEs, so the FDA extended the application period for three months 30 June. "SMEs can manufacture their products. But I want them to request to apply for the FDA license. We will also try to finish the license applications period in time. The FDA will permit the selling of the products during the license application period. We will also inspect the market during the application process. If we find the shopkeepers selling the dyed food, the germinated food and the food dissolved in formalin, we will take action against them," said Dr. Than Htut, the director-general of the FDA.—*Soe Win (MLA)*

FDA officials inspect retail sellers at the market during the license applying process. PHOTO: SOE WIN (MLA)

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi meets separately with Indonesian President and Brunei Sultan

State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi holds talks with Indonesian President Joko Widodo. PHOTO: MNA

State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi meets Brunei Darussalam Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Muizzaddin. PHOTO: MNA

WHILE in Manila, Philippines, to attend the ASEAN Summit and related meetings, State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi yesterday met separately with Indonesian President Joko Widodo in the Sofitel Philippines Plaza Hotel at local standard time 9 a.m. and Brunei Darussalam Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Muizzaddin in Philippine International Convention Center at local standard time 10:20 a.m.

During the meeting with the Indonesian President, improving bilateral relations this year was noted and discussions were held on increasing cooperation in the economic sector, stability and development in the Rakhine State and cooperation in regional and international matters.

In the meeting with the Brunei Darussalam Sultan, matters relating to increasing bilateral relations, cooperating in the energy and agriculture sector were discussed.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Fire burns down two homes in Maungtaw Township

A FIRE broke out in Myinlwut, Maungtaw Township on Friday evening, destroying two houses.

The fire was caused by an electric short circuit in Mawlawi Marmatno's house in Ywar Hown village, Ale ward in Myinlwut, and put under controlled by villagers.

Two homes worth Ks 38000 were engulfed in the fire.

The suspect has been investigated at the Ale Than Kyaw Police Station.—*State Counsellor's Office Information Committee*

Outstanding students tour Bagan and Mandalay

A total of 176 outstanding students of ninth grade and 18 teachers arrived Bagan yesterday to make excursion tour of the archaeological zone.

Before the Bagan trip, the students visited Mandalay's renowned Myanansankyaw golden palace and Maha Myat Muni Pagoda.

Upon arrival to multi-talented youth camp (Bagan) in the afternoon, they were greeted by Nyaung U District Education Officer U Nay Win, teachers, students and scouts.

The outstanding students will take a recreation at Myanan-bon Royal Emerald River View Resort during the trip.—*Naing Lin Kyi*

Outstanding students making an excursion tour in Mandalay. PHOTO: MNA

Men of letters have the same wish for progress of the freedom of literary talks

PAPER reading session on translated literature and summer book festival were held at Central Press of the Printing and Publishing Department on Theinbyu Road, Yangon, yesterday morning, officially opened by Union Minister for Information Dr. Pe Myint, Chairman of paper reading session organizing committee U Tin Hlaing (Ledwintha Saw Chit) and Chairman of Myanmar Publishers Association Dr. Tha Tun Oo.

Union Minister Dr. Pe Myint, U Tin Hlaing (Ledwintha Saw Chit), Dr. Tha Tun Oo open paper reading session and summer book festival. PHOTO: MNA

In his address, Dr. Pe Myint said it was the third time, and during the first one, the first ever debate on the political issue by literati could be held. Later a paper reading session on contemporary literature was held.

Normally, men of letters have the same wish for progress of the freedom of literary talks. Myazeti stone inscriptions written in four languages is a proof that translated literature flourished since then. Myanmar literature is close to Buddhist literature, Pali and Sanskrit. The style of writing was invented by ancient Myanmar literati by adding their artistic creations in the translated works on the said three languages. And Myanmar literature gained fast development based on literatures that came in from India, although there were own creations. During the colonial era, there were joint translated works between Myanmar intellectuals and foreign counterparts. Translated works could open the eyes and ears of Myanmar people.

Later, the paper reading session followed, during which questions raised by four participants were answered by the resource persons. The paper reading continued today.—*Myanmar News Agency*

ICRC visits Buthidaung Correctional Facility for 3rd time

A delegation of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) visited the Correctional Facility in Buthidaung, Rakhine State, yesterday for the third time.

During the visit, the 10- member delegation led by Mr. Jacque Ducros De Lafarga De Romefort from ICRC interviewed inmates.

At noon, five members of the delegation discussed with officers of the prison and gave suggestions to them while other delegation members led by Mr. Makoto Abe interviewed an inmate.—*Myanmar News Agency*

ICRC delegation visits Correctional Facility in Buthidaung. PHOTO: MNA

China to begin construction of manned space station in 2019

BEIJING — China will begin construction of a permanent manned space station in 2019 after carrying out a successful in-orbit refueling from its Tianzhou-1 cargo spacecraft, officials leading the project said on Friday.

The Tianzhou-1, China's first cargo spacecraft, launched on 20 April and completed the first of three planned docking attempts with the orbiting Tiangong-2 spacelab two days later, state media reported.

The successful five-day refueling, directed from technicians on Earth and completed on Thursday, is a key milestone toward China's plans to begin sending crews to a permanent space station by 2022.

"This again announces the ambition and aspiration of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese people, and our resolute confidence in becoming a major space power," the space station project's supervisor Wang Zhaoyao told a news briefing in Beijing.

"After completing experimental stage spaceflight missions, we will enter the development and construction phase. According to our plans we will carry out the assembly and construction of China's manned space station between 2019 and 2022."

President Xi Jinping has prioritized advancing China's space programme to strengthen national security. The Central Military Commission, chaired by Xi, sent a letter congratulating staff of the Tianzhou-1 mission for "realizing our unremitting space dream", according to the official Xinhua news agency.

The US Defence Department has highlighted China's increasing space capabilities, saying it was pursuing activities aimed at preventing other nations from using space-based assets in a crisis.

China insists it has only peaceful ambitions in space, but has tested anti-satellite missiles. —*Reuters*

Long March-7 rocket and Tianzhou-1 cargo spacecraft are seen as they are transferred to a launching spot in Wenchang, Hainan province, China on 17 April, 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

Malaria, wiped out in US, still plagues American travelers

WASHINGTON DC — US public health officials declared victory over malaria in 1951, but the mosquito-borne disease continues to infect and kill American travelers, a new study shows.

From 2000 through 2014, more than 22,000 people with malaria were hospitalized in the US, including 182 who died from it, according to estimates published in the American Journal of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene.

Using hospitalization data, researchers found an average of more than 2,100 US malaria cases a year — nearly double the number previously reported.

Most of those hospitalized for malaria in the US are men. A majority are black, most likely foreign-born individuals who traveled abroad, frequently to their countries of origin, where they often fail to realize they are no longer immune to the deadly parasitic disease, lead author Diana Khuu said in a phone interview.

"We need to encourage travelers to seek pre-travel advice and to use personal protective measures against mosquitoes and anti-malarial medications when they travel to malarious countries," said Khuu, an epidemiologist at the UCLA Fielding School of Public Health.

"Because a lot of people are not using these preventive measures, it's resulting in a lot of hospitalizations and in half a billion dollars in hospital charges from 2000 to 2014," she said.

Insecticide-treated bed nets have been credited with spurring a 41 per cent drop in worldwide malaria incidence and a 62 per cent drop in worldwide malaria deaths over the past 15 years.

Despite the progress, malaria infected an estimated 212 million people and killed an estimated 429,000 in 2015. Nearly 90 per cent of cases were in children under age 5 in Africa, where malaria claims a child's life every two minutes, according to a statement from the National Institutes of Health this week on World Malaria Day on 25 April.

Meanwhile, the number of imported malaria cases has steadily increased in the US.

Dr Stephen Gluckman of the Perelman School of Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia sees six to 10 patients a week who travel to malaria-risk areas in Africa, India, Southeast Asia and parts of South America.

He attributes the increase in US malaria cases to an increase in Americans traveling to developing parts of the world where the disease continues to threaten lives. He advises people traveling outside the US to consult a "bona fide" travel clinic before departing. "There are several options and significant nuances in advice for preventing malaria," he said in an email.

Checking the US Centres for Disease Control and Prevention website for travelers (bit.ly/2k74gQd) also can be helpful, but Gluckman, who was not involved with the study, believes individualized advice is superior.

He warned that people infected with malaria might carry the disease for months or years before falling ill. In the meantime, an infected pregnant woman could pass malaria to her unborn child, and a mosquito could bite an unsuspecting infected person and pass malaria on when it bites another person.

Moreover, Gluckman warned, there is "a very large group of at-risk people who rarely get screened."

"These people grew up in developing parts of the world but now live in the US," he said. "When returning to visit their country of origin, they very rarely seek any prevention advice because they grew up in a community that did not have access to prevention."

"They are difficult to reach but clearly could be accessed by the proper public health programs in the communities where they live in the USA," he said.

People who grew up in malaria-endemic areas, especially those who were exposed as children, do gain some natural protection, but they still can get malaria and therefore need to take preventive steps. In addition, spending long periods in a malaria-free area, like the US, can reduce immunity and render people more susceptible to infection.

"You can develop immunity," Khuu said. "But after you move away, that immunity wanes. If they go back to visit, they might not use the preventive measures because they might think they're still immune."

And why do men appear to be more vulnerable, comprising 60 per cent of the US cases? Khuu believes they are less likely to seek pre-travel advice, less likely to use mosquito repellent and take anti-malarial medication, and their sweat might be more attractive to mosquitoes.—*Reuters*

No vote on healthcare bill this week in US House

WASHINGTON — US House leaders have decided against holding a vote on a reworked healthcare system overhaul this week after failing to find the necessary support, congressional aides said on Thursday.

White House officials had urged a floor vote on the legislation before President Donald Trump's 100th day in office on Saturday, hoping to follow through on a campaign promise to repeal and replace the 2010 Affordable Care Act, also known as Obamacare.

Advocates had hoped to raise enough support for the measure after a group of hard-line Republican conservatives endorsed an amended version on Wednesday.

But by Thursday evening Republican leaders still had not collected enough votes from moderate Republicans whose backing was also needed for passage in the House, given united Democratic opposition.

"We won't vote this week," said one House Republican aide, who asked not to be named. Next week was not ruled out, another indicated. "We'll call a vote when we have the votes."

Representative Pete Sessions, a senior House Republican, also left the door open to a vote next week. Possibly referring to Trump, Sessions said that a lot of people had tried to rush the legislation to the floor, but House Republican leaders want to "allow the time to do it right.

"I said it will find its time and I am satisfied we are moving at a pace, keeping people engaged," he said at a late night session of the House Rules Committee he chairs.

The Republican healthcare bill would replace Obamacare's income-based tax credit with an age-based credit, roll back an expansion of the Medicaid government health insurance programme for the poor and repeal most Obamacare taxes.

The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office had estimated 24 million fewer people would have insurance than under the original version. House leaders brought the bill to the floor last month after Trump demanded a vote, but yanked it after a rebellion by Republican moderates and the party's most conservative lawmakers, in a major setback for Trump.

An amendment drafted by Representative Tom MacArthur won over conservatives in the hardline Freedom Caucus this week, reviving some hopes that the bill could still pass. The amendment would allow states to seek waivers from some provisions. Among these are one mandating that insurers charge those with pre-existing conditions the same as healthy consumers, and that insurers cover so-called essential health benefits, such as maternity care.

But a number of centrist Republicans still opposed the measure. "Protections for those with pre-existing conditions without contingency, and affordable access to coverage for every American, remain my priorities for advancing healthcare reform, and this bill does not satisfy those benchmarks for me," Representative Ryan Costello of Pennsylvania said in a statement posted on social network Twitter on Thursday.

Some outside groups like the American Medical Association weighed in against the legislation, saying it would cost millions their health care coverage. The bill's future is further clouded in the Senate.—*Reuters*

LOCAL Business

MRTV officials and 5 Content Providers for FTA channels meet

MRTV officials hold talks with Content Providers for FTA channels. PHOTO: MNA

FOR broadcasting media development, Myanma Radio and Television (MRTV) of Ministry of Information and 5 private companies permitted as content providers for digital free-to-air channels in multi-channel playout system of MRTV met yesterday afternoon at MRTV meeting hall on Pyay Road, Yangon.

At the meeting, MRTV Director General U Myint Htwe and responsible persons from these 5 companies coordinated and discussed about television broadcasting technology, policy requirements and quick implementation of television broadcasting programs.

The 5 companies were Mizzima Media Co., Ltd., Young Investment Group Co. Ltd., Kaung Myanmar Aung Co., Ltd., Fortune International Ltd. and DVB Multi Media Group Co., Ltd. They were announced as Content Providers for Digital Free-to-Air channels in Multi-Channel Playout System of MRTV on 11 April.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Russia to import Myanmar mango next month

POTENTIAL buyers from the Russian Federation will come to Myanmar in the second week of May to purchase the popular variety of mangoes, according to the Myanmar Mango Growers and Exporters Association.

The vice chairman of the association said that Russian buyers are mainly interested to import Seintalone (Diamond Solitaire) mango produced in the country.

The Seintalone mango is one of many mango varieties available in Myanmar and it has been regarded as the best mango in the country because of its delightful aroma, sweetness, juiciness and non-fibrous nature. This kind of mango has become highly popular in the global market since last year. The association's spokesperson said that technical assistance is required for enhancing the quality of mango product and the association has shared techniques of nurturing the fruit to the mango growers.

The yields of Seintalone mango plantations continue to drop in the country due to untimely weather occurrences this season. Despite bad yield, exporters expect that the price of mango to reach Ks2.4 million per ton owing to high foreign exchange rate. The Seintalone mango mostly goes to China, Singapore and Thailand. According to the local exporters, the export prize of a ton of Seintalone mango was between Ks1.2 million and Ks1.5 million last April. The mango prices have increased to Ks2 million per ton this year.—*200*

Trade with ASEAN countries reaches $8.5 billion

EXTERNAL trade between Myanmar and other ASEAN member states before the end of the 2016-17 fiscal year hit over US$8.5 billion, the Commerce Ministry reported.

From April of last year to February of this year, the import of commodities from those trading partners exceeded $5.7 billion, while the export value reached $2.849 billion in toto.

Neighbouring Thailand is ranked first in the list of top five ASEAN traders with $3.871 billion, including $2.645 billion from normal trade and $1.226 billion from border trade, followed by Singapore with $2.649 billion, Malaysia with $825 million, Indonesia with $719 million and Vietnam with $428 million. Bilateral trade with the Philippines stood at over $51 million. However, trade with Brunei, Laos and Cambodia were lower than $3 million.

Myanmar monthly exports a wide variety of agricultural products, dried and fresh marine products, minerals and industrial finished goods. The major imported products include consumer goods, electronic devices, capital goods, automobile and accessories, and intermediate goods.

The trade with ASEAN countries was $8.697 billion in 2011-2012 FY, $8.411 billion in 2012-2013 FY, $11.038 billion in 2013-2014 FY, $12.604 billion in2014-2015 FY and $10.432 billion in 2015-2016 FY.—*Shwe Khine*

Over 800 units of Bo Ba Htoo Housing (Phase2) to be sold in installment, bank loans

THE Yangon City Development Committee announced that it will sold more than 800 units of the phase two section of Bo Ba Htoo Housing Complex which is projected to be finalised in three years.

Located in Ward-48, Dagon Myothit (North) Township, Yangon, the phase two section of the housing project was started since December 2015. Upon completion of the project, there will be 20 eight-storey buildings with 900 sq ft apartments, and eight-story buildings with 600 sq ft apartments.

The project is being implemented under the Yangon City Development Committee's supervision and constructed by the Myanmar V-Pile Company, with the city authorities planning to sell a total of 864 apartments in advance through installment plan and bank loans.

Authorities invite public to send their application forms to the YCDC's Engineering Department (Buildings) between 2 May and 2 June of this year. Application forms are available at the department and will be sold for Ks1,000 per head.

According to its announcement on Friday, the 917 sq ft apartments will be sold for Ks37.7 million, 877 sq ft apartments for Ks35.9 million, 614 sq ft apartments for Ks28.5 million and 565 sq ft apartments for Ks26.7 million.—*Shwe Khine*

Agri-exports expected to exceed US$3 billion in current FY

THE export of agriculture products is expected to exceed US$3 billion in the current fiscal year, according to a spokesperson of the Trade Promotion Department under the Commerce Ministry.

The country earned over $2.9 billion from the export of agriculture commodities to foreign buyers last FY. The department is putting forth continuous efforts to increase the export of the country's products and seeking new markets under the national export strategy.

The largest barrier to penetrate the international market is cost of production. Producers are searching a cost-effective way to gain a handsome profit.

According to its national plan for 2017-18 FY, the Commerce Ministry targets to earn $3.3 billion from the export of oil and related products, $1.7 billion from CMP garment export, $1.2 billion from minerals and gems export, over $500 million from marine products and $15 million from animal products.—*Swe Nyein*

PM Abe says North Korean missile launch grave threat to Japan

LONDON — North Korea's decision to test-fire a ballistic missile represents a grave threat to Japan, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said in London on Saturday, calling on the United States and China to keep up pressure on Pyongyang.

North Korea test-fired a missile shortly after US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson warned that failure to curb Pyongyang's nuclear and ballistic missile programmes could lead to "catastrophic consequences".

"Despite strong warnings by the international community, North Korea today went through its ballistic missile launch. It is a grave threat to our country. This is absolutely not acceptable. We strongly condemn such acts," Abe told reporters, speaking through a translator in London.

US President Donald Trump has said a major conflict with North Korea was possible and that military options remain on the table. Russia and China have warned against the use of military force.

Abe said further provocation by North Korea was "fully conceivable", calling for solidarity from the international community.

"We'd like to maintain a close coordination with the United States, our ally, to maintain a high state of alert. We'd like to be water-tight to ensure safety for our citizens," he said.

Trump has praised Chinese President Xi Jinping for his role in trying to calm the situation in North Korea. Abe welcomed Trump's engagement with Xi and said the role of China was extremely important.

"As prime minister I am focusing on China's response," he said. "China, I hope, will play a constructive role ... it is my high expectations that China will perform its role properly."—*Reuters*

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Philippine leader says North Korea's Kim "wants to end the world", urges US restraint

Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte speaks during the opening ceremony of the 30th ASEAN Summit in Manila, Philippines on 29 April 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

MANILA — hilippine President Rodrigo Duterte on Saturday urged the United States to show restraint after North Korea's latest missile test and to avoid playing into the hands of leader Kim Jong Un, who "wants to end the world".

Duterte said the Southeast Asia region was extremely worried about tensions between the United States and North Korea, and said one misstep would be a "catastrophe" and Asia would be the first victim of a nuclear war.

The United States, Japan, South Korea and China, he said, were sparring with a man who was excited about the prospect of firing missiles.

Duterte is current chairman of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) and was due to speak by telephone to US President Donald Trump later on Saturday. He said he would urge Trump not to get into a confrontation with Kim.

"There seems to be two countries playing with their toys and those toys are not really to entertain," he told a news conference after the ASEAN summit in Manila, referring to Washington and Pyongyang.

"You know that they are playing with somebody who relishes letting go of missiles and everything. I would not want to go into his (Kim's) mind because I really do not know what's inside but he's putting mother earth, the planet to an edge."

North Korea test-fired a ballistic missile on Saturday shortly after US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson warned that failure to curb Pyongyang's nuclear and ballistic missile programmes could lead to "catastrophic consequences".

US and South Korean officials said the test appeared to have failed, in what would be the North's fourth straight unsuccessful missile test since March.

Duterte said it was incumbent upon the United States as the a responsible country to not rise to Kim's provocations. He said he was sure Trump had cautioned his military not to allow the situation to spiral out of control.

"Who am I to say that you should stop? But I would say 'Mr. President, please see to it that there is no war because my region will suffer immensely'," Duterte said.

"I will just communicate to (Trump), 'just let him play... do not play into his hands'."

He added: "The guy (Kim) simply wants to end the world, that is why he is very happy. He is always smiling. But he really wants to finish everything and he wants to drag us all down." —*Reuters*

Independence push threatens Hong Kong's autonomy, says Beijing official

HONG KONG — The legal chief of Beijing's representative office in Hong Kong said on Saturday growing calls for independence could make the territory's current "one country, two systems" constitutional framework unsustainable.

Chinese leaders are increasingly concerned about a fledgling independence or secessionist movement in the former British colony of Hong Kong, which returned to mainland rule in 1997 amid promises of wide-ranging autonomy including judicial independence under the formula of "one country, two systems".

The unusually strong comments by Wang Zhenmin, an official at the Central Liaison Office, China's top representative office in Hong Kong, came ahead of the 20th anniversary of the handover of power to China. Hong Kong will be on high alert ahead of the July 1st celebrations when President Xi Jinping is widely expected to attend the swearing in of leader elect Carrie Lam. Speaking at a seminar in the territory, broadcast on local cable television, Wang attacked the separatist movement and said Hong Kong must act to defend China's sovereignty.

"The more Hong Kong fails to actively defend (China's) sovereignty, national security and development interests in accordance with the law, the more wary the country will be about Hong Kong's high degree of autonomy and the 'two systems'. There would be less room for its autonomy," Wang said.

He said Beijing was also "disheartened" at the prospect separatists might enter the Hong Kong establishment or education system.

"If the two systems have been severely disrupted or even been used to damage one country, (China) will feel very unsafe…If one's own existence has become a problem, no nation will continue the arrangements of 'two systems'," he said, according to footage of the same speech carried on government funded RTHK.

China has promised Hong Kong's capitalist system would remain unchanged for 50 years, but it has not made clear what will happen in 2047. Some in Hong Kong fear Beijing may look to impose mainland rule on the territory before then.

Last year, China's parliament intervened in a Hong Kong court case by passing a ruling on the Basic Law, as the territory's mini-constitution is known.

It was one of Beijing's most direct interventions into Hong Kong's legal and political system since the 1997 handover. Wang previously said on Friday that Hong Kong should have "respect and awe" for China's system, to which it would have to adapt, government funded RTHK reported on Friday.—*Reuters*

N Korea test-fires ballistic missile, appears to have failed — S Korea

SEOUL — North Korea test-fired a ballistic missile on Saturday from a region north of its capital, but it appears to have failed, South Korea's military said, defying intense pressure from the United States and the reclusive state's main ally, China.

An official at South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff confirmed the launch but did not immediately have any further information. Yonhap news agency said the missile appeared to have blown up a few seconds into flight.

The test came as US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson warned the United Nations that failure to curb North Korea's nuclear and ballistic missile programs could lead to 'catastrophic consequences'.

US President Donald Trump told Reuters in an interview on Thursday a "major, major conflict" with North Korea was possible over its nuclear and ballistic missile programs.

Trump praised Chinese leader Xi Jinping for "trying very hard" to rein in Pyongyang.

North Korea's leader Kim Jong Un watches a military drill marking the 85th anniversary of the establishment of the Korean People's Army (KPA) in this handout photo by North Korea's Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) made available on April 26, 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

But both China and Russia rebuked Washington's threat of military force at a meeting of the UN Security Council on the matter.

Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi told the 15-member council it was not only up to China to solve the North Korean problem.

"The key to solving the nuclear issue on the peninsula does not lie in the hands of the Chinese side," Wang told the council in blunt remarks that Tillerson later rebuffed.

Tensions on the Korean peninsula have been rising as North Korea celebrates a number of key anniversaries, with both sides staging major military drills.

In a show of force, the United States is sending the USS Carl Vinson aircraft carrier group to waters off the Korean peninsula, where it will join the USS Michigan, a nuclear submarine that docked in South Korea on Tuesday. South Korea's navy has said it will hold drills with the US strike group. —*Reuters*

Strong earthquake hits off Philippines, no major impact seen

MANILA — A strong earthquake measuring 7.2 struck off the coast of Mindanao island in the Philippines on Saturday, and the country's seismology agency advised people to stay away from coastal areas but expected no major damage.

There were no immediate reports of destruction or casualties, but witnesses said the quake was very strong and shook the ground and walls.

The Pacific Tsunami Warning Centre said there was a risk big waves could spread 300 km (190 miles) away from the epicentre, reaching as far away as Indonesia.

The Philippines Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Philvolcs) said no tsunami warning was issued after a quake it had measured at 7.2. The US Geological Survey downgraded its own assessment of the magnitude to 6.8.

The Philippines is on the geologically active Pacific Ring of Fire and experiences frequent earthquakes, particularly in the south, although there were several last month in Batangas on the main island of Luzon, felt also in the capital Manila.

The earthquake was about 57 km (35 miles) southwest of Sarangani province, the southernmost part of Mindanao, the biggest island in the south of the archipelago nation.

"It was so strong, you could hear the ground shaking for almost 10 seconds," Jenifer Bugtay, who works at a beach-front resort in Sarangani, said by telephone.

"This is the strongest earthquake I have experienced," she said. "The wall looked like it would fall."

Philvolcs head Renato Solidum said there was no need to evacuate the area. The quake was at sea, and deep, although the public had been advised to stay away from the coast in the south for the next few hours.

Solidum said no major damage was anticipated.

"Many of our southern cities are far from the epicenter so we are not expecting much damage," he told news channel ANC.

"We have had some aftershocks, we expect that."

Janet Bongolan, tourism officer at the Tuka Marine Park in Sarangani province, said people spilled out of their homes and into the streets during the earthquake, but most had returned and there was no sign of panic.

"There's no news here that there will be a tsunami. But we are watching out for aftershocks. We are careful here," she said by telephone. —*Reuters*

Russia backs Chinese proposal to resolve N Korea issue

MOSCOW — Russia said on Saturday it supports China's "double suspension" proposal to help resolve the crisis on the Korean Peninsula by getting North Korea to halt its nuclear and ballistic missile programs in exchange for the United States and South Korea suspending their large-scale joint military exercises.

The Russian Foreign Ministry, in a statement, said the support was conveyed in a UN Security Council ministerial meeting on the North Korea issue held in New York on Friday, at which Moscow was represented by Deputy Foreign Minister Gennady Gatilov.

Speaking at that meeting, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi said the "suspension for suspension" proposal aims to get all parties back to the negotiation table and is just a "first step" toward the eventual goal of denuclearizing the Korean Peninsula and building a peace mechanism there. "The dual-track approach aims to promote parallel progress in the denuclearization of the peninsula and the establishment of a peace mechanism in a synchronized and reciprocal manner, ultimately achieving both goals together," Wang explained.

On Friday, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Geng Shuang said China's proposal "is gaining understanding and support of more and more countries."

But the United States and South Korea both rebuffed the proposal just hours after Wang first made it in early March.

US Ambassador to the United Nations Nikki Haley said then, "We have to see some sort of positive action by North Korea before we can take them seriously," while her South Korean counterpart Cho Tae Yul said, "This is not the time for us to talk about freezing or dialogue with North Korea."—*Kyodo News*

China deports US citizen convicted of espionage

SHANGHAI — China has deported a US citizen who was convicted of espionage this week after being held without trial for two years, removing a source of friction between Washington and Beijing.

Sandy Phan-Gillis was arrested in March 2015 while about to leave mainland China for the Chinese-ruled, former Portuguese colony of Macau. A court on Tuesday ordered her deportation after sentencing her to three-and-a-half years in prison for espionage.

She left China on Friday from the southern city of Guangzhou and arrived in Los Angeles on the same day, her husband said in a statement. The Chinese government has not released details of the charges against Phan-Gillis. Her lawyer told Reuters on Tuesday he could not reveal details of the case because it involved "state secrets".

Her husband, Jeff Gillis, said China had accused Phan-Gillis of visiting the country twice on spy missions in 1996 and working with the US Federal Bureau of Investigation to capture two Chinese spies in the United States and turn them into double agents. The deportation comes at a time of warming China-US relations after US President Donald Trump met Chinese President Xi Jinping in Florida in early April. In an interview with Reuters on Thursday, Trump called Xi a "good man" and praised him for his efforts to press North Korea to give up its development of nuclear weapons and long-range missiles. Negotiations to secure the release Phan-Gillis intensified when Secretary of State Rex Tillerson visited Beijing in March, according to the San Francisco-based Dui Hua Foundation. "Sandy is overjoyed to be reunited with friends and family, and sends out her thanks to the many people who worked tirelessly for her release," Gillis said.—*Reuters*

US carrier Carl Vinson sails into Sea of Japan, conducts drill

TOKYO — The US aircraft carrier Carl Vinson sailed into the Sea of Japan on Saturday en route to waters near the Korean Peninsula and conducted a joint drill with Japanese Maritime Self-Defence Force destroyers, the MSDF said

As part of US military maneuvers in the wake of continuing ballistic missile and nuclear tests by North Korea, the Carl Vinson strike group has already conducted a series of joint exercises with the MSDF and the Air Self-Defence Force as it headed north from the Philippine Sea.

The US carrier sailed through the Tsushima Straits between Japan's southwest and South Korea, completing the exercise in the early afternoon, according to the MSDF. It is also expected to conduct a drill with the South Korean navy. North Korea fired a ballistic missile early Saturday, but the launch is believed to have failed with the missile falling on land within North Korea. —*Kyodo News*

Opinion

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Due to limitation of space we are only able to publish "Letter to the Editor" that do not exceed 500 words. Should you submit a text longer than 500 words please be aware that your letter will be edited.

We can build up a good nation with able & morally right civil service personnel

Khin Maung Oo

NOWADAYS, news and photos of collapsed public buildings, due to poor quality and standard at the time of construction, though they were recently built are ubiquitous. With criticism and public opinions over these news and photos, good tidings that buildings under the Ministries of Education and Health will be built by the Ministry of Construction occupied social media website pages and print media. The news in fact has highlighted that bribery and corruption, poor management and supervision in building public infrastructure by using public finance led to the emergence of such buildings of poor quality and to the untimely ruins.

Simultaneously, news about the arrests of corrupt staff are being action against was frequently found. And, we also found that there were disagreements over deeds of some staff.

Here, civil service personnel means those from the executive pillar out of the three pillars of the State, being a major driving force for the existence of good governance. In the task of carrying out the national development after laying out policies on people's needs and desires, civil service personnel are those who must implement mainly. This being so, good morality of every individual of staff is a very basic need and, so that they will become dignified and respected organizations for the people. Contrariwise, it is noteworthy for us that those good-for-nothing service-men who lack management skills, fail to abide by codes of practice & violate rules, regulations and disciplines are apt to gradually cause people's trust and respect toward respective organizations, institutions and working places come to nothingness.

With a view to improving codes of practice of civil service-men, law for civil service personnel had been enacted in 2013, with ethics for civil service personnel to follow also already promulgated.

Ethnics include laying stress on the interest of the people, protecting wastage of public properties and finances, refraining from misappropriation of authorities conferred upon as a responsibility for one's own sake, keeping away from exercising bribery and corruption and abstaining oneself from earning money by dubious ways, apart from legal earnings.

In accord with the motto, "We can build up a good nation with able and morally right civil service personnel," "Having able and morally right civil service personnel in the executive pillar" is a major necessity in building a nation. Accordingly, we firmly assume that it is a national task for us to compulsorily foster good civil service-men and to concurrently remove evil ones, for the benefit of the State and its People.

Myanmar pushes through with investment reforms

Oxford Business Group

Figures released in early April by the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA) reveal that Myanmar attracted $6.6bn worth of FDI in FY 2016/17 – which ended on March 31 – marking the first decline in international inflows since FY 2012/13. PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR

REFORMS to legislation governing investment in Myanmar, including streamlined procedures and strengthened investor rights, aim to reverse a downward trend in foreign direct investment (FDI) seen in the previous fiscal year.

While the most recent full-fiscal-year FDI total was higher than the $6bn initially forecast, it was also around 30% lower than the previous 12-month figure.

This decrease took place against a noticeable shift in the sector make up of Myanmar's FDI portfolio, with the energy industry's contribution falling from 50% of foreign inflows in FY 2015/16 to 36% in the last fiscal year.

Many other sectors, however, saw their contributions rise, including the transport and communications industry, which achieved $3.08bn of FDI in FY 2016/17, an increase of 60%, bringing its contribution to the total from 20% to 46%.

Streamlining processes, levelling playing fields

To reverse the overall decline in FDI inflows, Myanmar is implementing a series of reforms to foreign and domestic investment legislation. Foremost of these initiatives is the new Myanmar Investment Law (MIL), ratified last October and progressively coming into force.

The MIL serves to bring investment law under one regulatory roof, combining the Myanmar Citizen Investment Law and the Myanmar Foreign Investment Law.

The new law extends automatic investment protection to both citizens and foreign investors, covering a broad swath of asset classes, including shares and property. It also introduces a new investment application scheme, known as the Myanmar Investment Commission (MIC) Endorsement.

The MIC Endorsement is aimed at streamlining the approval processes for investments and providing a speedier recourse to investment benefits that were not available under the previous laws.

These include tax breaks for approved investments, opportunities for subsidies, and Customs duties exemptions for approved imports and re-exports.

MIC Permits will still be required, as under the previous investment law, for businesses seeking to invest in strategic sectors, capital-intensive investments, projects set to have a substantial environmental impact, and those that will use state-owned land or buildings.

According to Charles Schneider, senior operations officer of the International Finance Corporation of the World Bank, the MIL will not only contribute to levelling the playing field for all investors, but will also reinforce aspects that foreign and local investors seek.

"Myanmar is putting in place a clear framework for the protection of investors by incorporating international rules in national law, such as the ASEAN Comprehensive Investment Agreement, as well as other principles of international law, rights to access to land and transfer of funds," Schneider told OBG.

Foundations laid, more building to be done

Though the main foundations of legislative reform have been laid, it will take time for the supportive structure to be erected, according to a recent report released by consultancy PwC.

While the MIL was approved in October, the by-laws have yet to be issued, PwC said, meaning there will be a transition period when some elements of the old investment regulatory regime will continue to apply.

This measured timeframe was confirmed by U Kyaw Win, minister of planning and finance, in mid-March, when discussing the reforms and the expansion of investment avenues.

"An attractive investment environment has taken shape," he told a seminar in Yangon. "We assure you that the government will be supporting both domestic and foreign investors in their endeavours: 2018 and 2019 will be when Myanmar will truly sprint ahead economically."

Some doors ajar, not wide open

While the MIL will open new doors to foreign investors and level the playing field, it will not benefit all investors in the same way, some stakeholders say.

According to Pedro Bernardo, a partner at law firm Kelvin Chia Yangon, some investors, while no longer obligated to secure MIC Permits, may still be subject to further permit requirements under policies implemented by other line ministries or agencies. These bodies, unlike the MIC, may not have formalised or streamlined their respective investment approval process and requirements.

Thus, where under the previous investment law approvals were more centralised (through the issuance of an MIC Permit), the MIL may have unintentionally created a situation where investors will be faced with more rather than less licensing requirements.

"In this sense, those companies that seek to operate in certain sectors, including possibly 'strategic sectors' or seeking to invest in big projects, such as power, mining and telecommunications, may be presented with more challenges to entry when the MIL is actually implemented on the ground," Bernardo told OBG

Looking forward, the challenge will be to streamline procedures and create the right conditions for market entrants wishing to invest in certain sectors to get their investment licences more quickly, he said.

More reforms in the pipeline

Expected to be ratified later this year, Myanmar is also in the process of finalising reforms to the Companies Act, which covers the rules and regulations surrounding business operating environments.

Under the proposed reforms, lawmakers will work to ensure that regulations for companies are brought in line with international standards. In doing so, the aim is to reinforce investor rights, ease restrictions on foreigners buying shares in local companies and allow domestic firms to benefit from FDI.

Once ratified, the new act will put foreign investors on a more level footing with Myanmar citizens, giving them the opportunity to buy into the domestic economy and reinforcing their confidence in their legal rights.

Book worms visit a book shops of summer book festival in Yangon on 29th April. PHOTO: MNA

Fire breaks out at Pansoedan Business Tower

A fire broke out at Pansoedan Business Tower in Kyauktada Township, downtown Yangon yesterday morning. The fire caused by short-circuit of air-condition on the 11th floor of Pansoedan Business Tower, Anawyatha Road between Pansoden road and 36th street in Kyauktada Township, Yangon Region.

Fire fighters from Fire Services Department supervised by U Kyi Win, director of Yangon Region Fire Services Department controlled the fire within 20 minutes after it started. They used 11 fire engines, two fire engines with ladder and five ambulances. Ma Sao Thiri Hnin, manager of MIL management Co Ltd has been charged under the law by Kyauktada Township Police station. —*Soe Win (MLA)*

Fire breaks out at Pansoedan Business Tower in Kyauktada Township. PHOTO: SOE WIN (MLA)

Stimulant tablets and heroin seized in Nawnghkio

A combine team including Anti-drug squad No 24 of Lashio seized 36 grams of heroin, 1365 stimulant tablets and two smartphones while searching a Toyota Corolla vehicle driven by Myo Min Sett and passengers Ma May Oo Kyi Lin and Kyaw Swar Min at 80/4 mile post of Mandalay-Muse Highway, Nawnghkio Township on 28 April 2017.

Myo Min Sett(41 years old), Ma May Oo Kyi Lin (24 yearsold) and Kyaw Swar Min(36 years old) have been charged under the Anti-narcotic drug and psychotropic substances Law. — *Myanmar Police Force*

Myo Min Sett, Kyaw Swar Min and Ma May Oo Kyi Lin. PHOTO: MPF

EU leaders united on Brexit demands — for now

European Heads of State meet during a EU summit in Brussels, Belgium on 29 April, 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

BRUSSELS — European Union leaders endorsed a stiff set of divorce terms for Britain at a summit on Saturday, rejoicing in a rare show of unity in adversity but well aware that may start to fray once negotiations begin.

Meeting for the first time since British Prime Minister Theresa May formally triggered a two-year countdown to Brexit in late March, the 27 other EU leaders took just a minute as they sat down to lunch in Brussels to approve 8 pages of negotiating guidelines hammered out by their diplomats over the past month.

"Guidelines adopted unanimously. EU27 firm and fair political mandate for the Brexit talks is ready," summit chair Donald Tusk tweeted. Leaders applauded, officials said, after formally adopting unmodified the text drafted by their aides.

Those will bind Michel Barnier, their chief negotiator, to seek a deal that secures the rights of 3 million EU expats living in Britain, ensure London pays tens of billions of euros Brussels thinks it will be owed and avoids destabilising peace by creating a hard EU-UK border across the island of Ireland.

"We are ready," Barnier said. "We are together."

They also rule out discussing the free trade deal May wants until they see progress on agreeing those key withdrawal terms.

"Before discussing the future, we have to sort out our past," Tusk said in comments echoed by German Chancellor Angela Merkel, who said "substantive issues" must first be settled.

In a mark of how last year's Brexit vote has called into question the unity of the United Kingdom itself, leaders will also offer Irish Prime Minister Enda Kenny a pledge that if Northern Ireland, which voted against Brexit, ever unites with his country, it will automatically be in the EU.

The leaders may spend more time in discussions, including with Barnier, on what criteria they may use to judge, come the autumn, whether he has made sufficient progress to warrant a start on trade talks. They may also talk about how to manage a transition, after Britain leaves in 2019, to a new relationship likely to take many more years to finalise.

That decision on what is "sufficient" is the kind of debate that can poison relations as the 27 seek to protect national interests. Also contentious will be which countries scoop the prizes of hosting two EU agencies set to be moved from London.

With most of the 27 offering to house the European Medicines Agency (EMA) and several wanting the European Banking Authority (EBA), Tusk and EU chief executive Jean-Claude Juncker will propose criteria for making the choices to avoid unseemly rows.

"We are remarkably united," one national leader who will be at the table told Reuters. "But then it's always easy to be united on what you want before you start negotiating."

Belgian Prime Minister Charles Michel warned against falling into a "trap" where Britain divided the bloc to its advantage.

Among possible differences, the priorities of poor, eastern states are to secure residency rights for their many workers in Britain and British money for the EU budget; Germany and others set store by a smooth transition to a new free trade agreement.

Unwonted unity has been forged by the shock of Brexit; it breaks a taboo and raises fears of further break-up at the hands of nationalists like French far-right leader Marine Le Pen. She will contest her country's presidential election run-off on 7 May, though few expect her to beat centrist Emmanuel Macron.

The EU sees it as vital that Britain not be seen to profit from Brexit to dissuade others from following suit.

However, some officials are also voicing concern that the process of weaving maximalist demands into the negotiating text could risk souring the atmosphere with May, who expects to start talks shortly after the UK election she has called for 8 June.

Senior officials in Brussels believe the risk of a breakdown in talks that could see Britain simply walking out into chaotic legal limbo in March 2019 has diminished since May wrote to Tusk on 29 March in terms recognising a need to compromise.

Merkel, facing her own election in September, warned Britain last week against lingering "illusions" of how much access it can get to EU markets. And some diplomats fear the tone of EU demands sounds too aggressive and may create a popular backlash in Britain that might make it hard for May to strike a deal.

"These are legally solid arguments," one said, noting for example a demand Britain not only lose the EMA and EBA but also pay the moving costs. "But we don't want to sound too punitive."

Luxembourg Prime Minister Xavier Bettel said: "They are maybe not any more in our family but they are still our neighbours so we should have respect for each other."—*Reuters*

NEWS IN BRIEF

Russia's Lavrov says ready to cooperate with US on Syria: agencies

MOSCOW — Moscow is ready to cooperate with the United States on settling the Syrian crisis, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said on Saturday, Russian news agencies reported.

Russian authorities reiterate periodically that they stand ready to renew cooperation with Washington on Syria and, more globally, on fighting terrorism. Relations between the two countries, however, are seen reaching another low after US fired missiles at Syria to punish Moscow's ally for its suspected use of poison gas earlier in April. Russia condemned the US action.—*Reuters*

Japan's Abe says Brexit regulation whiplash would be a concern for business

LONDON — Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said that if the United Kingdom left the European Union with an abrupt change of rules for businesses then it could cause confusion for international firms. The leader of the world's third largest economy said he hoped there would be a transition period to ease the United Kingdom's exit from the EU that is scheduled for March 2019. "Japan supports a strong UK and a strong Europe," Abe told reporters at a briefing in London. Abe held talks with PM May at Chequers, the country house of the British prime minister.—*Reuters*

Turkish military says kills 14 Kurdish militants in northern Iraq

ANKARA — Turkey's military killed 14 members of the militant Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) in air strikes in northern Iraq on Saturday, the military said in a statement.

Six militants were killed around the area of Sinat-Haftan and eight in the countryside around Adiyaman in two separate air strikes, the military said.

The PKK, which has carried out a three-decade insurgency against the Turkish state, has camps in the mountains of northern Iraq, near the Turkish border. Turkey has stepped up attacks against the PKK in northern Iraq and its Syrian-Kurdish affiliate, the YPG, in recent weeks. The attacks on the YPG, a key member of a US-backed militia fighting Islamic State in Syria, have further complicated relations with Washington.—*Reuters*

France calls for firm reaction after North Korea's missile test

PARIS — France condemned a ballistic missile test conducted on Saturday by North Korea and called for a "firm" and "determined" reaction towards Pyongyang.

"In spite of its failure, this test confirms the willingness of the North Korean regime to obtain an operational nuclear capacity and constitutes a threat to international peace and security," a spokesman with the French ministry of foreign affairs said in an emailed statement.

North Korea test-fired a ballistic missile shortly after US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson warned that failure to curb Pyongyang's nuclear and ballistic missile programmes could lead to "catastrophic consequences", sparking condemnations worldwide. US and South Korean officials said the test, from an area north of the North Korean capital, appeared to have failed, in what would be the North's fourth straight unsuccessful missile test since March.—*Reuters*

Two US soldiers killed in operation against IS militants in Afghanistan

WASHINGTON — Two US special forces troops killed in Afghanistan on Wednesday could have been struck by friendly fire in an operation targeting the emir of Islamic State in Afghanistan, a Pentagon spokesman said on Friday.

Pentagon spokesman Captain Jeff Davis told reporters that the military was investigating the circumstances of the deaths. Davis added that the target of the raid was Abdul Hasib, the emir of Islamic State in Afghanistan. The US military suspected that he was killed in the operation, but could not yet confirm it.—*Reuters*

Notorious Afghan warlord calls for peace in first public speech

MEHTAR LAM (Afghanistan) — In his first public speech since signing a peace deal with the Afghan government, one of Afghanistan's most notorious warlords on Saturday called for the Taliban to stop fighting and begin negotiations.

"I invite you to join the peace caravan and stop the pointless, meaningless and unholy war," Gulbuddin Hekmatyar said to a gathering of his followers and Afghan politicians in Laghman province, east of the capital, Kabul.

In February the United Nations Security Council agreed to drop sanctions against Hekmatyar, paving the way for him to return openly to Afghanistan.

The Afghan government requested the move as part of a peace deal with Hekmatyar and his militant group, Hezb-i-Islami, in September.

"I want a free, proud, independent and Islamic Afghanistan," he said on Saturday.

Afghan warlord Gulbuddin Hekmatyar (C) arrives to speak to supporters in Laghman province, Afghanistan on 29 April, 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

The deal has been criticised by some Afghans and human rights groups for the pardon it granted to Hekmatyar and many of his fighters.

Hekmatyar's return "will compound the culture of impunity", Human Rights Watch researcher Patricia Gossman said of the deal, calling it an "affront" to victims of abuses.

A controversial figure from the insurgency against the Soviets in the 1980s and the civil wars of the 1990s, Hekmatyar is accused of ordering his fighters to bombard Kabul, leading to many casualties, besides other abuses.

His faction of Hezb-i-Islami has played a relatively small role in the current conflict, in which the Taliban have a leading role in battling the Western-backed government in Kabul.

In hiding for nearly a decade and a half, Hekmatyar had been designated a "global terrorist" by the United States, which has been leading an international military mission in Afghanistan for the past 15 years.

American and other Western leaders praised the deal with him, however, hoping it could help lead to wider peace in Afghanistan. —*Reuters*

Syrian rebels fight each other in besieged Damascus enclave

BEIRUT — Fighting between rebel groups in the biggest insurgent stronghold near the Syrian capital Damascus entered a second day on Saturday, while government forces pressed an offensive against the besieged enclave, a war monitor said.

The clashes broke out in part of the densely-populated rural area east of Damascus known as the Eastern Ghouta which has been besieged by Syrian government forces since 2013.

The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said it had documented the deaths of at least 38 fighters in the first 24 hours of fighting between rebel groups. It also reported civilian casualties.

Jaish al-Islam is pitted against the Failaq al-Rahman group and fighters from an alliance with links to al-Qaeda, rebels, activists and the Observatory said.

Fighting between the groups killed hundreds of people last April before a ceasefire was agreed in Qatar in May. The rift was exploited by Syrian government forces to capture parts of the Eastern Ghouta, whose territory shrank by about a third in the second half of last year.

Jaish al-Islam is one of the biggest Syrian rebel groups and has been the dominant faction in the Eastern Ghouta. Its leader, Zahran Alloush, was killed in an air strike in December 2015.

A Failaq al-Rahman statement on Friday said Jaish al-Islam attacked some of its positions and said the factional fighting was not in the interests of the Eastern Ghouta or the Syrian revolution.

A statement by Jaish al-Islam said its dispute was with the group called Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (Liberation of the Levant Committee) which had been obstructing Jaish al-Islam members from going about their business.

Hayat Tahrir al-Sham is an alliance of factions formed in January, whose members include Jabhat Fateh al-Sham, formerly al Qaeda's Nusra Front group.

Jaish al-Islam said it shared the same goals as Failaq al-Rahman and called on them to contain the crisis. During the fighting, Syrian government and allied forces attacked the rebel-held district of Qaboun northwest of Eastern Ghouta by land and air. The Syrian government, which is backed by Russian air power and Iranian-backed militias, launched an offensive against Qaboun and neighbouring Barza, which are believed to contain supply tunnels for the besieged enclave, in February. Government forces advanced slightly in Qaboun on Friday, the Observatory said. —*Reuters*

Islamic State claims car bombing in Baghdad, four police killed

BAGHDAD — Four Iraqi traffic policemen were killed on Friday when a suicide car bomb detonated outside their station, close to a street where several foreign media have offices in Baghdad, a security spokesman said.

Five people were also wounded by the blast on Abu Nawas Street, the spokesman said. The street runs alongside the east bank of the Tigris River and the French Embassy is located in the area.

Islamic State claimed the suicide attack on its Amaq news agency. The hardline Sunni group has controlled parts of Iraq and Syria since 2014. —*Reuters*

Members of Iraqi security forces look at the site after a suicide car bomb attack in Baghdad, Iraq on 29 April, 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

Libya captures two oil-smuggling tankers after firefight

TRIPOLI — Libyan naval forces captured two vessels suspected of smuggling oil from the North African country after gun battles lasting several hours west of the capital Tripoli, a spokesman for the service said on Friday.

Libyan forces frequently capture vessels smuggling oil and arms off the coast and the North African state has become a haven for migrant smugglers who take advantage of the country's turmoil to ship people across to Europe.

Ayoub Qassem, a spokesman for the Libyan naval forces, said Ukraine-flagged tanker Routa and a vessel with an unspecified African nation's flag named Stark were captured early Friday.

"Clashes lasted for three hours, but the two tankers were successfully seized," Qassem said.

The incident occurred in the Sidi Said area west of Tripoli. Qassem did not report any casualties or give details on what happened to the crew of the vessels or their nationalities.

Six years after the fall of Muammar Gaddafi, Libya is still caught in turmoil among rival military factions who once fought against the former leader but then turned against one another in a multi-sided power struggle.

A UN-backed government in Tripoli is struggling to assert control since arriving in Libya more than a year ago. Libya's oil infrastructure is also often targeted by fighting or blockades as rival groups seek to gain wealth or leverage. —*Reuters*

Tu-95MS strategic bomber. PHOTO: TASS

Russia checks Aerospace Force for readiness to defend facilities against advanced weapons

MOSCOW — Russian Tupolev Tu-160 and Tu-95MS strategic bombers and about 50 other aircraft and helicopters have taken part in a control check of Aerospace Force units and formations, Aerospace Force Commander-in-Chief Colonel General Viktor Bondarev said on Friday.

"The control check of units and formations of the Aerospace Force has confirmed the readiness of all armed service branches for effectively performing their tasks within the established time limits and defending our facilities against existing and future aerospace attack means," the commander said.

As part of the combat readiness check, the crews of Tu-95MS strategic missile carriers practiced re-deployment to operational aerodromes and simulated launches of airborne cruise missiles while Tu-160 bombers performed flights at supersonic speed.

As the Russian Aerospace Force commander-in-chief said, the crews of Sukhoi Su-27 fighter jets intercepted aerial targets while helicopters launched rockets and airborne munitions against ground targets at a practice range.

Also, air defence teams practiced detecting, tracking and notionally destroying enemy aircraft whose flights were imitated by the crews of Long-Range, Military Transport, Tactical and Army Aviation.

"Overall, the check involved more than 50 aircraft, about 100 weapon systems of antiaircraft missile forces and radio-technical troops (the S-400, S-300, Pantsyr-S air defense missile complexes and radars)," Bondarev said.—*Tass*

First Britain-China direct freight train arrives back in China

YIWU, (China), — The first freight train to run from Britain to China arrived in the city of Yiwu in eastern China on Saturday, completing its 12,000-km (7,456-mile) journey.

The train was greeted by traders and shipping company officials when it arrived at Yiwu West station after departing London on 10 April carrying items such as vitamins, baby products and pharmaceuticals.

The first freight train from China arrived in Britain in January.

Operated by Yiwu Timex Industrial Investment, the Yiwu-London freight service makes London the 15th European city to have a direct rail link with China after the 2013 unveiling of the "One Belt, One Road" initiative by Chinese President Xi Jinping.

"This freight train is a reflection of the achievements of trade," Yiwu Timex Chairman Timmy Feng told Reuters Television.

After leaving London the bright red train passed through seven countries — France, Belgium, Germany, Poland, Belarus, Russia and Kazakhstan — before arriving in Yiwu.

For Britain, the train is part of an effort to strengthen trade links with the rest of the world as it prepares to leave the European Union in two years' time.—*Reuters*

People take pictures as a train carrying containers from London arrives at the freight railway station in Yiwu, Zhejiang province, China on 29 April, 2017. The sign at the front of the train reads: "First Sino-Euro Freight Train (London Yiwu). PHOTO: REUTERS

French amphibious carrier visits Japan ahead of Pacific show of power

SASEBO — As tension spikes on the Korean peninsula, a French amphibious assault carrier sailed into Japan's naval base of Sasebo on Saturday ahead of drills that risk upsetting China, which faces US pressure to rein in North Korea's arms programmes.

The Mistral will lead exercises next month near Guam, along with forces from Japan, the United States and Britain, practicing amphibious landings around Tinian, an island about 2,500 km (1,553 miles) south of the Japanese capital of Tokyo.

The drills, involving 700 troops, were planned before Saturday's test-firing of a ballistic missile by North Korea, in defiance of world pressure, in what would be its fourth successive unsuccessful missile test since March.

Japan and the United States are worried by China's efforts to extend its influence beyond its coastal waters and the South China Sea by acquiring power-projecting aircraft carriers, a concern shared by France, which controls several Pacific islands, including New Caledonia and French Polynesia.

Even as they seek stronger economic ties with China, both France and Britain, which has two navy helicopters aboard the Mistral, are deepening security cooperation with Japan, a close US ally that has Asia's second-strongest navy after China.

The Mistral forms part of an amphibious task force mission, the Jeanne d'Arc, that is "a potent support to French diplomacy," the country's defence ministry said in a statement. Officials and children's welcome dances greeted the Mistral in Sasebo, on the western island of Kyushu, a major naval base for Japan's Maritime Self Defense Force (MSDF) and the US Navy.

The Mistral, which left France in February, can carry up to 35 helicopters and four landing barges, besides several hundred soldiers. It will stay in Sasebo until 5 May.

This month China launched its first domestically-built aircraft carrier. It joined the Liaoning, bought from Ukraine in 1998, which led a group of Chinese warships through waters south of Japan in December.

China's military ambitions, however, have been overshadowed in recent weeks by tension on the Korean peninsula as Pyongyang conducts long-range missile tests, and prepares for a possible sixth nuclear test.

"We did not expect the start of our visit to coincide with a North Korean missile launch, France's ambassador to Japan Thierry Dana said on the Mistral's bridge. "Cooperation between our four nations in upholding laws, peace and stability in the region will display our readiness to deal with North Korea," he added.

In a show of force, the United States has sent the USS Carl Vinson aircraft carrier group to nearby waters, where it will join the USS Michigan, a guided missile submarine that docked in South Korea on Tuesday. The Carl Vinson entered the Sea of Japan on Saturday, where it completed naval drills with two Japanese warships dispatched from Sasebo, an MSDF spokesman said.—*Reuters*

French amphibious assault ship Mistral arrives at Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force's Sasebo naval base in Sasebo, Nagasaki prefecture, Japan on 29 April, 2017, ahead of joint exercises with US, British and Japanese forces in waters off Guam. PHOTO: REUTERS

Opposition supporters attend a rally in support of political prisoners and against Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro, in downtown Los Teques, Venezuela on 28 April, 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

Venezuelan opposition activists march to Leopoldo Lopez' jail

LOS TEQUES (Venezuela) — Hundreds of activists marched on Friday to the hilltop jail of Venezuela's best-known detained opposition leader Leopoldo Lopez in the latest of a month of protests against the socialist government.

Security forces blocked access to the decrepit-looking penitentiary next to a slum in Los Teques, an hour's drive from the capital Caracas, as the demonstrators shouted "Leopoldo!" and held signs reading "No To Dictatorship!"

This month's wave of protests against President Nicolas Maduro's government has led to at least 29 deaths in the worst unrest since 2014 rallies championed by Lopez, who was arrested then and convicted of instigating violence.

Venezuela's opposition is demanding elections, autonomy for the legislature where they have a majority, a humanitarian aid channel from abroad to alleviate an economic crisis, and freedom for more than 100 jailed anti-Maduro activists.

Supporters say Lopez, the US-educated leader of hardline Popular Will party, and others are political prisoners who symbolize Maduro's lurch into dictatorship.

Maduro says all are behind bars for legitimate crimes, and calls Lopez, 45, a violent hothead intent on promoting a coup.

"This shows yet again the fear Nicolas Maduro has of people in the street," said Popular Will legislator Juan Mejia at the National Guard barriers outside Ramo Verde jail.

Some inhabitants of a nearby slum came out of their homes to cheer as the protesters marched by.

"We would never have marched here before because it was very dangerous and pro-Chavista," said demonstrator and marketing consultant Kailee Shima, 36, referring to the ruling "Chavista" movement named for Maduro's predecessor Hugo Chavez.

Elsewhere, relatives of imprisoned activists and supporters turned up at other jails, including the Caracas headquarters of the state intelligence service Sebin.

"We are opposite one of the dictatorship's iconic prisons where they keep dozens of political prisoners, opposite the biggest torture center in the land," said another opposition lawmaker Gaby Arellano.

Government officials accuse the opposition of inventing torture stories to sway international opinion against the Maduro government and create the conditions for a foreign intervention of the South American oil producer.

The opposition coalition, which now enjoys majority support after long being in the shadow of "Chavismo" especially during the 14-year rule of Chavez himself, is trying to keep the pressure on Maduro with daily protests. —*Reuters*

UN Security Council backs new Western Sahara talks attempt

ALGIERS — The United Nations Security Council has unanimously backed the UN chief's attempts to restart negotiations to end the Western Sahara conflict and extended its peacekeeping mission for another year.

The resolution late on Friday came after the UN mission confirmed the Polisario Western Sahara independence movement had withdrawn its troops from the Guerguerat area in the disputed territory where they had faced off since last year with Moroccan forces.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres earlier this month called for Morocco and the Polisario Front, who fought a war over the region until a 1991 ceasefire, to enter new negotiations that would include proposals from both sides.

"Together with the earlier withdrawal of Moroccan elements.... this action should improve the prospects of creating an environment that will facilitate early implementation of Mr Guterres's determination to relaunch the negotiating process," the UN spokesman said in a statement confirming the Polisario withdrawal. A vast desert area bordering the Atlantic Ocean, Western Sahara has been contested since 1975 when colonial Spain left. Morocco claimed the region, but Polisario fought a guerrilla war for independence until the UN-backed ceasefire.

UN talks have long failed to broker an agreement on how to decide self-determination. Morocco wants an autonomy plan under Moroccan sovereignty. But Polisario wants a UN-backed referendum including on the question of independence. Since the ceasefire, the region has effectively been split by an earthen wall separating an area controlled by Morocco that it claims as its southern provinces, and territory controlled by the Polisario with a UN-mandated buffer zone between them. Tensions rose last year when UN peacekeepers intervened in a standoff after Moroccan forces crossed beyond the earthen wall in Guerguerat near the Mauritania border and Polisario responded by dispatching troops to the area.—*Reuters*

Notice on SHISEIDO business in Myanmar

Singapore Myanmar Investco has an exclusive agreement with Shiseido SAPAC Ltd under Singapore jurisdiction to arrange for the distribution and marketing of SHISEIDO products in Myanmar. Importation and distribution in Myanmar is done through an agreement with a Myanmar company, Royal Golden Sky Company Ltd.

Market rumours or suggestions that SMI has an 'agency' agreement with Shiseido Singapore Pte Ltd are factually incorrect. SMI is not the agent of Shiseido Singapore Pte Ltd in the Myanmar market, nor the importer of SHISEIDO products nor does SMI have, and indeed has never had, any contractual relationship with Shiseido Singapore Pte Ltd.

Singapore Myanmar Investco Ltd (Myanmar Branch Office)

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

MV EVER ALLY VOY. NO ( )

Consignees of cargo carried on MV EVER ALLY VOY. NO ( ) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 30.4.2017 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of H.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S EVERGREEN SHIPPING LINES

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

MV MATHU BHUM VOY. NO (1035)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV MATHU BHUM VOY. NO (1035) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 30.4.2017 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P 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 MOL (S'PORE) PTE LTD

Phone No: 2301185

China's first androgynous all-girl pop band challenges ideal of femininity

BEIJING — China's all-girl "boy band", FFC-Acrush, had more than 749,000 followers on social networking site Weibo even before any of their music was released.

Sporting short bobs, loose T-shirts and barely there makeup, Acrush's androgynous look is bucking centuries-old norms in a society where girls strive to look feminine and act demurely.

Marketed by sports brand Fantasy Football Confederation (FFC), the five women — aged 18 to 24 — held their first news conference in Beijing on Friday as their first single "Action" was released.

"We want the girls to break the mould," the band's agent, Zhou Xiaobai, told Reuters.

The letter 'A' in the band's name is a reference to the god Adonis - the archetype of youthful male beauty in Greek mythology.

It's not the first time Chinese music agents have had the idea of forming a gender-neutral act.

In 2005, a boyish-looking Li Yuchun briefly won fans with her style. She also sparked debate about how women should dress in a conservative society.

Members of China's all-girl 'boyband' FFC-Acrush appear on the stage during their maiden press conference in Beijing, China, on 28 April 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

Held back by worry about a social backlash, the music industry had stayed away from marketing "handsome girl" acts until 2016.

Last year, Zhejiang Huati Culture Communication, an entertainment startup backed by Tencent Holdings, was looking to create a girl band when the idea of an androgynous act came about.

"It was rather a coincidence. We happened to see many 'handsome girls' during the auditions, and people thought they looked quite all right. Then it hit me that now is the time," Zhejiang Huati's chief executive Wang Tianhai told Reuters.

Acrush is one of several bands under the FFC brand, which aims to be a pioneer in sports entertainment by mixing sports with music and dance.

All FFC bands - including Acrush - must learn how to play soccer.

Soccer is backed President Xi Jinping, and the sport is expected to boom into a 5 trillion yuan ($725 billion) business by 2025.

"It is a new adventure for us and also for the Chinese pop music market," said Min Junqian, a member of Acrush.

"I will not be afraid, because I will just be me, a handsome girl."—*Reuters*

Bad Boy Records family reunites for Sean Combs documentary

NEW YORK — Rappers Faith Evans, Lil' Kim, Mase and French Montana turned out in a mini Bad Boy Records reunion to celebrate the Sean "Diddy" Combs documentary, "Can't Stop, Won't Stop: A Bad Boy Story."

Combs, who founded the record label in 1993, gave the filmmakers a raw and exclusive behind-the-scenes look at his efforts to reunite the Bad Boy family for a 2016 concert in New York. He said it morphed into a story about family, tragedy and perseverance.

"It's a piece of my life ... My whole life might have to be a ten-part miniseries or something like that. But you know this is a good slice of my life to let people kind of see who Sean is," Combs told reporters on the red carpet at the Tribeca Film Festival on Thursday.

"It feels surreal but also I feel proud ... I'm so New York, you know, and to be at the Tribeca Film Festival it's beyond your dreams," added Combs, 47, who was born in Harlem.

The screening was followed by a concert in which Lil' Kim, Mase and other label members performed some of their biggest hits.

The film will be launched on Apple Music on 25 June. —*Reuters*

More Star Trek stamps? Make it so, says Canada Post

TORONTO — "Star Trek" fans can now get Starfleet's most famous figures to help deliver their mail, thanks to a new collection of seven stamps issued on Friday by Canada Post, the country's mail operator.

The stamps, a followup to a set released last year for the science-fiction franchise's 50th anniversary, include the captains from each of the five "Star Trek" television series already aired. They are depicted alongside a key nemesis from the series.

The sixth stamp is of the Galileo shuttle craft, which first appeared in the original series in 1966. A holographic foil stamp in the shape of a "Borg" cube is the seventh in the collection. —*Reuters*

Comedy series 'Roseanne' could be latest US television comeback

LOS ANGELES — "Roseanne," the hit 1990s television comedy about a working-class American family, could be on its way back, Hollywood trade publications reported on Friday, marking the latest in a trend for revivals of 20-year-old shows.

Variety and Deadline.com reported that a revival with original cast members Roseanne Barr, John Goodman and Sara Gilbert was being shopped around broadcast networks and streaming services.

Reuters could not independently confirm the reports.

The original "Roseanne" was broadcast from 1988-1997 and was the most watched TV show in the United States in 1989 and 1990. It featured a blue-collar family, with overweight parents, who were struggling to get by in the fictional town of Lanford, Illinois. The show was praised for being a realistic portrayal of a working-class family.

Deadline.com said the intention was to include other principal original actors, such as Laurie Metcalf and Johnny Galecki, in the reboot.

In an appearance in March on daytime talk show "The Talk," which is co-hosted by Gilbert, Goodman was enthusiastic about bringing back the show.

"Roseanne" would be the latest hit show from the 1980s and 199Os to get a revival. "Will & Grace," a comedy that helped bring gay men and women into mainstream pop culture, is returning to NBC with 12 new episodes within the next year, while supernatural crime "Twin Peaks" is coming back in May some 27 years after it was first shown.

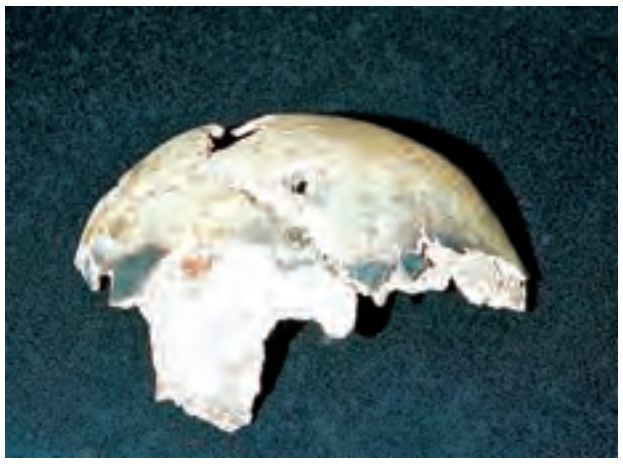
There have also been revivals or sequels to popular American TV series "Gilmore Girls" and "Full House" in the past two years.—*Reuters*

Actress Roseanne Barr arrives at the Roseanne TV series season one DVD release party at Lucky Strike Bowling Centre in Hollywood, US, on 18 July 2005. PHOTO: REUTERS

Mrs Winifred Saldanha (Dimples) - Ma Lone Yin

Dimples, aged 97, second daughter of U Tun Hlaing and Daw Pya Ohn of Belugyun, Chaungzone, beloved wife of the late Wilfred Saldanha and loving mother of Winsome, Barbara+Andrew, Jeanne+ Meenu, Clement+Finn, Dorothy+Christopher, Wilfred+Kirsten and Patricia+Gottfried, passed away on **27 April 2017** at her home in 135E Than Lwin Road, Yangon. She is also survived by six grandchildren, Natasha, Jason, Lydia, Nathaniel, Nathan, Marckie and two great grandchildren Anjeli and Alexia. She will be greatly missed by all. May her soul rest in peace.

Funeral services will be held at St Augustine's RC Church at 64 Inya Road at 08:00 am on **1st May 2017** followed by burial at Htein Pin. Catholic cemetery.



A fragment of Hitler's skull with a bullet hole. Photo: TASS

Russia ready to provide Hitler's skull to scrutinize its authenticity

MOSCOW — The Russian State Archive is ready to furnish the skull of Nazi dictator Adolf Hitler for any examination to prove its authenticity, its director Larisa Rogova told TASS on Friday.

"An English company contacted us a short while ago. They said they had found Hitler's nephew who is ready for genetic tests," Rogova said.

She added that the examination should be carried out by Russian specialists if the Investigative Committee grants permission.

A slew of conspiracy theories circulating suggest that Hitler did not commit suicide in 1945, but rather fled to South America or elsewhere and that the skull is not authentic.

"The skull is genuine, it has been proven," Rogova said, adding that the skull is put on display from time to time.—*Tass*

Gallery of Hiroshima Panels raising funds for new facility

HIGASHIMATSUYAMA — A gallery in a Tokyo suburb has launched a fundraising campaign to preserve its main exhibit — a series of large panels depicting the horrors of the 1945 atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki — in the face of damage caused by insects, ultraviolet rays, as well as grit and dust.

Marking the 50th anniversary of its establishment on 5 May, the Maruki Gallery for the Hiroshima Panels also plans to set up archives to collect documents about Iri and Toshi Maruki, a husband-and-wife team which created the 15 panels, to make the art work, which has been shown around the world, more accessible to the public.

"We now face difficulties in keeping the Hiroshima Panels, a representative painting of the 20th century," said Yukinori Okamura, a curator of the gallery. "It is a great challenge to hand down the common heritage of mankind to the next generation, looking ahead to the next 50 years," he said.

"Preparing the archives is also necessary to allow people to further understand the background to the creation of the painting," he added. "The archives will include publications on the Marukis, their letters and other documents. We plan to launch a multilingual website to open them globally."

The panels — each standing 1.8 metres by 7.2 meters — were created over 32 years from 1950 based on the experiences of the Marukis, who visited Hiroshima shortly after the 1945 atomic bombing. The couple opened the gallery in 1967 in Higashimatsuyama, north of Tokyo, to house them.

The panel series starts with "Ghosts," which depicts people walking like ghosts with their arms extended in front of them, after their clothes were burned off and skin peeled by the A-bombing.

They also include "Death of American Prisoners of War," focusing on American POWs who were killed by the A-bombing or by Japanese captors, as well as "Crows," which illustrates discriminatory treatment of Korean A-bomb victims and survivours.

Of the 15 panels, 14 are displayed at the Maruki gallery, while "Nagasaki" is owned by the Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Museum.

The Marukis also dealt with other tragic incidents, such as the Nanjing Massacre, the Auschwitz concentration camp, the Battle of Okinawa and the Minamata mercury-poisoning disease, before Iri died in 1995 at the age of 94 and Toshi passed away in 2000 at 87. They were nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize in 1995.

Aiming to raise 500 million yen, the gallery hopes to build a new facility in five years' time, equipped with a humidity and temperature management system, to preserve and exhibit the panels, according to Okamura.

Since its establishment, the gallery has not financially relied on public subsidies or corporations so it can operate independently, and it uses solar power to generate enough electricity to provide power to the whole facility.

"We will maintain these current management frameworks in operating the new facility to demonstrate that culture can survive through the support of individual citizens," Okamura said.

The panels have achieved worldwide recognition, traveling to more than 20 countries, including exhibitions in China and the United States, as well as nations in Europe and South Africa. In 2015, some of them were displayed in the US capital for the first time prior to their exhibitions in Boston and New York. The events at the three sites attracted more than 10,000 visitors.

Okamura also said the significance of the gallery itself has been enhanced since the March 2011 nuclear disaster at the Fukushima Daiichi complex.

"More and more young artists have displayed their works at this gallery, which shows the nuclear threat, and visitors to this gallery have followed their subsequent paths," he said. "I think we have contributed to fostering both artists and audiences."

For further information, visit the gallery's website both in Japanese and English.—*Kyodo News*

Yukinori Okamura, a curator for the Maruki Gallery for the Hiroshima Panels, points at a damaged part of the Hiroshima Panels on 27 April, 2017, at the gallery in Higashimatsuyama, north of Tokyo. Photo: Kyodo News

MRTV Programme Schedule (30- 4- 2017, Sunday)

6:00 Am
♦ Paritta by HillyRegion Missionary Sayadaw
7:00 Am
♦ Breakfast News
7:35 Am
♦ Documentary
8:40 Am
♦ Beautiful ASEAN
8:45 Am
♦ Documentary
9:15 Am
♦ Towards All Sectors Development
9:25 Am
♦ MRTV Travelogue
9:45 Am
♦ Poem for Children
10:00 Am
♦ Sunday Talk1
10:30 Am
♦ Women in Myanmar Society
11:00 Am
♦ Week Charctrful News
11:50 Am
♦ SEAN Spothkight
12:50 Pm
♦ Myanmar Movie
2:45 Pm
♦ TV Drama Series
3:30 Pm
♦ This Week's Special Interest
4:15 Am
♦ Documentary
5:25 Pm
♦ Teleplay
6:20 Pm
♦ Myanmar Classical Songs
6:15 Pm
♦ Teleplay
7:15 Pm
♦ TV Drama Series
8:00 Pm
♦ News/International News/ Weather Report
8:35 Pm
♦ Monthly Weather Report
8:40 Pm
♦ Unity Melody
9:05 Pm
♦ Documentary
9:15 Pm
♦ TV Drama Series
♦ Fine Arts - Bosom of Dramatic Performance

mitv Myanmar International Programme Schedule

(30-4-2017 07:00am ~ 1-5-2017 07:00am) MST

07:03	Am	News
07:26	Am	Elegant and Exquisite Myanmar Cotton Fabrics
07:38	Am	Pagoda Forest in Pa-O Land
08:03	Am	News
08:26	Am	School For the Blind (Kyee Myin Dine)
08:52	Am	Thin Byu Mat
09:03	Am	News
09:26	Am	Myanmar's Beauty and Nature "Beach"
09:53	Am	TECH School
10:03	Am	News
10:26	Am	Oboist and His Life
10:46	Am	Products of Myanmar - Mya Setkyar Pure Silk Fabric From Inle Lake

(11:00 Am ~ 03:00 Pm)- Saturday 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
07:25	Pm	Mogok: The Colourful Land of Rubies
07:40	Pm	One of the Useful Purposes of Bamboo
07:49	Pm	Today Myanmar
08:03	Pm	News
08:26	Pm	Bogalay Tint Aung: A Man of Versatility (Part-3)
08:54	Pm	Myanmar Masterclass "Caricature"

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

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

5th Waxing of Kason 1379 ME | Sunday, 30 April 2017

Wenger says Arsenal, not Spurs, are north London's No 1

LONDON — Arsene Wenger believes Arsenal will remain the major force in north London even if Tottenham Hotspur overturn decades of dominance to finish above the Gunners in the Premier League this season.

Arsenal have never ended below Tottenham in Wenger's 21 years at the club although the gap has been narrowing, and last season they only leapfrogged Spurs into second spot on the final day of the season.

Victory at White Hart Lane on Sunday would almost certainly ensure that second-placed Spurs finish above Arsenal for the first time since 1995, but Wenger said a one-off achievement could not outweigh a long run of success.

"Let's be honest, I've answered that question about a shift in power over (many) ...years," he told British media on Friday. "Nothing changes in that.

"Do Spurs have to do more over a long period of time? I think so. You cannot say that the weight of one year has the weight of 20....

"For the pride and the continuity or our achievements, yes we want to fight to be in front of Spurs. (But) we have to focus on what is really important to us at this moment, which is to finish in the top four."

PHOTO: REUTERS

The Tottenham-Arsenal derby is one of fiercest in English football with less than five miles separating the clubs who first played each other in 1887. Arsenal have posted 80 victories to Tottenham's 61, with 51 matches drawn.

Wenger suggested another victory for his team on Sunday might even kick-start a winning run towards a third-placed finish in the league.

But he acknowledged that Spurs, 14 points and four places above his side, would start as favourites as they seek a ninth successive league win.

Victory would also silence talk among Arsenal supporters of St Totteringham's Day, the moment each season when they celebrate the mathematical certainty of finishing above Spurs.

"It is certainly one of the few times where, if you look at people's opinions, Spurs are favourites," said Wenger.

"I think we have shown persistence, tenacity and desire to win and keep going at any cost. You could see what it means to the squad when we scored against Leicester (in midweek). These qualities will of course be very important." Wenger reported positive injury news on Friday with defender Laurent Koscielny likely to return and Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain, who missed the midweek 1-0 victory, definitely fit.

"He will be fit enough to start because it was more precautionary to leave him on the bench (against Leicester)," said Wenger. "I didn't want to take the gamble with him."—*Reuters*

Bayern sign Coman on permanent deal, extend Thiago contract

MUNICH — Bayern Munich activated a clause to make winger Kingsley Coman's transfer from Juventus permanent at the end of the season and extended midfielder Thiago Alcantara's contract to 2021, the German club said on Friday.

The 20-year-old France international, who joined Bayern on a two-year loan deal in 2015, will sign a contract until 2020.

"He is a player with huge potential," Bayern CEO Karl-Heinz Rummenigge said. "We're convinced that he will be of great help to us in the coming years.

"He is a very young player who already plays regularly for the French national team and who has gathered experience at the European Championship." Coman, a former Paris St Germain player, has scored eight goals in 58 games for Bayern. Rummenigge also heaped praise on 26-year-old Thiago, who signed a two-year extension that will keep him in Munich until 2021 and has arguably played his best football at Bayern this season. "Thiago is one of the best and most sought after midfielders in Europe," Rummenigge said. "We are happy to have tied him to the club on a long-term basis." The Spain international is the latest stalwart to sign up to 2021 following — among others — Jerome Boateng, Mats Hummels, Thomas Mueller, Robert Lewandowski and keeper Manuel Neuer as Bayern look to retain key players.—*Reuters*

Bayern Munich's Kingsley Coman in action during the match of German Bundesliga between Bayern Munich and Borussia Moenchengladbach at Stadion im Borussia Park in Moenchengladbach, Germany on 19 March, 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

Real rotation vital but there's no A or B team, says Zidane

BARCELONA— Real Madrid coach Zinedine Zidane said on Friday he had no A or B side and needed to call on every member of his squad to cope with a gruelling fixture list, as a debate about his team selections was played out in the Spanish media.

The question of whether Zidane's periphery players perform better than his first-choice starting 11 resurfaced after a Los Blancos side with nine changes blitzed Deportivo La Coruna 6-2 on Wednesday.

The coach rested heavyweights Luka Modric, Cristiano Ronaldo, Toni Kroos, Karim Benzema and Keylor Navas, who played in last weekend's 3-2 defeat against Barcelona, and was without Gareth Bale through injury and Sergio Ramos through suspension.

Not for the first time this season, Real's squad players seized the opportunity, with James Rodriguez, Marco Asensio, Alvaro Morata and Isco emphatically taking up the mantle to keep their team on the heels of Barcelona in the title race.

Losing manager Pepe Mel said Real's second string were harder to play against than their first-choice XI, while sports daily AS declared: "Plan B is a great plan".

Arging that some clubs' second-string players get no time on the pitch at all, Zidane told a news conference on Friday: "I have immense respect for my players and I have to choose who plays but I'm not unfair...

"Some people may think that in some games the same players always play and in other games another team plays and call that an A or B team, but it's not like that for me.

Real host Valencia on Saturday looking to temporarily go three points ahead of the Catalans, who top the table due to their superior head-to-head record against Los Blancos but have played one game more.

Zidane also said players who performed well against Deportivo would hold no hard feelings against him should they find themselves on the bench against Valencia.

"I don't just drop players, I speak with them and explain my thinking and we move forward together," he added.

"...I understand this debate but now I'm the coach of Real Madrid, I have to decide, and I'm always thinking about what's best for Real Madrid as a family.

"I know I have an extraordinary squad and everyone is committed ...We all want to follow the same path."

Bale is still suffering from a calf injury while Ramos returns from a one-game suspension for getting sent off against Barcelona.—*Reuters*

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