We preview our new look 'daily' newspaper

HEARTBEAT OF THE NATION

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EDITORIAL

Our bond with readers central to us becoming a great newspaper

ROSS DUNKLEY Editor-in-Chief

IN a country where gossip has often been viewed as gospel, increasingly people are hungering for quality in-

formation they can trust.

And amid the 20 or more dailies being foisted on the Myanmar public, readers are going to choose what they have always wanted: a source they can trust, and a paper that entertains and informs in a format that is modern and attractive.

Enter *The Myanmar Times* in English, which will shortly slide into a five-day-a-week cycle as the premier newspaper in the nation.

We had planned to go daily on Friday, May 3 - World Press Freedom Day - but our hopes were dashed because of the ongoing internal struggle

'we are confident we are giving our readers one of the best newspapers in the region'

at the paper between the company's shareholders: Dr Tin Tun Oo's Swesone Company and the foreign partners and staff.

This is neither the time nor place for to become entangled up in those issues. Instead I make only the fundamental point that the interests of the paper and staff should stand above all

As the leading press sector player for more than 13 years it would have only been appropriate for us to have proudly launched a month ago with other dailies. Instead we limp along

CONTINUED IN OUR 4-PAGE SPECIAL LIFTOUT INSIDE C



Staff from 'The Myanmar Times' enjoy the new spaper's new daily look, which is revealed in this week's special edition.

President hands over USDP reins to Thura U Shwe Mann

Union Solidarity and Development Party formally appoints Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann as chairman at its youth conference on May 1, ending months of speculation after President U Thein Sein held on to the top post following the party's national assembly in October 2012. NEWS 3



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COMMENT

Is Aung San Suu Kyi the real enemy?



THERE is an old saying that love can easily turn into hate but it has been surprising to see how quickly this has happened regarding Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.

It was always going to be impossible for her to meet expectations. First, because of the sheer scale of the problems Myanmar faces, and second because after spending so many years under house arrest, she became all things to all people. In the absence of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi being able to comment and act herself, expectations were based on hope, not reality.

ons were based on hope, not reality. Successive dictatorships in Myanmar ruthlessly pursued divide and rule policies. Unity was essential to counter this. Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, though, has now chosen the path of party politics rather than leading a whole movement. In the 2012 by-elections, the National League for Democracy stood alone, not as part of a coalition of pro-democracy parties and organisations. As such, the situation has changed. Criticism of political parties and their policies is

Now it is President U Thein Sein who is winning peace awards and avoiding criticism.

Mark Farmaner

Director of Burma Campaign UK

an essential part of any democracy. It would be dangerous and unhealthy if people were not criticising Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.

However, the level of vitriol and hatred being directed at her by some people in Myanmar, and some external observers, is worrying. Her picture has been burned during protests, and she has even been compared to Robert Mugabe in Zimbabwe. These attacks are all the more worrying because the level of criticism exceeds that directed at President U Thein Sein.

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi has made compromises that many people are unhappy with. She has been silent on key human rights issues where her intervention could have made a real difference. Her role in the Letpadaung commission has been controversial. There are many decisions she has made that are worthy of comment and debate. In doing so, however, it is

important to keep things in perspec-

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi does not keep hundreds of political prisoners in jail. She does not have an army which is committing war crimes by targeting civilians in Kachin State, with soldiers who rape ethnic Kachin women, and even children. But President U Thein Sein does.

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi doesn't control a government budget which allocates around five times as much to the military as health, or have security forces committing horrendous abuses against the Rohingya. President U Thein Sein does.

There has not been a single repressive law completely repealed that is not already covered by another law, or has not been replaced by another law that does not meet international standards. Myanmar is violating multiple international humanitarian and

human rights laws. As head of state it is U Thein Sein who is responsible for this, not Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.

Aung San Suu Kyi used to be the one winning peace awards but now faces criticism that crosses the line into personal attacks. Now it is President U Thein Sein who is winning the peace awards – and avoiding criticism.

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi would be among the first to admit she isn't perfect. Her actions and decisions should be scrutinised and questioned. But let's not forget it is the head of state who has ultimate responsibility for human rights abuses. U Thein Sein rules a country that two years into the reform process still has one of the worst human rights records in the world – and he is getting a free ride.

(Mark Farmaner is Director of Burma Campaign UK.)

DAILY ROUNDUP

Out of this world

Hearing on UFOs begins

UFO believers have begun testimony at a congressional-style hearing at the National Press Club in Washington at an event organisers say will have "historical implications". The Citizen Hearing on Disclosure will see as many as 50 researchers and government witnesses give their accounts of extraterrestrial encounters over five days to an audience of UFO enthusiasts as well as some former members of the US Congress. The event's motto is, "If the Congress won't do its job, the people will." The event's international spokesman is Apollo 14 astronaut Edgar Mitchell, who has long made his views on alien life known. "I can't say where they're from, but the evidence of their presence here is pretty overwhelming – if you care to look for it," he told Huffington Post.

Top of the pops

Schlong song flops

Jonah Falcon, the man who holds a record for having the world's largest penis, has released a pop song about his member entitled "It's too big". The three-minute track is available for download from iTunes for 99 US cents. Since its release on April 16, the song may not have been an enormous success, with Falcon recently having tweeted: "A lot of controversy going on over my song with Adam

Barta. Please support by buying it – things are not going well."

Help wanted

Queen's kitchen hiring

The conditions stated in the job advertisement might not be that hot with a salary of £23,000 (US\$35,000) a year for 45 hours a week in the kitchen but there are perks: cooking dinner for Queen Elizabeth II at Buckingham Palace. The ad on the official palace website says that the applicant should if possible have a "good understanding of kitchen French". It leaves no doubt too that the cuisine must be haute. "The post-holder has contact with members of the Royal family, their guests, all levels of household staff and employees at the private residences," the advert warns. Darren McGrady, who worked at Buckingham Palace for 15 years, said that in private the queen likes the breakfast cereal Special K, jam sandwiches and chocolate cake, while her favourite lunch was Dover sole. In the evening the queen is famously partial to a 'zaza", a cocktail of one part gin and two parts Dubonnet, well-shaken.

Fast fashion

Pakistan quicks get makeover

The tough-guy fast bowlers of yesteryear might not approve, but Pakistan's budding young quicks were coached on their appearance at a training camp this week – by a hair stylist. The Pakistan Cricket Board





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organised the 10-day camp led by legendary paceman Wasim Akram after concerns were raised over the standard of fast bowlers coming through the ranks. As well as being drilled in technique and fitness, the players were also given a lecture by top Pakistani stylist Nabila Ahmed on how to look good off the field. "We wanted to tell the players through Nabila's lecture how to present yourself as a person which is very important for international players as they are ambassadors of the country," said Wasim.

On this day

May 1

1945 – Joseph Goebbels, German Nazi politician, and his wife Magda poison their six children with cyanide, before committing suicide by gunshot and cyanide respectively.

1948 – The Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea) is established, with Kim Il-sung as leader. 1999 – Body of British climber George Mallory is found on Mount Everest, 75 years after his disappearance in 1924. 2011 – Barack Obama announces that Osama bin Laden has been killed by United States special forces in Ab-



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If you're wondering what makes Marina such an eyecatcher, it could be her heritage: she's a member of the Naga ethnic group that mostly lives in Sagaing Region along the border with India. However, she was raised in Kachin State and came to Yangon in 2008 to launch a modelling career. Earlier this year Marina crossed over into film when she played singer Sai Sai's girlfriend in Sai Sai Ko Chit Thi (I Love Sai Sai), directed by Mg Myo Min (Yin Dwin Phyit). She's now looking to take her acting career to the next level and is shooting Eden Yeh Nat Tha Mee (The Princess of Eden), in which he says she plays a "sexy girl". – *Nuam Bawi*

Photo: Htet Aung Kyaw (HAK Studio)

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Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann addresses the Union Solidarity and Development Party conference in October. Photo: AFP

Speaker confirmed as new USDP chairman



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PYITHU Hluttaw Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann announced he had officially taken over as Union Solidarity and Development Party chairman from President U Thein Sein on May 1, the opening day of the party's youth assembly in Nay Pyi Taw

He said the handover took place "a few days" after the party's first national assembly, held in October 2012.

Thura U Shwe Mann, who served as USDP vice chairman under U Thein Sein, was widely tipped to formally take over from the president during the October conference. Provisions in the constitution forbid members of the government from taking an active role in party politics, and U Shwe Mann had been the de facto leader since early 2011. However, President U Thein Sein appeared reluctant to relinquish the post and remained in control of the party, at least officially.

"President U Thein Sein handed over the chairman position of party to me a few days after the party assembly," Thura U Shwe Mann told *The Muanmar* $\it Times$ on the sidelines of the conference.

Senior party members said they only learned about the handover on May 1 – more than six months after it took place.

"It is the first time that the party officially announced who the chairman was since the assembly last year. I only learned who our chairman is today," said one central executive member, who asked not to be named.

The decision avoids the potentially embarrassing situation of the president being forced to relinquish control, as opposition MPs had indicated they would ask the Constitutional Tribunal to decide whether a member of the government is allowed to be head of a party.

But party vice chairman U Htay Oo said the decision was voluntary, and the provisions in the constitution were not a factor.

"It is not necessary [for U Thein Sein] to hand over the chairman position since the constitution only says [government] members should not take part in party activities," U Htay Oo said.

But U Ye Htun, the Pyithu Hluttaw representative for Hsipaw from the Shan Nationalities Democratic Party, said handing over to Thura U Shwe Mann was the right move.

"The provisions in the constitution are designed to ensure that the president is not biased towards his own party," he said. "I think [the decision to

made because someone explained them about the potential problems."

Meanwhile, a USDP senior member has criticised government ministers for attending the youth conference.

Minister for Cooperatives U Kyaw Hsan, Minister for Information U Aung Kyi, Minister for Energy U Than Htay, Ministers for the President's Office U Soe Thein, U Aung Min and U Tin Naing Thein, and Deputy Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement were all allocated seats at the conference, although not all of them attended.

"In my opinion, [union ministers] have already resigned from our party due to the constitution so they should not have attended like this, wearing the party's badge," central executive committee member U Thein Swe said.

Members of the government also attended the first day of the party's October conference.

U Kyi Myint, the Pyithu Hluttaw representative for Latha from the National Democratic Force, said he believed the government ministers were trying to influence party activities by attending the events.

"People sometimes do not understand that the government, the hluttaw and party are not the same thing," he said. "The government and the hluttaw in particular should be separate from each other, as prescribed in the constitution."

GOURMET ADVENTURE

MP rejects rumours of citizenship probe

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A HLUTTAW representative reportedly at the centre of a probe into the citizenship status of three Muslim MPs from Rakhine State says he has received no formal notification that he is under investigation.

Pyithu Hluttaw representative for Buthidaung U Shwe Maung was the only MP named. The two others are thought to be U Aung Zaw Win, the Pyithu Hluttaw representative for Maungdaw, and U Htay Win, the Amyotha Hluttaw representative for Rakhine State constituency No 7, which encompasses the majority-Muslim northern part of the state.

All three represent the Union Solidarity and Development Party.

U Shwe Maung said the reports, which have circulated mostly online, were "baseless".

"I haven't received any information [from the Union Election Commission] about any investigation into our citizenship," he told *The Myanmar Times*.

The reports were based on comments attributed to Minister for Immigration U Khin Yi at a meeting with expatriate Myanmar in New York. U Khin Yi was part of a government delegation that visited the United States in late April.

The reports said Ko Khaing Aung Kyaw, a Rakhine national living in New York, asked U Khin Yi if there was any plan to examine the citizenship of some MPs from Rakhine State, including U Shwe Maung.

Under election rules, a person is only eligible to stand for election if both their parents were born in Myanmar. In the 2010 election, dozens of candidates were disqualified for not meeting this criteria, while in

the 2012 by-elections, the National League for Democracy's candidate for Sagaing Region Amyotha Hluttaw constituency No 7, U Saw Hlaing, was banned from running on the same grounds.

In his reply, U Khin Yi said that a complaint over the citizenship of several MPs from Rakhine State had been received by the ministry in March.

The ministry was only asked to investigate whether the parents of those MPs were born in Myanmar, he said, adding that the investigation has to take place according to the rules and regulations of the election commission, *Eleven Media* quoted him as saying on April 29.

Reports suggested the three USDP representatives from northern Rakhine State were the subject of the investigation.

"I saw this news on the internet, on both news website and also Facebook. However, this news is baseless – I don't trust it. The media also use indirect quotes, not the direct words of U Khin Yi. I will repeat again: we have been living in Rakhine State generation after generation," U Shwe Maung said.

USDP general secretary U Htay Oo said he had also not received any official notification about the alleged investigation.

"Although I have heard some people questioning whether it is real or not, we haven't received any official notification. We selected [candidates for the 2010 election] after verifying they were eligible as much as we could," he said.

"But the Immigration Department may be investigating [the citizenship of the MPs]. If they do, I think they will do their job fairly."



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WASHINGTON

U Thein Sein plans landmark Washington visit: US source

Secretary of State ends a 17-year ban on access to US visas for those accused of hindering democracy

SHAUN TANDON

PRESIDENT U Thein Sein is planning a landmark visit to Washington later this month, a source said on May 2, as the United States eased visa restrictions in a sign of support despite a surge in anti-Muslim violence.

President U Thein Sein, who would be the first Myanmar leader to visit in half a century, is planning to be in the American capital around May 20 or May 21, a staff member at the US Congress said on condition of anonymity.

The trip would include a summit with President Barack Obama at the White House. Administration officials said they had no announcement to make but have previously said that they were studying a visit by U Thein Sein.

In another step towards thawing relations, US Secretary of State John Kerry on May 2 ended a 1996 ban on US visas to Myanmar nationals accused of hindering democracy.

Separate restrictions remain on visas for nationals accused of human rights violations. A State Department official said the 1996 ban was overly broad by including government workers, officers and even

some pensioners.

"Clearly many people in those categories are now contributing to the reform process and need to engage" through visits to the United States, the official told reporters on condition of anonymity.

President Obama has suspended most sanctions, although he issued a declaration on May 2 that keeps them on the books. The move allows the United States to re-impose restrictions in response to future setbacks, unlike the European Union, which recently terminated most measures entirely.

The US decisions recognise "the important changes the government of Burma has made and encourage and empower the government and the people of Burma to continue on the path of political and economic reform", the State Department official said.

An official from U Thein Sein's office declined to comment on the Washington trip but welcomed US moves to relax visa restrictions.

"We see their termination of the visa ban as a support to increase the momentum of the president's reform process," said the official, who asked not to be named.

Meanwhile the congressional

1966

The last time a Myanmar leader was invited to Washington

source said the administration was considering starting to use the name Myanmar rather than Burma, which is still favoured by some exiled groups

Washington is also reviewing whether Myanmar can enter an agreement that gives duty-free access for some 5000 goods.

President Obama paid his own visit to Myanmar in November 2012, when he praised the nation for its transition but called for progress on reforms, particularly in the treatment of ethnic minorities.

But U Thein Sein's visit is expected to be controversial due to a surge in violence against the Rohingya, a Muslim group referred to in Myanmar as Bengalis.

Jennifer Quigley, executive direc-

tor of the US Campaign for Burma, a Washington-based pressure group, accused the Obama administration of only responding to positive developments and not to setbacks.

"To invite him at this point of time would really just reinforce the message of a positive relationship when there really has been no move by the US government to tie this to the Burmese government taking necessary steps" to curb the violence, she said.

The State Department official distanced the visa easing from the communal violence, saying that the United States had "profound concerns" but pointing to a statement by U Thein Sein in support of religious freedom and tolerance.

"The military regime, for half a century, would respond to conflict with more violence and repression. This central government is trying to do things differently," the official said.

It would be the first visit to Washington by a head of the country since U Ne Win was invited in 1966 by President Lyndon Johnson.

U Thein Sein has previously visited the United States to attend the UN General Assembly, but only held meetings in New York. – AFP

Scared Muslims flee Okkan after mob violence

HT00 AUNG

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MANY Muslim families from the Okkan area of Yangon Region have temporarily left their homes following last week's riots, which left two dead and nine injured.

In Okkan, a Buddhist mob burned 130 homes on April 30, while 77 homes were destroyed in the nearby villages of Yadanakon, Panipin, Chaukthe, Thekon villages. Twenty-four shops in Okkan were also destroyed.

Eighteen people have been arrested in connection with the violence, Deputy Commander of Yangon Region Police Force Lieutenant Colonel Thet Lwin was quoted as saying in state media.

But the assurances that order have been restored were not enough for some Muslim families: residents said around half have left Okkan to stay

'We have nothing left, we are just surviving on donations.'

Daw Yee Mon Muslim resident of Okkan

with relatives elsewhere.

Those who have remained behind told *The Myanmar Times* they are wary of the threat of more violence.

"We sleep under the trees. We [men] sit and stay alert at night. Women and children sleep together at night. ," Ko Kyaw Kyaw, a 45-year-old Muslim resident, said on May 2.

He said that if a relief camp was set up he would leave with his family, because he believed putting Muslims together in one place left them at risk of more violence.

Others said they would continue



Muslim people sit near their destroyed homes in Okkan on May 1. Photo: AFP

to live in Okkan among the remains of their homes.

"Our relatives called us to go and stay together with them but I said no. All our property has been destroyed but I don't want to leave," said Daw Yee Mon, a 50-year-old Muslim resident of Okkan.

Muslim residents said they only narrowly escaped the mob.

"When we heard them coming we ran down to the river. I brought my child together with me. We didn't have a chance to take any of our things with us. We have nothing left, we are just surviving on donations," Daw Yee Mon said.

U Aung Kyaw said he climbed on the roof of his shop to escape the mob and then took refuge with his Buddhist neighbours. *The Myanmar Times* met him as he returned to the shop that doubles as his home. "I am speechless," he said. "I have never experienced riots like this in my life."

The Yangon Region Ministry of Social Welfare and private donors, including political parties, have provided clothes, blankets, towels, cooking

utensils and soap to those affected by the violence. The government has also provided rice, oil and drinking water.

A section 188 partial curfew remains in place not only in Okkan but also nearby townships, including Taikkyi, from 5pm to 5am, and Tharyarwady, from 10pm to 3am.

"More than 400 police from Yangon Region are providing security in cooperation with local security forces. Not only urban but also rural areas are covered by the security," said Lt Col Thet Lwin.



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6 News THE MYANMAR TIMES MAY 6 - 12, 2013

Indonesia radicals urge jihad as bomb plot foiled

JAKARTA - Two Indonesians have been detained over a plot to bomb the Myanmar embassy in Jakarta, officials said on May 3, as radicals rallying in the city called for "jihad in Myanmar" to avenge Muslim deaths.

The incidents highlight the growing anger in Muslim-majority Indonesia over a string of religious clashes in largely Buddhist Myanmar that have left many Muslims dead and tens of thousands displaced.

At least one person was killed when mosques and homes were attacked in Okkan last week.

About 1000 angry hardliners from the Islamic Defenders Front (FPI) converged on Myanmar's embassy in Jakarta on May 3, brandishing banners that read "we want to kill Myanmar Buddhists" and "stop genocide in Myanmar".

They torched the Myanmar flag, while chanting "burn down the embassy" and demanding to speak to officials inside, as hundreds of police in riot gear stood guard.

"Our Muslim brothers and sisters are being attacked in Myanmar - they are being raped and murdered," said Bambang, a 37-year-old street vendor. who like many Indonesians goes by one

"I want jihad in Myanmar. Anyone mistreating Muslims should be killed."

'I want jihad in Myanmar. Anyone mistreating Muslims should be killed.

Bambang Indonesian street vendor

The national head of the FPI, Habib Rizieq, shouted through a loudspeaker to whip up the crowd, mostly men wearing white Islamic skullcaps, as they marched on the embassy.

Earlier, officials said anti-terrorist



Protesters from a hardline Muslim group during an anti-Myanmar protest in Solo, Central Java, on May 3. Photo AFP

police had detained two men suspected of planning a bomb attack on the Myanmar embassy.

The suspects were arrested late on May 2 while travelling by motorbike in a busy residential area in the south of the capital with five assembled pipe bombs, national police spokesman Boy Rafli Amar said in a statement.

The men, Sefa Riano, 28, and Achmad Taufiq, 21, planned to launch the attack on May 3, said a senior source at the country's anti-terrorist police, speaking on condition of anonymity.

The head of Indonesia's anti-terrorist agency, Ansyaad Mbai, said that the target was the Myanmar embassy.

"We are very certain that the attack would have been launched if we did not stop them," he said.

A woman, believed to be the wife of one of the men, has also been detained to be questioned as a witness over the planned attack, said Amar. A spokesman for the office of Presi-

dent U Thein Sein said: "Myanmar government have coordinated diplomatically for the security of the Myanmar embassy, embassy staff and Myanmar citizens in Islamic countries including Indonesia

"The Indonesian government is thanked for identifying and taking action to [stop] the [alleged] terrorists."

Anger in Indonesia about Myanmar has focused on the plight of the Muslim Rohingya, who are known as Bengali in Myanmar. They have increasingly been arriving in Indonesia as they flee violence at home. Clashes in Rakhine state last year between Rohingya and Rakhine Buddhists left around 200 dead, and tens of thousands displaced. In March a flare-up in Buddhist-Muslim violence in central Myanmar left at least 43 people

A man admitted in September to olanning a suicide bomb attack against Buddhists in Jakarta in response to Myanmar's treatment of Muslim groups, particularly Rohingya. – AFP

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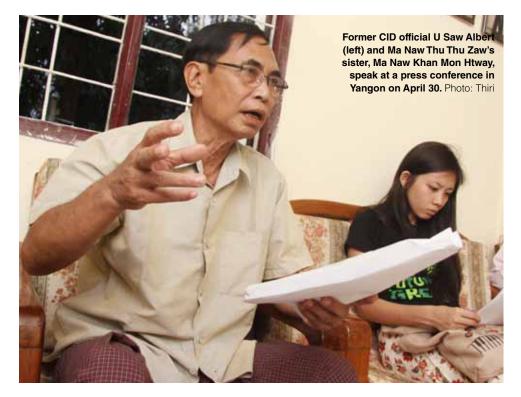
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Family calls for probe into death

Police ruled that Ma Naw Thu Thu Zaw drowned in Hlaing River but relatives are calling for the case to be re-opened

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POLICE will decide this week whether to reopen a case in which a girl was ruled to have drowned after her family accused police of not investigating her death properly.

U Tin Htay Naing, a senior officer from Insein Township Police Station, said police would receive a new medical report on the girl's death this week.

"Medical [findings] of Ma Naw Thu Thu Zaw will come out this week. We will continue our investigation based on what the findings are," U Tin Htay Naing said on May 4.

Ma Naw Thu Thu Zaw, a second-vear student at Myanmar Pharmaceutical Institute, was found in Yangon's Hlaing River on the morning of April 20. Her body was sent to Insein Hospital and the cause of death was ruled drowning.

But the girl's family, who are from Hmawbi township, say they do not think her death was properly investigated, particularly whether the cause of death could have been homicide, and have called on the regional government to reopen the investigation. Eyewitnesses who found hospital, no one her body said she had some evidence of injury and she had yellow foam around her mouth, which her family believe could indicate she was drugged.

They have also questioned Uncle of Ma Naw Thu Thu Zaw why police did not contact them until April 23, despite her bag,

which contained identification documents, having been handed in to police on April 19.

A retired Criminal Investigation Department (CID) officer, U Saw Albert, is helping the family campaign for the case to be reopened.

"We are pushing CID authorities to investigate quickly as it is not good to wait for so long. And CID said they will tell us whether they will investigate it or not on about May 7 or 8. I think they are likely to help us," he said on May 3.

At a press conference in Shwe Pyi Thar township on April 30, relatives said they could not believe that she have either accidentally drowned or committed

"We filed the case in Padauk Chaung police station on the morning of April 20," said the girl's uncle, U Saw Aye Min.

"On April 23, the police said that there was an unknown

'By the time we went to the would allow us to see the body.'

U Saw Aye Min

body in Insein hospital and told us to check her identity card. By the time we went to the hospital no one would allow us to see the body," he said.

"We want the hospital and police to do an autopsy again but we can't do anything as the police already closed the case. But we have entombed the body rather than cremating or burying it because we hope it can be checked again if we get permission to reopen the case.

U Saw Albert said at the press conference that when he questioned police and hospital officials they admitted they had not examined her body in detail, including the contents of her stomach or whether she had been sexually assaulted.

The family also discussed the possible role of Ma Naw Thu Thu Zaw's ex-boyfriend in her death. She was last seen on April 19 when he collected her for his birthday party. The pair had broken up two days earlier.

At 8pm he called her mother to say he had sent her home on the bus. Just 15 minutes later, a pedestrian found her bag on Aung Zayar Bridge and handed it in to police in Hlaing Tharyar township. "They broke up on April 17 and before this they quarrelled for the whole week. And Naw Thu Thu Zaw said that she wouldn't meet him on his birthday. But when he picked her up, she followed him," said Ma Naw Khan Mon Htway, the deceased girl's sister.

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China denies arming Wa

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THE Chinese embassy in Yangon has denied fresh allegations that China sold weapons to one of Myanmar's armed ethnic groups, calling the claims "fake".

A report published by defense and security analysis firm IHS Jane's on April 29 detailed the delivery of helicopters to the United Wa State Army (UWSA), an armed ethnic group with an estimated 20,000 soldiers.

"The Chinese government or military companies never sold weapons to any party or organisation in Myanmar," Mr Xiong Guofeng, secretary to the China's ambassador to Myanmar, told The Myanmar Times in an email.

"We did not receive any complaint from the Myanmar government and army for those unfounded allegations."

The report stated that armed helicopters were flown to UWSA-controlled territory, which is located in northeastern Shan State. over the Mekong River via Laos.

"China delivered several Mil Mi-17 'Hip' medium-transport helicopters armed with TY- 90 air-to-air missiles to the Wa in late February and early March, according to both Myanmar ethnic minority and Myanmar government sources," the report said.

According to an ethnic military source five helicopters were delivered, but a Myanmar government source cited in the report said only two had arrived.

Mr Xiong Guofeng slammed IHS Jane's, saying that the group makes "astonishing reports about China or Russia" that have "always proved to be fake".

Media reports on May 1 quoted a Wa official as saying the report was not true.

In December 2012 another report by IHS Jane's said that the Chinese had provided ground-to-air missiles and 12 tank destroyers to the Wa, in what the report's author, intelligence analyst Anthony Davis, described as "a significant escalation in the equipment sup-

The Chinese government said in a statement issued by its Yangon embassy on January 27 that the accusations were "ill-founded and

KOICA to fund dry zone project

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SOUTH Korea will support a US\$2.3 million project for the greening of central Myanmar's dry zone, said Daw Kay Thi Khaing, programme officer of Korea International Cooperation Agency, on April 26.

We have been supporting that project since 2008, and the first three phases are already complete. This will be phase four. The project will be implemented in Nyaung Oo township this year, and will include reforestation and water access," she said.

The agency will also support five other

projects with Myanmar Development Institute, including a land reform scheme to introduce mechanised farming, a master plan for arterial road network development, strengthening the statistical system, and strengthening capacity for convention man-

Daw Kay Thi Khaing said an agreement would soon be signed between the two governments. KOICA will provide assistance to Myanmar in four sectors: industrial promotion, agricultural development, human resources, and economic and administrative governance.



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Thousands still without shelter in Rakhine

Experts warn of 'looming humanitarian crisis' in the state, where up to 125,000 people remain homeless following last year's communal unrest



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MORE than 100,000 internally displaced people in camps in Rakhine State face a "looming humanitarian crisis" in the coming rainy season, humanitarian sources say.

The majority of the displaced are Muslims who fled their homes during last year's riots in Rakhine State. Since then, the estimated 125,000 people have been living in makeshift camps near the state's larger cities, many of which are located in rice paddies and other low-lying areas prone to flooding.

The government-formed commission investigating the Rakhine conflict says that 90 percent of housing needs among IDPs remain unmet, along with 15pc of food needs.

"It is extremely urgent to provide the Bengali [IDPs] with access to safe and secure temporary shelters prior to the monsoon season," the commission said in findings released to the public yesterday.

'Unregistered camps get nothing ... I don't know what will happen in the rainy season.'

U Aung Win

Sittwe-based activist

Ms Chris Lewa, program director of Arakan Watch, an advocacy group for the Muslim Rohingya based in Bangkok, said many temporary homes are not close to being weatherproof. "A week ago there was a strong rain [in Pauktaw] and people losts their huts," Ms Lewa told The Myanmar Times. "What's going to happen during the rainy season?'

In response to the looming threat, the United Nations and other international agencies have stepped in to build more substantial shelters. A spokesperson for the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) said the agency has already completed 300 temporary shelters that can each house eight families. It plans to construct at least another 560 dwellings.

UNHCR is also working with donations and supplies from several foreign governments. On April 26, the South Korean government donated 640 tents to the agency for distribution.

Mr Hans ten Feld, UNHCR's Myanmar representative, said the tents would provide immediate shelter for

"Our experience shows a tent like this can quickly [be] built up in 30 minutes. The rain is coming and it's a very valuable contribution," he said.

However, he said that about 60,000 people in rural areas of Sittwe, Myebon and Pauktaw townships still require shelter assistance.

Other proposed shelter programs have highlighted the tricky politics of delivering aid to the Rohingya, who are mostly referred to in Myanmar as Bengalis.

The Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency, also known as TIKA, had proposed building 5000 homes for displaced Mus-



lims but the move was met by mass protests because Rakhine people were concerned that the recipients would also be given land.

"We demanded that TIKA not give them homes without checking whether or not they are Myanmar citizens. It was our demonstration that stopped that program. Now UN-HCR is planning to build barracks for all refugees in Rakhine State. We don't oppose this plan. We accept it because it confirms they have no right to own the land," said U Kyaw Zaw Oo, who led the protest in Sittwe and is facing charges in connection with the demonstration, which took place without permission under Myanmar's peaceful protest law.

While the UN is allowed access to certain IDP camps that are officially registered with the government, many thousands are left to survive on their own.

"Registered camps get palm oil, chickpeas, salt and rice," said U Aung Win, a resident and activist in Sittwe. "But unregistered camps get nothing ... I don't know what will happen [to

people in unregistered camps] in the

rainy season."

International NGO Human Rights Watch has described the situation as a "humanitarian crisis".

"Burmese government restrictions on aid to Rohingya Muslims are creating a humanitarian crisis that will become a disaster when the rainy season arrives," the group's Asia director, Mr Phil Robertson, said in a statement on its website.

Representatives from the President's Office and the Ministry of Immigration could not be reached for

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Quintana calls for lifting of IDP travel restrictions

TIM MCLAUGHLIN

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THE United Nations' top official on human rights in Myanmar has called for the lifting of movement restrictions imposed on displaced Muslims and punishment for those responsible for crimes related to the conflict in Rakhine State.

The special rapporteur on the human rights situation in Myanmar, Tomás Ojea Quintana, made the comments in response to the public release of the Rakhine Investigation Commission report, which he said contained "many worthwhile recommendations".

"[I]n implementing [the recommendations], I urge the authorities, as a matter of urgency, to ease the harsh and disproportionate restrictions on the freedom of movement of Muslim populations in the IDP camps and also in Muslim residential areas, such as Aung Mingala in Sittwe and across northern Rakhine State, while also providing adequate security," he said in the May 1 statement.

"Now we are at the beginning of May and the harsh restrictions for Muslim populations remain firmly in place."

Mr Quintana's calls echo those made by director of operations for the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), John Ging, who on March 28 said displaced people needed to be given greater freedom of movement.

"A solution needs to be found to relocate those people and also to see the return and the freedom of movement for all the internally displaced persons (IDPs) so they can begin to recover their lives and their livelihoods," Mr Ging said.

Mr Quintana praised most of the recommendations made in the 27-member commission's long delayed report, which was released to the public on April 29, including those to double the presence of police, military and border security forces in Rakhine State.

However, he said he was concerned that those responsible would not be held accountable for human rights violations that took place during riots in June and October 2012.

"I have received credible allegations that widespread and systematic human rights violations by state officials targeted against the Rohingya and wider Muslim populations have occurred and are continuing in Rakhine state," he said, in an apparent reference to a report released by Human Rights Watch that detailed allegations of ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity.

"These involve the most serious of allegations, including extrajudicial killings, rape and sexual violence, arbitrary detention and torture and ill-treatment in detention, deaths in detention, and denial of due process and fair trial rights.

"The government has an obligation under international law to investigate these allegations ... and, where appropriate, to take action against those responsible, in accordance with domestic and international law."

Conflict will grow if govt recognises Rohingya: report

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THE Rakhine Investigation Commission says the government needs to urgently initiate a process for examining the citizenship status of people in Rakhine State but warned it will face a "huge confrontation" if it officially recognises the Rohingya ethnic group.

The commission also said the government should implement the 1982 Citizenship Law "in a transparent and accountable manner" and recognise the basic human rights of the Muslims of Rakhine State as part of longer-term measures.

The commission used the term Bengali, rather than Rohingya, in its report to avoid "unwanted problems", 88 Generation and commission member Ko Ko Gyi said at a press conference at the Myanmar Peace Centre yesterday.

The committee was formed in August to probe an outbreak of violence in Rakhine State between Buddhists and Muslims in June. Its report was delayed following a fresh outbreak of violence in October, and it finally submitted the report to the

president on April 22.

The 186-page report included 15 sections focusing on issues such as humanitarian assistance for internally displaced people, citizenship, religion, security and administration, rule of law, peaceful coexistence and more.

Commission members interviewed members of both communities to compile the report and issue a set of findings and recommendations.

The commission said it found that nearly all Rakhine people do not accept the Rohingya name but they would agree to give citizenship to all Muslims who met the criteria in the 1982 Citizenship Law.

The commission warned that if the government recognises the Rohingya as an ethnic group, it will create further unrest and hinder regional development.

"The term Rohingya is not a small issue," it said. "The government should address the citizenship claims of the Bengalis in a transparent and accountable manner. In dealing with state-



Members of the Rakhine Investigation Commission speak at a press conference in Yangon on April 29. Photo: Boothee

less individuals, the government should do so in accordance with existing laws and international norms. The government should arrange citizenship ceremonies to commemorate those who become new citizens."

Commission spokesperson Dr Kyaw Yin Hlaing said amending the 1982 Citizenship Law would not resolve the conflict. "The most important thing to prevent problems is for the government to implement the law clearly," he said.

The commission also said the "temporary separation" of Buddhist and Muslim communities should continue in the state, where 125,000 people have been displaced.

"While keeping the two communities apart is not a long-term solution, it must be enforced at least until the overt emotions subside," the commission said.

Last week international NGO Human Rights Watch accused the government and security forces of being involved in the "ethnic cleansing" of Muslims in Rakhine State – a claim rejected by the government.

The official report said soldiers and police should be held accountable for any illegal actions, but also recommended doubling the security presence in the region "to control and prevent further violence".

But Mr Phil Robertson, the deputy director of Human Rights Watch's Asia Division, said the report "fails to address the need for accountability for ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity that happened in last June and October".

"By failing to hold responsible the individuals who committed these grievous crimes, the government will miss deterring precisely those extremists who are prepared to use more violence in the future to achieve their aims," he said.

Mr Robertson also rejected the commission's recommendations on the citizenship law.

"The commission missed a critical point when it failed to include reform of the 1982 Citizenship [Law] to strip out discriminatory provisions and ensure that the law complies with international human rights standards." – With AFP



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MMA members to vote on controversial lease plan

Senior medical association members will decide whether to lease Yangon office to a foreign company on July 1





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REPRESENTATIVES from the Myanmar Medical Association are to vote on whether to allow foreign companies to rent out parts of the association's Yangon office, or even allow them to demolish the existing fourstorey building.

The proposal to lease the site was announced at a meeting in January by the association's central executive committee, and sparked a significant backlash from other members who allege the CEC has not been transparent in its financial dealings.

Three foreign companies have already submitted proposals to lease the site on Thein Phyu Road in Mingalar Taung Nyunt township, which the association estimates is worth about US\$10 million. The building is used to conduct training seminars and houses the public health project offices.

MMA general Secretary Dr Myint Thaung said leasing the land for 30 years would create a valuable income stream for the association and allow it to expand its activities.

"It is a good idea. The young generation will benefit from the money [received from investors]," he said.

"We are going to spend the rent money on MMA business and social activities. The association needs a lot of money to maintain this building and then we need to expand our space for storage and conducting seminars. Every month we spend K7 million and it's very difficult to find the money so we believe this is the best way."

But some members interviewed by The Myanmar Times said they were opposed to the proposal, which



A building inside the Myanmar Medical Association compound in Mingalar Taung Nyunt township. Photo: Aung Htay Hlaing

will be settled at the July 1 meeting. They are also unhappy that only the heads of the 86 associations under the MMA will be allowed to vote on the proposal.

'It is not fair because the senior association members tried to do this project without asking all MMA members what they want. We first heard about this project during the Mawlamvine Myanmar Medical Association annual meeting on January 1," said Dr Aung Khin Sint, a former secretary of the association.

Members were told that the association had already started negotiations with foreign companies and that if a deal was reached, the Yangon branch of the association would relocate to the maternal and child health centre at South Okkalapa township, Dr Aung Khin Sint said.

"After we heard this news, most MMA members complained and we wrote articles in some newspapers,"

Association member Dr Ba Shwe said that if the existing building was not big enough for the association's needs it should be redeveloped and renovated, rather than the whole compound leased.

"A new MMA building has already been built in Nay Pyi Taw and the association headquarters should shift there. Then the Yangon branch

'The senior members tried to do this project without asking all the **MMA** members.

Former association secretary

Dr Aung Khin Sint

should use this old building," he said. "I think the association's healthcare activities need to be separate from the business side. Coordination and cooperation with the private sectors is not suitable for medical professionals. But I can accept the MMA renting out office space, like at Traders Hotel, if there is enough room."

The controversy has also sparked broader accusations of financial mismanagement, with members accusing the central executive committee of hiding income and expenses.

In response, the MMA held a press conference in February at which Dr Myint Thaung said the association earned income from renting out the Yangon office for wedding ceremonies, leasing space in the office's compound to restaurants and receiving donations from pharmaceutical companies. However, no detailed figures were released.

One association member, who spoke on condition of anonymity, questioned whether the central executive committee members would financially benefit from any deal reached with a foreign company.

"It is unnecessary to hand over that much property to foreign companies. If the association needs money, they should create a new building using a local contractor," the member said.

But Dr Myint Thaung rejected all accusations of impropriety and said the central executive committee was working for the best interests of the association's members.

"Regardless of the accusations that are made about us, we are going to do the job that we have been entrusted with," he said.

The association is Myanmar's only professional organisation of physicians. It was founded in 1949 and as of 2011 it had 17,000 members and 86 member organisations. It is administered by the central executive committee and is divided into 26 different societies.

Policeman held over alleged rape in Myingyan

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POLICE in Mandalay are questioning a fellow officer over rape allegations, after the father of a 19-year-old woman claimed the officer held her captive for four days.

The officer from Myingyan township has been detained but maintains his innocence, saying that the woman eloped with him.

The pair apparently met while she was visiting her brothers while they were incarcerated at the police station. The woman says the officer called her to the station on April 18, the day her brothers were due to be released, after which he detained her for four days and raped her.

"I had to sleep with him for four nights, including at a house at No 19 ward, a room in the police station, and a house in No 4 ward," the woman said in a statement to police.

When the girl did not return home on April 18, her father reported her missing. In his statement to police, the father said officers at the police station did not do anything about his complaint and "threatened me in different ways". He said he asked to look for her inside the police station but was told if he did he would be charged with trespassing.

'We are scared because we are uneducated, poor and don't know anything about the law. I'd like to see the truth," said U Than Myint, 49.

Police Lieutenant Aung Kyi from No 1 Myingyan Police Station insisted the allegations would be properly investigated. He said the case would be heard by senior police officers under the Police Maintenance of Discipline Law.

'We locked [the officer up] in the police station and are questioning him because the girl's father reported the case. According to his statement, they are lovers and she eloped with him but we will try to get to the truth," he told The Myanmar Times.

Translated by Thiri Min Htun

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Controversy over MP cash allocation | UMTA chooses new team,

WIN KO KO LATT winkolatt2012@gmail.com

MPs will be allocated tens of thousands of dollars to spend on development projects in their townships, a hluttaw official said yesterday, but reports are already emerging of funds being misused.

The money has apparently come from the K50 billion parliamentarians cut from the proposed K178 billion budget for Nay Pyi Taw Council.

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Deputy Director Daw Khin Mya Win told The Myanmar Times that the government has earmarked K33 billion (US\$37 million) for the project, which will cover all 330 townships. Each township is to receive K100 million.

She said she did not yet know the details of the plan, including when or how the money would be distrib-

But U Kyi Myint, the Pyithu Hluttaw representative for Latha in Yangon, said there were already reports of funds being misused.

"Some MPs have already received this cash and some used it for their own offices," he said, refusing to name any MPs.

Daw Khin Mya Win declined to comment on the claims.

U Kyi Myint also said the money was not needed in his constituency. "I do not know much about the program but the people in my constituency are mostly rich. The township general administrative office and municipal authorities already have a large enough budget so I think my township doesn't need much of this money," he said, adding that he was unsure whether he would accept the funds.

But some representatives said the funding allocation would mean that they no longer have to raise

"small cases" in parliament, such as the renovation of schools and repairing of bridges. This will improve the parliament's effectiveness and speed up its activities, they said.

"Representatives will be able to fulfill the needs of voters in their constituencies [with this funding]," said Amyotha Hluttaw representative U Hla Swe.

U Min Thu, the Pyithu Hluttaw representative for Ottarathiri, said the K33 billion had come from the sharp cut MPs inflicted on the Nay Pyi Taw Council budget for 2013-14. "The hluttaw cut K50 billion kyats, around 30 percent of the total budget for Naw Pyi Taw," he said.

He said the distribution process was still unclear, including whether it would be shared between Pyithu Hluttaw, Amyotha Hluttaw and region and state hluttaw representa-

six months after first vote

YU YU MAW

THE Union of Myanmar Travel Association has succeeded in its third attempt to elect a new executive committee, more than six months after the original date for the ballot.

The new team was voted in during a meeting lasting about six hours at the Inya Lake Hotel on Sunday afternoon that was attended by 356 of the UMTA's 610 members.

The ballot saw U Aung Myat Kyaw elected as chairman, U Thet Lwin Toh as vice chairman, U Kvaw Min Htin as second vice chairman, U Naung Naung Han as general secretary and U Tin Htun Aung as secretary.

U Thet Lwin Toh said the new team was chosen democratically and the voting process was smooth.

Daw Sabai Aung, managing director of Nature Dream, expressed appreciation that the meeting was supervised by the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism.

"The association chose the right and good people; I believe they can do well," Daw Sabai Aung told The Myan $mar\ Times.$

However, she expressed disappointment that she did not have a chance to raise the issue of disputes between hotel operators and travel agencies

"Someone from the ministry warned me to be quiet," Daw Sabai Aung said, adding that she hoped the disputes could be resolved by the new chairman and executive committee

The result of the first election, held on October 7, was annulled as fewer than 50 percent of members voted.

The committee then drafted rules for another election last December, but it was cancelled.

Police hunt eight activists over latest mine unrest

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DEFIANT villagers are vowing to ignore a police threat to jail them unless they inform on outside "activists" who have helped organise resistance to the troubled Letpadaung copper mine pro-

Last week monks intervened to stop fresh violence after clashes between villagers and police left scores injured on April 24 and 25. Now Sagaing Region police have ordered local residents to hand over eight people police accused of instigating the unrest.

The number of villagers who took part in a protest near the Letpadaung mine on April 28

The incident is the latest in the longrunning dispute over the mine project, which was the subject of a months-long investigation by a commission chaired by Daw Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.

The commission, set up just days after a police raid in November in which monks and other protesters sustained severe burns and other injuries, received evidence that the police had attacked the protesters with white phosphorous, apparently in violation of international law. It did not recommend any prosecution, however, and also said the mine project should continue.

Now the villagers have rejected the police threats.

The eight men wanted by the police include Ko Han Win Aung, of the Network for Helping Political Prisoners, Ko Ba Htoo, of the Yangon Public Service Network, Ko Thaung Htike Oo of the Yangon University of Arts and Science Students' Union.

Police accuse them of forcing local residents to cover their living expenses, including meals, transportation and phone bills, of abusing villagers' trust, and instigating them to violence. The penalty for failing to come forward with information is six months in prison. Anyone convicted of harbouring an offender could also be jailed.

'We don't care about this order. If they want to arrest us, we are ready to be arrested," said U Aung Than Myo of Tone Ywa village. "The activists did not instigate us. They are helping us get our rights. We are willing to support their expenses. They didn't force

After the police issued their warning on April 28, 300 villagers held a peaceful protest to demand the release of three people detained in the April 24-25 violence.

"Our protest had official permission. We asked for an end to the Letpadaung project and the release of three persons. We won't give up our protest," said U Aung Than Myo.

According to the villagers, only one activist, Ko Aung Soe, has been arrested and the other seven are still at large.

U Chit Khin, chairman of Letpadaung Taung Salvation Committee, accused the police of issuing the warning to create fear among residents near the mine.

"The activists are helping us, not instigating us. The villagers are not afraid of the warning," said U Chit Khin.

Speaking to The Myanmar Times from an undisclosed location, Ko Han Win Aung rejected the police accusa-

"We help the villagers to get their rights, but not to create unrest and violence," he said.

He said the villagers have been living in poor conditions since the mine owners took their land.

"Now the villagers know their rights and are determined to claim them. The commission of inquiry said UMEHL and Wanbao had taken too much of the villagers' lands in inappropriate ways,' he added, referring to the Tatmadawowned business conglomerate and Chinese company that operate Letpadaung.



Residents from Dagon Seikkan's No 88 ward protest on May 3. Photo: Aung Htay Hlaing

Dagon Seikkan residents protest over ward administrator election

Township official admits irregularities in March vote and promises a fresh election

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HUNDREDS of residents of a Yangon township have taken to the streets to demand the removal of their administrative officer. They marched from the Yuzana Garden City housing development to the administrative centre of Dagon Seikkan township on May 3 to protest against U Kyi Lwin who, they say, rigged his re-election to the post.

The residents also accuse U Kyi Lwin of bribery and corruption, and of serving as a police informer under the former regime.

More than 4000 families live in Yuzana Garden City's No 88 ward.

"U Kyi Lwin rigged the voting when the township authorities chose a new administrator for our ward," said Daw Lone Ma, 65.

A Muanmar Times reporter who tried to contact U Kvi Lwin was told by his daughter that he was away from home. But U Kyaw Naing Tun, Dagon Seikkan township administrative officer, admitted irregularities in the election for ward administrative officer. Elections for ward and village-tract administrators were held nationally starting from December 2012.

"I have to say there was some-

thing we missed in the election. I will organise a re-election to choose another officer if higher-level authorities instruct me to do so," he said.

Daw Lone Ma said residents objected when U Kyi Lwin was nominated for the post last December. "Though we told township authorities that we object to U Kyi Lwin as our new officer, they chose without telling the residents. The election was held in another ward and the people who voted for him don't live in our ward. Some voted more than once," she claimed.

"Residents were invited to attend the election in March. But the invitation letter didn't mention where and when the election would

'U Kyi Lwin worked as an informer for the police under the military regime.'

Daw Myint Myint Thein

Resident of Dagon Seikkan township's No 88 ward

take place. In the middle of Thingyan, on April 15, U Kyi Lwin told us he was the officer," she added.

Residents are demanding a new and transparent election.

"U Kvi Lwin worked as an informer for the police under the military regime. He takes bribes from job applicants. We don't trust him and we can't accept him as our administrative officer," said another resident, Daw Myint Myint Thein.

Yuzana Garden City is a working-class district whose residents cannot afford good schooling for their children, said resident U Than Win, a bus driver.

"We also have poor water supply," he said. "I moved here after being evicted from Tarmwe township in 1997. We had purified water for six months, but dirty water ever since. We have to buy water.

"People with wells donate water to poor people who cannot afford to buy it."

Residents said that they want a leader they can trust to solve these problems. "An administrative officer has authority. If he is really a good person, the problems will be solved. I want an officer who pushes parents to send their children to school," said Daw Lone Ma.

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Flooding, winds kill at least 16



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AT least 16 people were killed by flash flooding in Kalaw township in southern Shan State on May 3, a Myanmar Red Cross Society official said.

U Kyaw San Win, an officer from the society's disaster management division, said 16 deaths had been reported from Nyaung Kone and Taung Palt villages in Shwe Twin Kone village tract.

"The report said the disaster occurred in those areas at about lam after heavy rain. Injured people have been sent to Kalaw hospital but specific number of injured people was not reported yet. There are some difficulties to transport injured people because of the poor transportation link. About 50 houses were damaged in the flash flood in two villages," he said.

He said MRCS had 18 members on the ground have been providing support to affected areas since early on May 3.

The heavy rain that sparked the flash flooding was relatively isolated, with nearby weather stations recording minimal rainfall. The Department of Meteorology and Hydrology (DMH) said Taunggyi and Pinlaung in southern Shan State received rainfall of 15 millimetres and 21mm respectively in the 24 hours to 9:30am on May 3.

Meanwhile, parts of upper Myanmar have also been affected by severe weather conditions, including strong winds and thunderstorms.

U Aung Khine, a director of the Relief and Resettlement Department, said homes in many villages in Monywa district were damaged by strong winds on May 2 and a damage assessment is underway.

"We have initial information that the roofs of lots of houses were destroyed in strong winds that happened at about 3pm yesterday. Telephone communication is also difficult now. It is hard to know how many houses have been affected but the strong winds hit many areas in Monywa district," he said on May 3.

Monywa district in Sagaing Region comprises the townships of Ayadaw, Budalin, Chaung-U, Kani, Monywa, Pale, Salingyi, Tabayin and Yinmabin.

One death was also reported in Lal Pyin village in Sagaing Region's Indaw township. On its Facebook page, the Myanmar Police Force said a man was killed by lightning on May 1.

The department forecast on May 3 that thunderstorms would continue to pose a threat in upper Myanmar through to May 5.

Govt orders 34 fuel stations to close for cheating customers

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FOUR fuel stations in Yangon have been ordered to close for three months for "cheating" customers, while 12 more will close for a month, an official from the regional office of the Myanmar Petroleum Products Enterprise said last week.

Another 18 from Bago Region were also found to have ripped off motorists, the Ministry of Energy said in a statement released on May 4

In Yangon, 12 stations were banned from operating from May 6 to June 6 a senior officer from the enterprise told *The Myanmar Times* on May 3, while four others will be banned until August. He said the stations closed for three months had also been caught cheating customers in September.

The bans were ordered at a meeting on May 1.

"These 16 stations were caught cheating customers by under-filling. They failed to fill the correct amount when the Yangon Region Control Committee for [the storage and distribution of petroleum products] checked again during the third week of April," he said.

The banned filling stations include Thurira Energy, Denko, GL (owned by Asia World), Lin Latt Aung (owned by Union of Myanmar Economic Holding Limited), Myawady, Nilar Yoma, U Nay Shwe Thway Aung, Green Luck, New World, Power 9, Yarzarmin, 2000



A '2000' brand fuel station in Botahtaung township that authorities have forced to close from one month from May 6. Photo: Aung Htay Hlaing

and Myanmar Naing Group.

"We already checked the shops in September 2012. We looked at 23 filling stations in Yangon and found 21 stations were not filling the right amount. So we warned them then," the Myanmar Petroleum Products Enterprise said.

The Lin Latt Aung, Myanmar Naing Group and Yazarmin shops in Minglardon township and Denko in Thaketa township will be forced to close until August 6.

UMEHL had the highest number of shop closures in Yangon with three, followed by GL (Asia World), Nilar Yoma and Denko with two.

A spokesperson for the privatesector Myanmar Petroleum Trade Association declined to comment on the forced closures, saying it was only responsible for the importation of fuel.

None of the filling station companies contacted by *The Myanmar Times* would speak on the record. However, some said that the checking system did not meet international standards, as the inspection committee had used a device with no written measurements to check stations were distributing the correct amount of



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Workers struggle to clear a mineshaft filled with mud at the Shwedaw gold field in Kalaw township on May 3, a day after flash floods hit the region on May 2. Photo: Boothee

Workers flee Kalaw mine after floods

Death toll at Shwedaw mine still unclear, with some predicting it could hit several dozen, following flash floods on May 2



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THE death toll at a gold mine in Kalaw township following flash floods in the early hours of May 2 remains unknown but sources in the area say dozens may have been killed.

Eleven bodies had been recovered and sent to Kalaw Hospital by May 3, while seven people were receiving treatment in hospital, four of them for serious injuries.

The floods filled 150-metre mine shafts with mud and felled massive 30-metre trees in the Shwedaw area. around the mine, which is a threehour motorbike ride and walk through steep mountains from Kalaw.

When The Myanmar Times visited the site on May 3, the Shwedaw community appeared decimated by the and pools of blood still on the ground. a plastic bag.

Numerous people had suffered injuries, and workers were trying to pump the mud out of the mine shafts. Officials from the company operat-

ing the 60,000 concession since De-

cember 2011, Asia Kabar Myay, were hostile when approached by a reporter and photographer from The Myanmar "We can't give the number [of casu-

alties]. You can write whatever you want," said a man at the mine site, who said he was the general manager of the company.

After questioning whether journalists had "permission to cover the event" from the Ministry of Mines and trying to delete photos from a camera, he said company officials were "too busy" and left.

A number of people interviewed in the Shwedaw area, which borders Mandalay Region and Shan State, said "many" people had been trapped inside the shafts when the flooding

"I've been here only two months. I was so scared," said a 20-year-old floods, with most houses destroyed worker as he ate some boiled rice from

"A tree that was as wide as three men holding hands fell down near my hut. I'm lucky to be alive," said 26year old Ko Soe Thu, originally from Pvawbwe, as he sat in front of the Asia Kabar Myay clinic, which was treating people for free.

Near Ko Soe Thu, Ko Sai Zaw Tun, a 27-year-old Pa-O, said he lost one colleague to the flooding, a 40-year-old man he described as "a silent person".

Ko Htaik, 26, came all the way from a village in Ayeyarwady Region's Wakema township, with the hope of a better income. He never expected to witness the tragic death of his neighbour, a 39-year-old woman, who was crushed by a tree as she hugged her two-year-old son as trees fell down around them.

The small hut was still crushed under a large tree when The Myanmar Times visited, and recent rain had left the ground streaked with blood.

We didn't know what was happening. We all just ran," said Ko Htaik. "When we came back, we saw her husband looking for her. As he shouted, the baby started crying. The baby was left his home in Yangon's North Dagon

her child. When the man saw that, he grabbed his child, he cried and just

"That night was really scary. There was lots of lightning, and trees falling down," said a middle-aged man standing beside Ko Htaik.

Fear of more floods had prompted

'After the floods, I asked the company for leave. But they rejected it so I resigned.'

> U Min Han Former head of security at the Shwedaw mine

many to pack up their belongings and leave Shwedaw: a stream of people were heading out of the area towards Lun Htoe train station on May 3.

U Min Han was one of them. He alive. It was like the mother saved township six months ago to work as

Asia Kabar's head of security.

"After the floods, I asked the company for leave. But they rejected it so I resigned instead," U Min Han said.

He said the number of deaths was likely to be "at least 40" - one of whom was his close colleague, a Kayin man,

This contrasted with what U Maung Maung Tar, head of the Asia Kabar Myay clinic at Shwedaw, had said just a few hours earlier. "We treated 30 people with minor injuries and we sent three people who had been hit by the trees to Kalaw Hospital. But we had no deaths here," he said.

A member of Fire Services Department from Taunggyi, who asked not to be named, said his team had only learned of the tragedy on the morning of May 3. That day, 17 firemen from Kalaw and Taunggyi were despatched to Shwedaw.

After spending almost five hours examining mine shafts, the team managed to exhume only one body.

"It's too hard to work," he said, with his rescue tools slung over his right shoulder. "The holes are 500 feet deep."

At a blackout-hit Kalaw Hospital, some of those who escaped the floods with injuries were receiving treat-

mine shaft, maybe 15 feet away," said U Win Maung, his face lit by a candle. 'Then a wave of water with mud came in. It's like it was pushing us back."

'We could see the mouth of the

While U Win Maung was rescued from a flooded mineshaft, one of his colleagues did not survive.

"I didn't want to do that job. Before I worked as a porter but this company came in so we couldn't do that work anymore. The pay was too low. So I decided to become a gold miner. I had no option if I wanted to be able to feed my family," he said. "Now I don't want to work anymore here. After I've recovered, I'm going back to Pyu."





Left: Miners injured in the May 2 flash floods sit on beds in Kalaw Hospital the following day. Right: Rescue workers at the Shwedaw gold fields. Photos: Boothee

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Finances a problem for Myanmar rep ahead of Geneva meeting in June

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THE recently selected representative for Myanmar workers at the 2013 International Labor Conference says she is facing financial difficulties to attend the event.

Daw Than Than Htay from Kamma township in Magwe Region was selected by her peers to represent Myanmar workers at an April 29-30 labour conference in Yangon.

A former member of the National League for Democracy, she leads a labour organisation representing farmers and other agriculture workers in Kamma's Okpo village.

She said she has already started preparing for the June conference but is concerned about raising enough money to attend. While the government pays the airfare, accommodation and some other costs, she said there were many other expenses that had to be met, particularly while preparing for the event.

"I started collecting information about the labour situation [for the conference] ... but the major difficulty is funding. I know the government will support for me butapart from the general expenses, there are so many other things," she told *The Myanmar Times* on May 2.

"Our organisation is so poor, we have no extra money. I don't know how we'll work this out," she said.

Nevertheless, she said she was hopeful that her participation in Geneva would be beneficial for labour rights and working conditions in Myanmar.

"I will let international organisations and our government know about the current thatfarmers and workers face. I believe I can do it." she said.

"I will propose that international businesspeople who come to invest in Myanmar must protect the dignity



Daw Than Than Htay.Photo: Aung Htay Hlaing

of workers and farmers. Their work should benefit workers financially and also improve their human rights situation" she said.

Cooperation between the government, labour organisations and workers is essential, she said.

"Myanmar still has weak points in terms of its labour laws. In some cases, the lawsare not practical and are not implemented properly," she said.

Daw Than Than Htay will be joined in Geneva by two advisers, U Than Swe and Dr Sai Khine Myo Tun, who received the second- and third-highest number of votes at the April 29-30 labour conference. U Than Swe represents an agriculture and food organisation in Nyaung Bin Kwin village in Yangon's Kayan township, while Dr Sai Khine Myo Tun is from a teachers' organisation at East Yangon University.

Daw Than Than Htay said the trio will meet before their departure to prepare for the Geneva conference.

Organisers resolve dispute at Yangon labour conference

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ORGANISERS of a labour conference in Yangon last week managed to resolve a dispute that threatened to derail the selection of a delegate for an international meeting in Geneva.

Daw Than Than Htay, the representative of an agriculture and food organisation from Okpo village in Magwe Region's Kamma township, was selected on April 30 to represent Myanmar workers at the International Labour Conference in Geneva, Switzerland, in June.

U Than Swe from an agriculture and food organisation in Nyaung Bin Kwin village in Yangon Region's Kayan township and Dr Sai Khine Myo Tun from a teacher association at East Yangon University received the next-highest number of votes in the secret ballot.

Daw Phyo Sandar Soe, secretary of the Youth Committee in the International Department of the Thailandbased Federation of Trade Unions-Burma, said the pair would accompany Daw Than Than Htay to Geneva as advisers.

More than 450 registered labour organisations were invited to the April 29-30 conference at Myanmar Convention Centre, in what organisers said was the largest labour meet in Myanmar in more than 50 years.

The conference, organised by the In-

ternational Labour Organisation (ILO) and German NGO Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, was designed to give participants a chance to network and discuss labour-related issues.

However, the opening day was marred by a disagreement over the voting process for selecting a Myanmar delegate to send to the Geneva conference. 88 Generation members

450

The number of labour organisations invited to the April 29-30 meeting

and labour delegates said they doubted whether all of the participants were from registered labour organisations, suggesting instead that some may have been planted to affect the outcome of the vote.

"I have doubts about voting for a delegate to go to Geneva. How can we vote if we don't even know the other people sitting here?" one labour delegate said at the meeting. The disagreement was settled on the second day of the conference when Mr Ross Wilson, the chief technical adviser for the ILO Freedom of Association Program in Yangon, accepted a proposal that only participants from worker organisations could vote for the delegate.

"We want the delegate to represent legal, registered organisations. The delegates who vote for the worker's representative should be also from registered organisations," one delegate proposed.

One representative from a Myanmar non-government organisation, who asked not to be named, said they believed some groups were trying to derail the conference.

"I think this kind of conference has come early for Myanmar, at a time when people are not yet used to labour organisations. Some political groups can take advantage of the situation," she said.

The first day of the conference was also attended by United States ambassador to Myanmar Derek Mitchell, Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry chairman U Win Aung, and Deputy Minister for Labour II Myint Thein.

Costs associated with sending the delegate to Geneva will be borne by the government, while Friedrich Ebert Stiftung will pay to send the two advisers, said Mr Wilson.

Midwives honoured at May 5 ceremony

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THE Ministry of Health and United Nations Population Fund were to hold a ceremony in Nay Pyi Taw on May 5 to mark International Day of the Midwife.

The ceremony was held from 9am to midday at Thingaha Hotel, a De-

partment of Health offical said.

"The event is to honour midwives who contribute to the wellbeing of mothers and children all over the world," she said.

This year objective's is to inform everyone that midwives are crucial

to reducing maternal and neonatal mortality and celebrate the achievement of midwives and progress made in improving maternal and child health. Organisers are also seeking to lobby policy makers for adequate midwifery resources, while at the same time recognise the unique professional role of midwives, she said.

Thilawa impact assessment begins

But hundreds of farmers served eviction notices in January press on with plans to cultivate their farmland ahead of monsoon



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DEFIANT farmers near the Thilawa special economic zone are planning to grow crops on their fields as the rains return this month, despite having received eviction notices from the government last January.

The farmers said they ignored the eviction notices – backed up with threats of prison – because they have nowhere else to go, and they have yet to receive any compensation.

The stand-off is intensifying as the government announced, on April 30, that the environmental impact assessment for the special economic zone, which began in March, is due to be completed in August by Japanese company Nippon Koei. Resource and Environment Myanmar will work with the Japanese firm on the assessment.

But Ko Aye Htay, a farmer under threat of eviction, said farmers in Thanlyin and Kyauktan township were preparing to farm from about May 20.

"That's when the rains usually begin. Though the government ordered us to move out and have offered reset-

tlement and compensation, nothing has been concluded yet. We can't wait so long for their decision. We have families to feed and we have to work for our living no matter what. We are farmers and we can only earn a living from farming," he said.

U Mya Hlaing, a farmer in Alwan

U Mya Hlaing, a farmer in Alwan Sut village, Thanlyin township, said farmers from both townships had informed the agriculture ministry and the regional authorities that they were going to cultivate rainy-season crops.

"Farmers in all six villages who have been threatened with eviction have reported to the regional government and the ministry that we have to cultivate in May," he said.

"Though we know the government is making plans for us, we can't wait for their solution. We've met with the authorities two or three times, but nothing is certain yet," he added.

The famers are demanding com-

'Though we know the government is making plans for us, we can't wait for their solution.'

> U Nay Myo Shwe Project officer of the Friends of Wildlife Association



A child sits inside a house in the proposed Thilawa Special Economic Zone that has an eviction attached to its exterior. Photo: Aung Htay Hlaing

pensation equivalent to the value of the farmlands they are working.

U Set Aung, deputy minister of national planning and economic development, said on April 30 that the environmental impact study would be completed in August. The assessment was being performed by Japanese experts, he said.

"Seven professional associations applied to carry out the environmental impact assessment, and two final-

ists emerged, one Myanmar and one Japanese. Though the Myanmar company charged a reasonable price, we chose the more expensive Japanese applicant because of their experience," U Set Aung said.

The first stage of the Thilawa development is expected to be completed in 2015.

The deputy minister added: "We know there are some people, non-residents, involved in the discus-

sions between the government and the farmers. The plans could be disturbed because of their dishonest involvement. I want the farmers to get compensation direct from the government."

"I'm really worried that farmers could lose what they deserve because of this dishonest involvement," he added.

Despite U Set Aung's allegations of outside interference in the compensation negotiations – a claim that has also been made by some Japanese officials – two farmers who received eviction notices told *The Myanmar Times* they were not receiving assistance from any individuals or organisations.

The Japanese government is a major investor in the Thilawa complex, and has announced plans to allocate US\$22.4 million to the special economic zone. Mr Taro Aso, Japan's finance minister, visited the site in January.

In March, Mr Ichiro Maruyama, deputy chief of mission at the Japanese embassy, spoke about the delay in the project, a joint venture between Japanese companies and the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry. Mr Maruyama stressed that his government wanted the support of the citizens of Myanmar for the development. "We want Thilawa to have a good image," he said.

Parties take steps to target youth ahead of next poll



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THE country's two biggest political parties are both taking steps to attract and empower younger members ahead of the next election.

The Union Solidarity and Development Party held its first youth assembly in Nay Pyi Taw from May 1 to 3, with its sights firmly set on reinvigorating the party to better compete against the National League for Democracy in 2015.

Thura U Aye Myint, one of the USDP's vice chairmen, said the party's youth members would "have to take responsibility for the 2015 election".

He said he had heard some USDP youth members were discouraged by the NLD's resounding win in the 2012 by-elections, when it was victorious in 43 of 45 seats.

"We must bravely review this situation and try to combat this defeatist mindset," he said.

Newly installed chairman Thura U Shwe Mann said there is still time to prepare for a strong showing in

"We have time to prepare but we must listen to the voice of the people," he said.

He said the USDP was in a strong position because its members lead not only the national government but virtually all regional governments as well.

"In this situation we have good opportunities for our party to work for the interests of the people," he

But vice chairman U Htay Oo said it was "narrow-minded" to only focus on the next election.

"The most important thing is to get our people believing in us and working for the interests of the people," he said on the sidelines of the youth assembly.

For the USDP, the National Unity Party (NUP) offers a cautionary tale: the former Burma Socialist Program Party struggled to attract new members after the 1990 election, when it lost to the NLD, and this was a major factor in its election defeat in 2010. With the return of the NLD to legal politics, the NUP appears set for a permanent place on the political margins.

But the NLD is taking similar steps to rally the youth vote. Spokesperson U Nyan Win said the party would hold first youth assembly this year, after the event was postponed in March.

The youth congress is considered important for the future of the party, which has faced accusations that its leaders are refusing to make way for new blood. A national congress in March saw few new faces injected into the party's leadership ranks.

The youth assembly was to take place shortly after the national meeting but was postponed. U Nyan Win said preparations should be complete by June for the assembly.

"We planned to hold the youth assembly after the national congress but things were not yet ready," he said.

"We need more new blood so that the party can continue for a long time, so we will work together with younger members. We will definitely hold the assembly this year."

Most of the senior members of the NLD – including Daw Aung San Suu Kyi – are over 60. Some have remained in the central executive committee well into their 80s: U Tin Oo is 87, U Than Tun 86 and U Win Tin

The youth assembly was first suggested by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi in 2003, when she was under house arrest

U Nyan Win said all members under the age of 30 would be eligible to participate. Organisers will use a "step-by-step" system to select delegates for the assembly.

Other parties are facing similar issues. U Khin Maung Swe, chairman of the National Democratic Force, said his party was also preparing to hand over to younger leaders.

"I will not hold this position when the next election comes around in 2015, I'll hand over to young leaders in our party. Now we are supporting these young people," he said. "Political parties need to have leadership change to survive in the long term so we're preparing now."

Comedian and activist Zaganar said the apparent inability for older leaders to relinquish power was a problem not only in politics.

"Whoever is empowering young people, regardless of the sector, whether its politics or the creative fields, should be applauded," he said. "I would really like to see younger candidates take part in the 2015 general election and it's positive to hear that political parties are already trying to foster younger leaders."



NLD members protest in Myingyan in January over preparations for the party's national assembly. Photo: Phyo Han

NLD forms dispute resolution committees

Party's head office will not interfere in decisions made by regional dispute-resolution teams, says spokesperson U Nyan Win

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THE National League for Democracy is forming teams to resolve internal conflicts, six months after disputes erupted over the selection process for the party's national assembly.

Party spokesperson and central executive committee member U Nyan Win said yesterday that he will lead the five-person central level team, while separate teams will be created for each state and region

"We've had conflicts in the past so we decided to organise these teams so they can be resolved at the regional level," he said.

He said the teams will include legal experts and will be able to freely adjudicate on internal disputes.

"It's like the separation of the administrative and judicial pillars – we won't get involved in their judgments ... I'm encouraging each regional leader to ensure their teams have legal experts," he said.

"Those teams will not be under the central executive committee members, they can work freely and make decisions if conflicts arise. We won't solve those conflicts, they will do it themselves and final reports will be submitted to the head office."

The formation of the teams comes after members in parts of Mandalay, Magwe and Ayeyarwady regions protested in late 2012 and early 2013 over the selection process for delegates, which began in late October.

The protesters called the system "undemocratic" and accused organ-

'I'm encouraging each regional leader to ensure their teams have legal experts.'

> **U Nyan Win** NLD spokesperson

isers of interfering to ensure their preferred candidates were selected.

More than 100 members in Pathein township resigned from the party over the incidents, while hundreds of residents protested in some other towns.

Party leaders mostly ignored the unrest and the conference went ahead on March 8-10.

U Nyan Win said he expected

the new dispute resolution system would assist the party's preparations for the 2015 election.

While the party swept 43 of 45 seats in the 2012 by-elections, it faced criticism internally over its selection of candidates, with some saying that new members were given priority over long-serving party

But he said there were no plans to change the process for selection candidates.

"Whether they say it's unfair or fair we will continue the current nomination system. [The central executive committee] knows who should be selected," he said.









Celebrating 5th anniversary



OPINION

Saving one life: a worthy goal

MOH MOH THAW

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THE ringing woke me from a restless sleep, but I was so tired and thirsty that for a moment I couldn't work out exactly whether it was a real phone call or part of a dream.

After a while, I realised that it was my mobile phone on the desk in my bedroom and answered it without turning on the light.

My mum's loud, breathless voice came down the line. "Hello ... hello ... Moh Moh. Are you listening? Your uncle was killed last night in a car accident."

There are some moments in life that you remember clearly and will never forget. For me, this was one of them. The accident happened almost a year ago, and it came back to me regularly while I was preparing articles on Global Road Safety Week.

I had seen him just the previous day, when he had been playing with his grandchildren. We had had a friendly argument over something he had read in the newspaper.

I accept we all have to face the death one day but he was only 58 and in good health. He should have had many more years to live, but a reckless driver had snatched him from his family and friends.

He had left home to go pagoda and never came back. A Dyna bus, which was not allowed to operate in the downtown, was illegally driving around at night. When the driver saw a traffic police checkpoint, he sped up and tried to escape. By the time he saw the two pedestrians – my uncle and his friend – it was too late to slow down

The driver and conductor ran away and have still never been apprehended or punished. Instead of hoping for retribution, I just wish they had followed the road rules and not come into the downtown area – or they stopped at the checkpoint and accepted the consequences of their actions.

The circumstances of my uncle's death have cast a pall over our family.

After the accident, his daughter – my cousin – often complains that "life is not fair". She was always an optimistic person – until her father went out one night and never returned.

The accident has also changed the lives of those criminals. They probably would have to have fled Yangon and so can no longer stay with their family. They will be on the run for many years.

A lot of people die on our roads every day. Sometimes it is the fault of a driver, in other cases a pedestrian. Regardless if everybody follows the rules it can make a difference. And if we can save one person's life to save a few minutes on our commute, or to get extra passengers on the bus, it is a sacrifice worth making. Traffic police should not only set the rules but also enforce them and give education so people are aware of what their responsibilities on the road are. If that happens, I believe fewer people will have to face the same situation as my family.

Committee formed to oversee safety on highway

SU HLAING TUN newsroom@myanmartimes.com.mm

THE President's Office has ordered the creation of a committee to manage road safety on the Yangon-Mandalay Highway, an official from the highway police force says

Police Colonel Nay Win said the President's Office notice called for equal punishments to be imposed along the length of the road, where currently the punishment varies depending on the region in which the offence takes place.

It also instructed more edu-

cational activities be conducted on traffic rules and the establishment of a traffic rules supervisory committee for the highway, which is part of the ASEAN Highway network.

"The committee's job will be to reduce road accidents on the Yangon-Mandalay Highway. We submitted a list of people we suggested be included on the committee and are waiting for approval," he told *The Muanmar Times*.

The proposed members include judges from courts in the

four regions through which the highway passes, as well as traffic police, officials from the Department of Road Transport Administration and engineers.

Engineers who worked on the highway said some safety features had not yet been completed, and accidents were due to a combination of human and mechanical error, and flaws in the road construction.

"We should look at highway standards and features in other countries and then take steps to rectify those areas where the Yangon-Mandalay Highway needs to be improved," said engineer Ko

Rest areas with restaurants are being built at five points along the 358-mile highway, which runs from Hlegu township in Yangon Region to Tada Oo township in Mandalay Region, while bathrooms are being built every 40 miles. Highway police are already ramping up enforcement of speed limits, with almost 500 people charged over 12 days in April. Pol Col Nay Win said the number ofroad accidents on the highway had halved during the enforcement campaign.

'I won't be satisfied until they are punished'

U Sein Kin was walking home from a teashop when he was hit by a bus. The accident changed his life, leaving him unable to walk – and angry at the system that he says failed to look after him, write **Ei Thae Thae Naing** and **Su Phyo Win**

Sein Kin does not remember the moment he nearly died.

He was walking near Sanpya Cinema to his home in Lanmadaw's Shwe Taung Tan Street on December 31, 2012, when a No 226 bus clipped a taxi and then collided with eight

"I didn't even know what had hit me," the 59-year-old car broker told *The Myanmar Times* last week. "My son and I were going home from the teashop and we were just walking on the pavement."

The bus had been competing with another bus and lost control while taking a corner. Eight people were injured; two of them, including U Sein Kin, severely so. One person died later that day in hospital.

U Sein Kin suffered two broken legs and broken hand. More than four months on, he still cannot walk properly.

"The people around me thought I was

"The people around me thought I was going to die. I was bleeding from my mouth and one of my eyes was so swollen it couldn't open," he said.

U Sein Kin said the bus driver told the authorities the accident happened because of brake failure. However, he insists it was because the two buses were racing.

"The bus drivers are so reckless. They drive as they wish and they don't care about how their actions could harm other people on the road. They aren't even thinking about having to pay compensation if they bump into people or other



U Sein Kin with his son, Mg Nyan Lin Aung. Photo: Ei Thae Thae Naing

cars. They just go to prison instead," said U Sein Kin.

"I really wanted to kill them but my wife asked me not to do it. I can't even walk up to now. Before I had this accident I didn't realise how hard it is for people with a disability to even do simple things," he said.

U Sein Kin said the bus line did nothing for the victims of the accident but Yangon General Hospital filed a case for them.

"I won't be satisfied until they get appropriate punishments. They don't need to drive so fast like this. The law should be enforced," he said.

Luckily, U Sein Kin's son, Mg Nyan Lin Aung, who is about to enter grade seven, was not seriously injured in the accident. But his parents say that while the scratches on Mg Nyan Lin Aung's knees have long disappeared, the trauma of seeing his father lying badly injured on the road still gives him nightmares.

But the accident has also had a significant economic impact on the family. U Sein Kin said he did not receive any compensation and has spent almost K10 million on surgery and treatment for his injuries.

"When the pain was really bad I just wanted to die. Today I feel like my life is hopeless. I can't run my business on my own. I have to request to my friends to help me [with my business]. What would a poor person do in this situation? How could they get treatment?"

His wife, Daw Khin Shwe,53, said the accident had been hard economically and socially for the family.

"I feel very sorry for my husband," the housewife said. "There are only three people in my family. I was so worried about losing him."



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Road safety bureau needed: experts



Make Walking Safe

ဘေးကင်းစွာ လမ်းလျှောက်ပါ။



MOH MOH THAW mohthaw@gmail.com

ROAD safety advocates are calling for better enforcement to help reduce the growing number of pedestrian road deaths.

More than a quarter of all people who die in road accidents in Myanmar are pedestrians. But many of these deaths could be prevented through smarter policies and improved enforcement of existing laws, the groups say.

"There are no safe walking places in Myanmar for pedestrians," said Professor Thit Lwin, head of the Department of Orthopaedics at Yangon's University of Medicine 1. "In downtown, pavements are blocked by vendors and workers unloading goods. In some areas, pedestrian crossings have been placed in dangerous spots."

Professor Thit Lwin said regionlevel government officials had previously developed plans to tackle road deaths but these had never been able to proceed through cabinet.

He said a National Road Safety Committee was needed to take leadership on the issue.

"Every day almost 10 pedestrians die in Myanmar in road accidents. We all know this, but how can we take action? We have had a lot of meetings, we identified the outputs and recommendations, but there has still not been any implementation, no action, and no intervention," he said.

The call comes as Myanmar marks Global Road Safety Week from May

As part of the global campaign, foreign and Myanmar road safety advocates led by the United Nations,

'We have had lots of meetings but there has still not been any implementation.'

Professor Thit Lwin

Head of the Department of Orthopaedics, University of Medicine 1

government agencies, private sector organisations and Tag International Development, a United Kingdombased NGO, have organised a series of events to mark the week.

After the opening ceremony at Yangon's Nursing University on May 6, they will undertake activities including the opening of new pedestrian crossings and handing out road safety pamphlets at the highway bus station

Global Road Safety Week is being marked internationally for the second time, with the theme this year of



A car rests on its side on Kabar Aye Pagoda Road in Bahan township. Photo: Yadanar

"making walking safe".

The activities are designed to "draw attention to the urgent need to better protect pedestrians worldwide, generate action on the measures needed to do so, and contribute to achieving the goal of the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2011-20 to save five million lives", the UN savs.

Five thousand pedestrians are killed globally every week, the majority in low- and middle-income countries.

In these countries, a major driver of pedestrian deaths is rapid growth in car use, and Roy Ben Eliezer from Tag International Development said policies were needed to address the growing number of vehicles on Yangon roads.

Some options include creating more designated areas for pedestrians, increasing and improving road signage and traffic lights, better enforcement and more training for traffic police on road usage, Mr Eliezer said.

"Over the past two years there has been a considerable amount of change taking place," he said. "More cars on the roads means that there is potential for traffic accidents and related injuries is likely to also increase if no consideration is given to road safety mechanisms and measures."

However, he also said that it was important to reinforce pedestrians' responsibilities through nationwide education programs.

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VOX POP

With traffic jams in Yangon getting progressively worse and the number of accidents on the rise, reporters **Ei Thae Thae Naing** and **Su Phyo Win** asked residents what they thought the factors driving this trend are, and what should be done to reduce accidents and congestion.



U Nyunt Win

46, trishaw driver, Thein Phyu Railway Quarters Most road accidents occur

Most road accidents occur because drivers are reckless. There wouldn't be accidents if they drove carefully. If they followed the road rules it will make the streets safer for everyone, from trishaws to other cars. More problems are occurring because so many cars have been imported but the roads are narrow.



Ko Htun Htun
31. office worker.

Mingalar Taung Nyunt township

There are more cars but the roads are still narrow. Drivers are reckless and just drive as they wish. Although there are many traffic police, they won't be much use without strict rules that are properly enforced. People have to follow the rules and take responsibility for their behaviour.

Saw Yan Myo Kyaw

46, bus driver, Insein township Traffic jams are mostly caused by reckless drivers, street vendors and cars parking on the road. Authorities should arrange parking away from the road. We are driving big buses on such narrow streets. When the cars are parked anywhere on the road and there are street vendors too, we have to drive slowly so we don't hit anything. Some people run across the road even when the bus is coming. We drive competitively because of the traffic jam ... when the road are congested with cars, we are afraid to

Dr Aung Khin Sint

80, community medicine specialist

miss out on passengers."

"They imported cars first before they upgrade the basic infrastructure. That's the main fault. Let it be, but they didn't repair the roads yet. They need to maintain them quickly and the drivers should follow traffic rules and regulations. Some drivers drive through when the red light is on. The zebra crossings are too apart from each other. The car drivers don't stop when the pedestrians are waiting to cross the zebra crossings. So, the passer- by have to pass the road whiles the cars driving with speed. It's the most dangerous case. It can lead to occur frequent road accidents."

U Than Nyunt

47, taxi driver,

Mingalar Taung Nyunt township The most important thing when driving is to be patient. Some people are driving even though they have no idea what the road rules are and can't really drive properly. The authorities should spend more time teaching people, especially younger drivers, about the road rules. Meanwhile, pedestrians don't use the overhead bridges because they are lazy. So given these kinds of factors it's not surprising there are so many traffic iams. The solution is for every individual to use the roads according to the rules.



Ma Yin Min Thant

28, nurse, Lanmadaw township
The best way to reduce
accidents is for drivers to be
careful, especially around
pedestrians. Some bus drivers compete against each
other and it is very dangerous.
Every day I see car drivers
who don't stop or slow down
at pedestrian crossings. More
traffic lights and pedestrian lights should be fixed
in crowded places, at street
corners and junctions.

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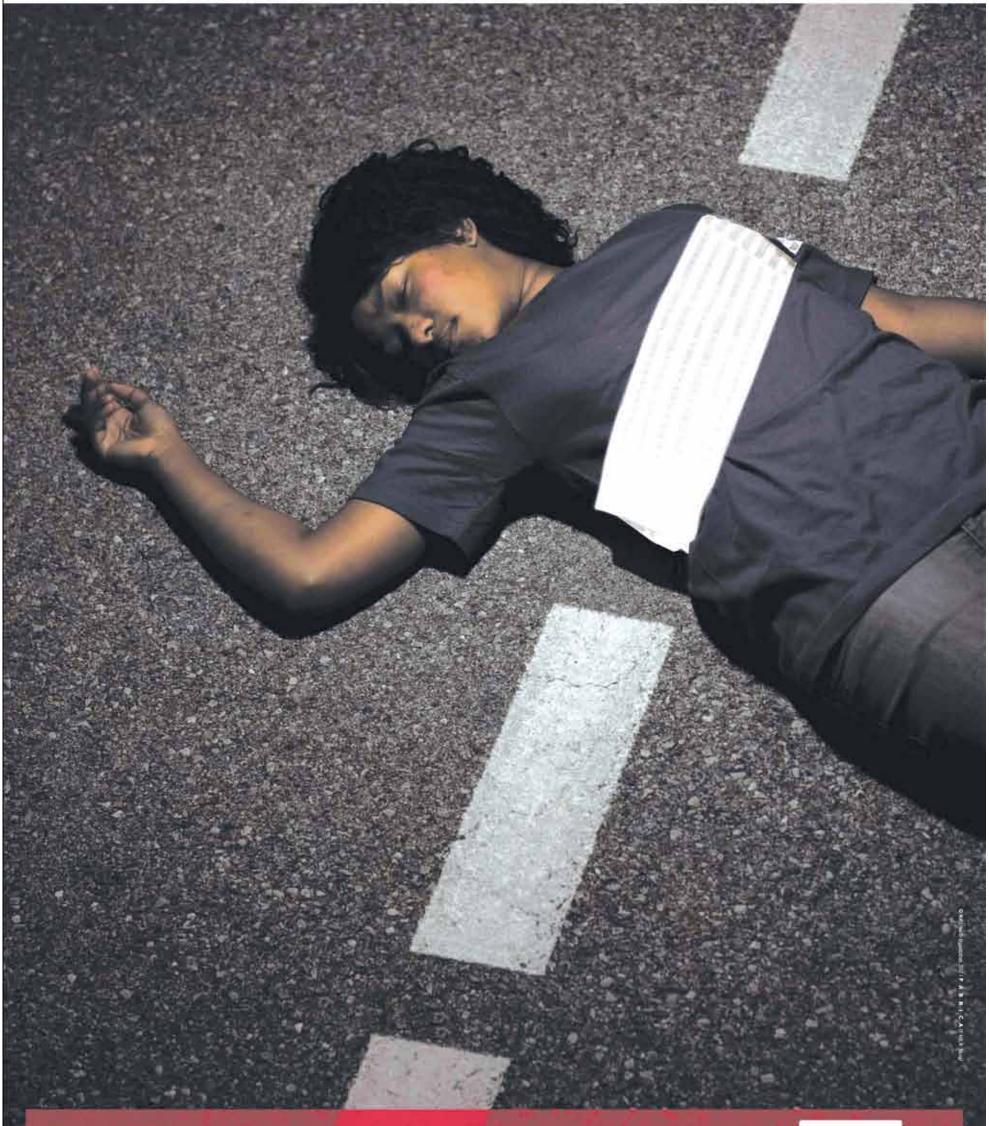




Make Walking Safe

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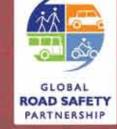




Too late to be seen

Wearing lightly - coloured or reflective clothing makes Pedestrians much more visible and can help avoid collisions. At the same time other road users - drivers must SLOW DOWN, a 5% cut in average speed will reduce the number of fatal accidents by as much as 30%.

Be part of the solution in MYANMAR: Pedestrians be seen; Drivers slow down



Road safety is no accident.

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BRIEFS

Mandalay

Two self-immolation suicides not linked: police

Two people committed suicide through self-immolation in Mandalay last week, but police say the incidents are not thought to be linked.

Both individuals used petrol to set themselves alight and later died in hospital, a spokesperson from the Mandalay Region Police Office said.

These two cases happened on April 23 and 24. A woman burnt herself on April 23 and died on the same day in the hospital while receiving treatment for her wounds," said Police Major Soe Nyein.

The 38-year-old woman lived with her father in a housing estate for Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise employees in Pyigyitagun township.

The following night, U Hla Bu, also 38, burned himself. He died from his injuries on April 29. -Si Thu Lwin, translated by Thiri Min Htun

Mandalay

Free Wi-Fi for local, foreign visitors at Mahamuni Pagoda

Visitors to Mandalay's Mahamuni Pagoda can now access free Wi-Fi internet at the religious site, a trustee says. Since September 10, 2012, trustees have distributed 30-minute access cards to foreign visitors. However now locals will also be able to access the service on any Wi-Fi-enabled device, said U Soe Soe, a member of the pagoda's board of trustees.

The Wi-Fi system was donated by Ko Htet Naing from Vakok Online Games, Ko Min Min from Mandalay Theinmyitta Cosmetics and Stationery and Ko Than Nyi Htwe from Crystal Shine Company. – Aung Ye Thwin, translated by Thit Lwin

Yangon

National Press Award nominees revealed

The National Press Award Committee yesterday released its nominations for 2013, with The Voice up for four awards.

The Voice was nominated for best headline, best news article, best feature and best cartoon. Three nominees were selected in each of the five print media categories, with The Yangon Times, Venus, Open News,

Myanmar Independent, Monitor and Flower News all still in the running. In the television news category, DVB, Mizzima and MNTV were nominated. The winners will be announced at a ceremony on May 3 at the National Theatre.

The Press Award Committee was formed in 2012, and only publications or broadcast outlets that nominate an employee to sit on the selection committee are eligible for prizes.

– Kyaw Hsu Mon

Mandalau MAI conducts Japan flight

Myanmar Airways International moved closer towards offering scheduled flights between Myanmar and Japan with a first

charter from Tokyo to Mandalay

on April 27. The airline said in a state-

ment that it will offer similar charter options from the Narita, Fukuoka, and Naha airports in Japan from May.



Public relations manager Daw Aye Mra Tha said the charter flights are a "pre-step" towards offering direct flights from Myanmar to destinations in Japan. "We are planning a regular flight schedule to Japan this year," said Daw Aye Mra Tha. - Yu Yu Maw

Man arrested over April 21 train carriage caught fire

Police have arrested a 37-yearold man over a fire on a railway carriage earlier this month.

The April 21 fire damaged an upper class carriage parked at Mandalay Railway Station.

Police arrested the man, from Myitkyina, on April 26 and charged him with negligence.

"He was sleeping in the carriage and left a burning cigarette on the seat when he went to take a shower," said Police Lieutenant Thein Lwin from the railway station police. – Si Thu Lwin, translated by Zar Zar Soe

Former officer returns to jail over defamation charge

KYAW HSU MON kyawhsumon@gmail.com

A RETIRED military officer who was jailed in 2010 for his political activism has chosen to return to prison rather than pay a K20,000 fine, his lawyer said last week.

U Nay Myo Zin was sentenced in Pantanaw Township Court on May 2 by judge Daw Khin Thaung Shwe. His lawyer, U Robert San Aung, told The Myanmar Times he plans to file an appeal against the sentence in the coming week.

"He chose the prison sentence and now he is in Maubin prison," U Robert San Aung

Pantanaw Police Lieutenant Tun Tun filed a charge of defamation after U Nay Myo Zin accused Ayeyarwady Region police of corruption while speaking at a public gathering in Pantanaw township's Kathawin village on January 8.

"A Pantanaw police officer

charged him after he spoke to about 100 people in a village in Pantanaw township. [U Nay Myo Zin] said people should not facilitate corruption in the police force and that he had found some cases ... of corruption," U Robert San Aung said.

"Before he was sentenced he said the judgment was not in the people's interest. What he means is that it doesn't reflect President U Thein Sein's speech about fighting corruption in the government. That is why he chose the prison sentence rather than the fine, although he could afford to pay it," he said.

U Nay Myo Zin served in the Tatmadaw from 1994 to 2005. retiring as a captain. In 2010 he was jailed under the Unlawful Association Act for his involvement with the National League for Democracy. He was released from prison in an amnesty in January 2013 and immediately



U Nay Myo Zin (left) with a member of his Myanmar Social Development Network at Sule Pagoda in January. Photo: Supplied

established Myanmar Social Development Network.

In February he led a peace delegation to the Kachin Independence Organisation headquarters at Laiza but was turned around by Tatmadaw soldiers.

U Robert San Aung said the sentence was already having an adverse impact on Myanmar Social Development Network's activities.

"Due to his sentence, some of his donations have been cancelled as he was conducting social activities in Ayeyarwady Region to support the education of young people."



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Patent in Japan under Japanese Patent Application No. 2011-527,665 on 16 August 2010. Japanese Patent No. 5,048,871 on 27 July 2012.

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Dated: 6th May, 2013.

22 News

BRIEFS

Magwe

Primate remains found

A joint Myanmar-Japan research team has found remains of the primate species Semnopithecus in Mandalay and Magwe regions, an official from the Department of Archaeology, National Museum and Library said.

The Ministry of Culture and Ministry of Education worked with officials from the University of Tokyo on the field research from January 28 to February 19, and found primate teeth in Gwe Pin and Htan Pan Chaung villages in Seikphyu township and a jawbone in Chit Saung village in Pauk township.

They have confirmed that the primate remains are about three million years old. "The findings provide evidence of the presence of the Colovine species in Southeast Asia," the official said.

They also found remains of ancient mammals, including rhinoceros, elephant, buffalo, cow, hippopotamus, pig, squirrel, rabbit and reptiles. – Cherry Thein

Yangor

Negligence charges over fire

One man has been charged with negligence following a fire at a two-storey building in an exclusive area of Bahan township.

The fire started at about 6:40am on April 29 at the 6400-square-foot property on Ko Min Ko Chin Road in Bahan and was extinguished about 35 minutes later. Yangon Region Fire Services Department officials said a joss stick was to blame: The stick fell onto a sofa on the second floor of the building and quickly set it alight.

Officials estimated the damage at K1.6 million. More than 370 fire officials attended the scene, along with 41 engines and seven administrative vehicles. A 28-year-old man was charged under section 285 of the Penal Code. – Htoo Aung

Mandalay

Two people killed as storm hits villages in Mandalay Region

Two people died during a thunderstorm in Mandalay Region on April 28, Mandalay police said.

U Tin Moe Aung, 40, from Pauk Taw Chaung village in Patheingyi township was struck by lightning. He was found dead in his bamboo home at about 2pm.

U Kyi Aye, 63, from Ywar Pale village in Kyaukse township, died at about 2:30pm when a 27-metre-high tree fell on his hut during the storm.

Meanwhile, two women were also struck by lightning on April 22 while winnowing green gram in Phyu Dan village, Lewe township. Ma Ei, 22, was killed, while Ma Mar San, 22, later regained consciousness. – Than Naing Soe, translated by Thiri Min Htun

Kyaukse

Rumour-mongers charged: police

Police say they have filed charges against five people who allegedly spread rumours aimed at provoking conflict between residents in Mandalay Region's Kyaukse township earlier this month.

The incident occurred shortly after unrest in nearby Meiktila in late March spread to western Bago Region.

On the evening of April 4, some residents from Thapyaybin and Thebin villages in Kyaukse fled to the Yangon-Mandalay Highway because they heard shouting in Letpan village. Police say the commotion was caused by three men from Letpan and they have been charged by Kyaukse township police.

Similarly, at about 9am on April 6, about 30 villagers holding swords and cudgels entered the precinct of Shwetheindaw pagoda in Thintaunggi village because an unknown man shouted that a group of Muslims were coming. Two men who allegedly created the rumours have been charged.

"It's worth bringing them to justice ... because they caused the public to panic," said Police Major Soe Nyein of the regional police office. – Si Thu Lwin, translated by Thit Lwin



A truck laden with wood travels on the road near the Chinese border town of Nangdao, opposite Namkhan in Myanmar.

Kachin conflict driving illegal logging: sources

Authorities are struggling to control the flow of illegal timber into China, which sources say is being fuelled by conflict between the Tatmadaw and Kachin rebels



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THE extended conflict in northern Shan and southern Kachin states appears to have sparked a sharp increase in illegal timber extraction and exports, residents and activists familiar with the region say.

One researcher, who has been studying deforestation and land rights in Myanmar for the past decade, said he was shocked at what he saw near the Chinese border town of Ruili during a visit in early April.

"For five miles on either side of the road there were nothing but lumberyards," he said.

When he arrived near the border proper, he said he witnessed "about 50 trucks on the road leading out of the checkpoint, with 15-20 tonnes per truck perhaps. I am told it is much more active during the week. I was told about 200 trucks per day cross from [the] Burma side [Namkhan] into China [Nangdao]."

The researcher, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said his information was based on anecdotal and eyewitness reports, rather than authoritative studies.

But Kachin Development Networking Group official Sai Kher Hseng, who has travelled extensively in both Shan and Kachin states, confirmed the report. He said he had witnessed a dramatic increase in illegal logging over the past 18 months. "We can see [illegal logging] all around the Salween [Thanlwin] River." he said.

The illegal timber trade has been a problem on the China-Myanmar border for many years. After 2005, and the publication of a report from watchdog group Global Witness titled "China's Choice: Ending the Destruction of Burma's Frontier Forests", both the Chinese and Myanmar governments took steps to stamp out the trade.

China placed a ban on the importation of Myanmar timber, while Myanmar placed a ban on logging and related transportation in Kachin State. In 2009, Global Witness said in a statement that both bans "have been enforced, albeit inconsistently, and, as a result, illegal logging in Kachin State has decreased dramatically, as has the associated trade with China"

However, in more recent years – and particularly since the outbreak of fighting between the government and the Kachin Independence Army in June 2011 – locals say there has been renewed growth in the illegal timber market, which appears to take place with complete impunity.

'For five miles on either side of the road there were nothing but lumberyards.'

Researcher in northern Shan State

The researcher said he believed the two main reasons were that the KIA is using proceeds from illegal timber sales to fund its war with the government, and Ministry of Environmental Conservation and Forestry officials are afraid to enter conflict areas, leaving teak in governmentcontrolled areas mostly unguarded.

Sai Khur Hseng said he believed the increase was due in a large part to illegal logging being one of the few viable industries left in a region scarred by conflict. "Many local people just want a job. ... They don't like damaging the forest, but they need to work" But U Aung Myat San, a spokesperson for the office of the general director of the Ministry of Environmental Conservation and Forestry, said his office had not received any reports about an increase in illegal logging from their affiliates in Shan and Kachin states.

However, he conceded that, given the violence and remote nature of the border area, Ministry of Environmental Conservation and Forestry workers cannot access some areas along the Sino-Myanmar border.

When asked about the reports of trucks loaded with timber crossing the border into China on the highway, he said: "Our office has no information ... [but] we care intensely about illegal logging in Kachin."

He said the ministry believes that it will have to work harder to protect Myanmar's natural resources as the country opens up more of its borders.

Mr Xiong Guofeng, a spokesperson for the Chinese embassy in Yangon, did not respond directly to questions about illegal logging.

However, he said that the "Chinese government is trying its best to cooperate with the Myanmar government to strengthen border control and eliminate all kinds of cross-border crimes. The cooperation mechanism between the two law-enforcement departments is very sound and get big success.

"The Chinese government is willing to keep close cooperation with the Myanmar government in border control and fight all kinds of crimes determinately."

But with little apparent enforcement, Sai Khur Hseng said he was concerned about the long-term environmental impact the logging will inflict.

"If the logging continues, we will face many problems in the future," he said. "Drought in the hot season, floods in the wet season. We must protect our forests because people depend on them."

Government announces first funding for monastic education

AUNG SHIN koshumgtha@gmail.com

THE government will give its first formal financial support to monastic schools with a K3 billion donation, the Ministry of Religious Affairs has announced.

The money will be used to support 6303 teachers in the 2013-14 financial year across 1579 monastic schools at the primary, post-primary, middle and high school levels.

The allocation was discussed at a meeting in Yangon on April 28 between ministry officials and supervising sayadaws from monastic schools.

The secretary of the Mandalay Region Monastic Education Supervising Committee, Sayadaw U Nayaka, said the government will supervise spending in accordance with financial rules and regulations but it will be left to religious authorities, including the supervising monks of monastic schools, to steer payments.

The money will be distributed in quarterly chunks, he said.

Sayadaw U Nayaka, who is also principal of Phaung Daw Oo monastic school in Mandalay, told *The Myanmar Times* that the amount given to schools will depend on enrolments.

"The payment rate is estimated at one teacher for every 40 students. We will know how many teachers will be paid a government salary in June when enrolments [for the next academic year] begin," he said.

BILLION KYAT

3

The amount of state funding allocated to monastic education for 2013-14

The money will significantly ease the financial burden on monastic educators, leaders in the sector said. "Monastic schools will receive funding every three months. I am happy and thankful for the support because we are operating with our own funding. We look for donations [to meet costs]," said Sayadaw U Dhamma Thara, president of Yangon Region Monastic Education Supervising Committee, who participated in the meeting.

Monastic school teachers also said they were pleased at the move.

"We have heard that the government will fund monastic schools," said Daw Wint Nadar Soe, a teacher with eight years' experience at Dhammar Nanda Monastic Education Post-Primary School in Mogok township, Mandalay Region. "We are happy because the monastic school doesn't have enough money to pay teachers' salaries.

"I am also happy to know that the government has its eye on monastic education. Our monastic school teachers are keen to see more reforms in the sector."

Sayadaw U Nayaka also agreed that further changes would be helpful. "We are quite happy to receive the government's support for the first time. However, permitting monastic schools to teach at higher levels than primary, middle and high school is more essential." he added.

The government has overseen monastic education since 1952. A section dealing with monastic education was formed under the Department of Religious Affairs in 1989.

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Yangon water project nears completion

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YANGON City Development Committee will increase the daily capacity of the city's water distribution network by 45 million gallons from the end of May. an official says.

"We are working on the second phase of the Ngamoeyeik project north of Yangon. It is almost completed. We can begin supplying 45 million extra gallons of water a day from the end of May or early June," U Myint Oo, head of the committee's Engineering Department (Water & Sanitation), said on April 29.

YCDC currently distributes 160 million gallons of water each day, but this meets just two-thirds of the city's daily needs, he said.

"A significant amount of water is lost in distribution. We are meeting 67 percent of Yangon's water demand and hopefully this will increase to 73pc or 75pc when the second phase of Ngamoeyeik is finished," U Myint Oo said.

YCDC estimates that as much as 35pc of water is lost due to leaking pipes. The increased capacity comes as many households in the city are struggling to pump water from the government network during the hot season.

"We haven't had water since before Thingyan. The water doesn't come at all these days. When we complain the YCDC officials say they will come to check the supply but they never do," said Ko Soe Zayar Tun from Botahtaung township.

North Okkalapa township resident Ma Kaythi Aung said the problem had worsened since Thingyan. "We have a YCDC water connection but it is useless. We just rely on our own tube well."

However, a YCDC official said complaints about water supply had been falling steadily since 2010. "We haven't got many complaints this year. The water supply problem is mostly prominent in hot season as people use more water. There are also problems related to electricity supply and pipeline repairs," he said.

He said YCDC has provided more than 100,000 gallons of water to residents in Dala township, along with 150,000 in Seikyikhanaungto and 400,000 in Kyeemyintdaing this year to combat water shortages related to the hot weather. It has also recently implemented water supply upgrades in the rural townships of Htantabin, Hmawbi



IN PICTURES

People ride a trishaw through puddles of water on 89th Street in Mandalay following heavy rain on April 30. The rain was the first for the year and brought some relief from the heat, which hit 42.3 Celsius on April 24. Photo: Phyo Wai Kyaw

BRIEFS

Nay Pyi Taw

Ministry warns journals owners

The Ministry of Information has issued warnings to 14 journals for regularly publishing alcohol advertisements, following a meeting at the ministry yesterday.

The ministry said in a statement on its website that it had found some local journals are breaking publishing rules by publishing beer and whisky ads.

The announcement said that the ministry will forward the case to the interim Press Council and will negotiate with the Ministry of Home Affairs to manage the cases under the liquor law.

Deputy Minister for Information U Ye Htut said the ministry had also warned a journal that published pictures of women and children who had been abused and raped. – Kyaw Hsu Mon

Mandalay

Railway police to improve security

Members of a newly formed police team at Mandalay Railway Station says they plan to clear vagrant children from stretches of track between 32nd and 34th streets and tighten security around the station precinct at night.

They will also take action against people hanging out of trains or getting on or off trains at the wrong times, said Police Lieutenant Thein Lwin of the railway police force. The force was formed on April 29 and has nine members.

"Entering the area along the railway between the two blocks was prohibited for safety and security reasons. Even the staff around must wear ID cards, and we have now done that," he said. "We are in a trial period and we will just educate the arrested people." On the first two days, 27 people were detained, he said. – Si Thu Lwin, translated by Zaw Winn

Mandalay weavers establish workers' group

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LOW-PAID handicraft workers have taken the first step towards improving their pay and conditions by founding the Loom Workers' Organisation, with an initial 51 members.

The organisation, which represents weavers who create hand-made garments popular with the tourist trade, was established to improve its members' education and health prospects as well as to raise their low wages, said Daw Than Yin, its chairperson.

"Firstly, we organized with 51 members but more members are expected to join. We've collected K500 from each household as the organization's fund. But we can't provide any services to the weavers yet because funds are still insufficient. We will continue to develop our future plans," she said.

Daw Than Yin said the group was organised last October and officially registered on April 4, and that another branch would open in May.

It is based in Amarapura township's Kyatan ward, which is home to numerous weaving workshops.

The Loom Workers' Organisation plans to export its members' woven clothing in response to interest from foreign customers. - Translated by Zar Zar Soe



Often confused with the common cold, flu (influenza) has an underestimated impact. The virus can cause severe illness and even death.

Flu is not just a common cold



Act Now. Get vaccinated.

Vaccination is your best defense against flu



Ask your doctor for more information





CONGRATULATIONS

We heartily congratulate

U Aung Ko Win

Patron of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI)

For receiving the State Excellence Award

(First Prize among the entrepreneurs serving the highest tax payments to the State Budget's Revenue)

recognized as the highest taxpayer in Myanmar for FY 2011-2012,

Conferred by the President of the Union of Myanmar

on the occasion of the Union of Myanmar President's

State Excellence Awards Presentation

Ceremony held on 30th April 2013 for the first time

under the new government administration.

We wish him continued contribution to our society and country in coming years.



President and Executive Committee/Central Executive Committee

Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of

Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI)

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Blame govt not China for projects, says RNDP leader

Protests are the result of the government's lack of transparency, says Dr Aye Maung



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ANGER over land confiscations involving Chinese companies should be directed at Myanmar government mismanagement, a political leader

Rakhine Nationalities Development Party chairman Dr Aye Maung, along with representatives of four other parties, was invited to China by that country's International Relations Bureau. He made the comments on his return last week, shortly after protests erupted on April 18 outside a China National Petroleum Corporation facility on Rakhine State's Maday Island. The facility is part of the oil and gas pipelines that link Rakhine State with Yunnan Province in China.

"You should not blame another country alone if a problem comes up. We also have to know what our government is doing for us. When we enter into an agreement with a foreign company, the government is obliged to make the contents of the contracts public. The relevant bodies should clarify what advantages are obtained from the agreement and how they are given to whom," he said

"China said it had given [significant] in compensation for the pipeline project on Maday Island, Rakhine State. The demonstrations there may have occurred because the local people affected did not receive that money."

Land confiscations, some involving foreign companies, have emerged all over the country over the past two or three years. The most violent dispute, over the Letpadaung copper mine, is still hotly controversial. A government-appointed commission of inquiry led by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi found that the companies behind the project - Wanbao of China and the military-run Union of Myanmar Economic Holdings Limited - took 7867.78 acres for the project, including 5057 acres of cultivated land. Villagers and po-



Maday Island residents, wearing anti-CNPC t-shirts, protest on April 18. Photo: Supplied

lice have repeatedly been involved in violent clashes over that and related issues.

Dr Aye Maung called for greater transparency around the oil and gas pipeline project

"If this matter was handled by Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise, they must announce how much money was received, who owns the land the pipeline passes through, and how much they are paid, and whether the compensation awarded matches the market price. Since nothing was disclosed, the public mounted demonstrations. This is the result of government mismanagement," he said. "The working practices of the pre-

'Since nothing was disclosed, the public mounted demonstrations.'

Dr Aye Maung Amyotha Hluttaw MP and head of the Rakhine Nationalities

Development Party

sent government are not so different from those of the former

China's International Relations Bureau, which invited the five Myanmar political parties for a 10-day-tour of China, told them the Chinese government had laid down clear policies for Chinese companies investing in Myanmar, said Dr Aye Maung.

"They believe China will prosper if neighbouring countries prosper. It's their policy to obey the laws of the country they invest in, to show respect for its people and to do things that lead to friendship between peoples," he said.

U Sai Hla Kyaw a Pyithu Hluttaw MP from Shan Nationalities Development Party, which also participated in the China tour, said he had raised the compensation issue with his hosts.

"In northern Shan State, because the relevant bodies were not transparent about how much money was given, people suspect that they haven't received as much as they should receive," he said. – *Translated by Thit Lwin*

Armed gang threatens official over illegal fishing investigation

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A MOTORBOAT carrying a government official was attacked by knife-wielding fishermen earlier this month during a search for illegal battery fishing operations on the Ayeyarwady River, police say.

The deputy head of the Department of Fisheries in Sagaing township, U Myint Lwin, and one fisheries licence holder were travelling on the boat when they were attacked by about 20 people on five vessels near Htauk Kyit village in Sagaing Region on April 22.

Nobody was injured but the gang destroyed three phones and the boat engine, and destroyed official documents, said Police Major Soe Nyein from the Mandalay Region police office.

"They also took K50,000. We have opened a case against the group," he said, adding that four charges had been filed.

U Myint Lwin was investigating reports that fishermen near Sintet village in Sagaing Region were using batteries to catch fish from the river, a practice that is banned in Myanmar.

They were approached by the fishermen, who carried steel rods and knives, shortly after catching a man and his wife using batteries and confiscating their equipment. The man and woman whose equipment had been seized were among the group, police said.

U Myint Lwin was investigating reports that fishermen were using batteries to catch fish from the river.

As *The Myanmar Times* reported in August 2012, the use of batteries in fishing has grown dramatically on the Ayeyarwady River in recent years, even in a 74-kilometre stretch in Mandalay and Sagaing Regions that is protected as part of efforts to preserve the critically endangered Irrawaddy dolphin.

Residents say the use of batteries has affected the behaviour of the dolphins and they now avoid human contact. - Translated by Thiri Min Htun





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Make Walking Safe ဘေးကင်းစွာ လမ်းလျှောက်ပါ။



Parliament ties get a boost with visit

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PRESIDENT of the Australian Senate John Hogg visited Myanmar last week to explore avenues for increasing cooperation between the parliaments of Myanmar and Australia.

Senator Hogg met President U Thein Sein and Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker U Khin Aung Myint in Nay Pyi Taw on April 29, a day after holding talks with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann in Yangon.

His visit follows Thura U Shwe Mann's historic trip to Australia in 2012 - the first by a parliamentary delegation from Myanmar.

Senator Hogg told The Myanmar Times in Yangon on April 29 that he hoped Australia could help Myanmar establish and develop proper parliamentary processes that enable government to operate effectively.

"I have no doubt that there are challenges in terms of education, health, technology, providing skills needed to develop industry, allowing businesses to operate, taxation, capacity to build



President of the Australian Senate John Hogg. Photo: Boothee

infrastructure - these are challenges that exist everywhere. What I am about is putting in place the policies and administrative and operational tools that will allow parliament to conduct its business," Senator Hogg said.

Senior parliamentary officials have previously expressed interest in Australia's parliamentary library providing support to the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw to help develop a comprehensive and modern research facility for MPs.

The need for such a service was identified as a priority during a recent Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) assessment mission to the Myanmar parliament.

Senator Hogg said a parliamentary library played a crucial role in the success of a parliament. "The parliamentary library is absolutely critical. You must have access to knowledge, you must have access to information,"

Senator Hogg said the transition from five decades of military rule to a democratic system poses unique challenges, and highlighted the need for accountability in government.

"You achieve through the process-

es: the need to be open and transparent about government, and for accountability. Our [the Australian] model is not a bad model," he said, pointing to Australia's senate estimates mechanism as an example of the kind of "ongoing scrutiny" vital to maintaining the integrity of a parliament. Senator Hogg said he believes the government is on the right path but urged them to consider democratic processes as something that must be maintained and nurtured.

He recommended the hluttaw also consider establishing an agency to coordinate assistance from foreign governments and bodies such as the United Nations Development Program and IPU, to ensure that their advice and resources are put to effective use.

He said the parliaments of Myanmar and Australia are engaged in "ongoing dialogue" with a view to establishing long-term cooperation projects.

"These things don't start with a big crash of cymbals - it's about learning each other's needs and learning what each can do for the other, and learning to trust in each other.'



We are an international organisation responsible for the preservation of the numerous cemeteries and memorials that commemorate the sacrifices made by the Commonwealth forces during the two World Wars. Our work extends across 153 countries around the world.

Regional Manager, Myanmar

We are seeking candidates for the above position based at the Taukkyan War Cemetery in Myanmar.

The Regional Manager has direct supervision of two Cemetery Managers in Rangoon and Thanbyuzayat, and cemetery staff in Taukkyan. The post holder will be responsible for ensuring compliance to Commission standards of excellence for Works, Horticulture, Structural Maintenance, Finance, Human Resources, Administration and Health & Safety for the cemetery and staff for which they are deemed responsible. The Regional Manager will also be involved in creating, monitoring and updating of management plans, carrying out detailed work specified within reports, observing and meeting timescales, and operating within a prescribed budget. A high amount of liaison with embassy officials, suppliers, contractors and local authorities will form a significant part of the role as it works with remote supervision from their line manager.

The successful candidate will also be required to represent the Commission at ceremonies and assist with visitors and enquiries from members of the public and visiting dignitaries.

The successful applicant should possess the following skills:

- An excellent level of oral and written English in addition to a high level of literacy in the local language
- Proven reliability, honesty and integrity
- Ability to work with a high degree of autonomy
- A recognised technical/management/administration qualification or relevant experience working in a supervisory position
- Proven project management skills
- Excellent Microsoft skills including e-mail, Word and Excel
- Understanding and experience in calculating wages and payment of income tax and associated

Ideally, a basic understanding of Horticultural practices would also be preferable, although specific Commission Horticultural training will be given.

Successful applicants will undergo a probationary period, during which, additional training and support will be given.

Starting salary for this position will commence at USD 661 per month. Subject Salary: to satisfactory performance, annual increments will be given up to the scale maximum of USD 941 per month.

44 net per week over 6 days. (Flexible working hours may also be available). Hours of Work:

Mon - Fri: 07:00 - 17:00 with daily 2 hour break

Sat: 07:00 – 11:00 with no break

18 working days per year (1 January - 31 December), rising incrementally after Annual Leave:

satisfactory completed working years' service to a maximum of 30 working days after 7

years' completed service.

If you wish to considered for the above position please send your CV to Burma.Recruitment@fco.gov.uk For further information about the organisation, please visit our website: www.cwgc.org

The closing date for applications is on 6 May 2013.

Interviews will take place the week commencing 17 May 2013 for those invited to attend.



AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY YANGON

JOB VACANCY

The Australian Embassy is seeking applications for the following position.

SENIOR POLICY OFFICER

SALARY RANGE: UP TO USD \$3,000 PER MONTH (depending on skills and experience)

The Australian Embassy in Yangon is a medium sized diplomatic agency representing the Australian Government in Myanmar. It is staffed by employees of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the Australian Federal Police, the Department of Immigration and Citizenship, Austrade and AusAID.

The Senior Policy Officer carries out his/her duties within the Political and Economic Section of the Embassy.

The Senior Policy Officer's direct supervisor is the Deputy Head of Mission, to whom he/she provides information and advice on the current political and economic situation in Myanmar. The Senior Policy Officer also monitors, researches and analyses public debate and policy developments on a range of domestic and political issues in Myanmar including trade and investment issues as directed.

The Senior Policy Officer also undertakes a wide range of tasks associated with implementing the Australian Government's engagement agenda with Myanmar, including government liaison and organising high level visits. The Senior Policy Officer also contributes to the Embassy's public diplomacy program and organises associated public

Please note that the specific duties of these positions may evolve over time, as the Embassy's operational requirements change, so the successful applicants will need to be adaptable.

This challenging position would best suit candidates with a can-do attitude, who are self motivated, possess excellent communication skills (both ve<mark>rba</mark>l and written), who have an eye for detail and are well organised. The successful applicant will have an opportunity to work in a professional and rewarding work environment with an attractive salary. The application form, selection criteria and duty statement can be obtained from the Australian Embassy, 88 Strand Road, or downloaded from the Embassy website at: http://www.myanmar.embassy.gov.au

Applications should be lodged at the Embassy or emailed to austembassyyangon@dfat.gov.au together with a one page summary addressing the selection criteria and a copy of your CV with one recent passport sized photo. The closing date for applications is 4:00 pm on Monday 20 May 2013.

Qualifications and Experience

The appointee should have the following qualifications and experience:

- · A native speaker level of written and spoken English. Myanmar language skills are highly desirable, but not essential; · Hold a relevant university degree or lower qualification with related practical experience in relevant aspects of the
- At least five years proven experience and a demonstrated ability in the areas of research, information and policy analysis. Experience working in Myanmar and engaging with government and non-government agencies in Australia and Myanmar is a construction of the contract of the condesirable but not essential:
- Good knowledge of modern office procedures, practices, methods and equipment including use of standard personal computer software programs such as Microsoft Word and Excel, Access, PowerPoint and web-based applications;
- Affinity for team work, initiative and ability to determine and achieve objectives;
- · Excellent communication and analytical skills, including the ability to write high quality reports within short time-frames;
- Excellent interpersonal and liaison skills;
- Australian citizenship:
- Employment is subject to a successful security clearance.

- 1. The Australian Embassy does not discriminate in regards to race, ethnicity, gender and age.
- 2. Only those candidates whose qualifications and experience are of further interest will be contacted for an interview.

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Bronze statues of Mahamuni Pagoda to remain accessible

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TRUSTEES at Mandalay's Mahamuni Pagoda have decided pilgrims can continue to touch several ancient Khmer bronze statues, after considering whether to put them behind glass.

Pilgrims believe that touching the statues will heal ailments in the corresponding place on their own bodies. But this practice has damaged some parts of the statues, which depict a three-headed elephant, a tiger and two warriors.

Trustees had been considering putting the statues behind glass to prevent them from further damage but have instead decided to place signs nearby encouraging visitors to treat the ancient artifacts with care.

Trustee U Soe Soe said the decision not to encase the statues was made out of consideration for pilgrims, both local and foreign.

"By rubbing the head of the statue, pilgrims believe [the statues] release them from headaches," said U Soe Soe. "If they rub other parts of the statues, such as the arms, stomach or knees, they believe they will be healed from diseases or pain they suffer in corresponding



Pilgrims touch centuries-old Khmer bronze statues at Mandalay's Mahamuni Pagoda. Photo: Minh Zaw

parts of their own body. So we will continue allowing them to touch the statues. But we will warn the pilgrims with notices to protect and value the statues."

Those who ignore the signs, he added, will be dealt with by security. "We have arranged to protect the pagoda's museum with guards."

The trustees will now inform the monks in charge of pagoda activities of their decision. "They will also agree with us," U Soe Soe said.

The bronze statues are believed to originate from the Angkor Wat temple complex in Cambodia. They were taken first by invading Thai armies but were claimed by King Bayintnaung after he defeated Ayuthaya in 1564. In the 17th century they were captured from Bago by King Min Yazar of Rakhine State but were then reclaimed by King Bodawpaya after the defeat of Mrauk U in 1784 and eventually enshrined at Mahamuni Pagoda. - Translated by ZarZarSoe

No cases for new tribunal members



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WOULD somebody – anybody – please submit a case to the new constitutional tribunal? Since it was re-formed last February, the court has not had a single issue presented to it for decision.

It was not always thus. Such was the controversy that raged over a March 2012 decision that all nine members were impeached by the hluttaw last September, leading to a mass resignation and the creation of the current incarnation.

Now, an eerie quiet has descended on the tribunal.

"No, we don't have [any cases that are currently being processed]," said U Thein Win, a director of the tribunal, on April 24.

Several constitutional disagreements between the par-

liament and the union executive have arisen over the past two years during the transition to democracy. The old tribunal was impeached in September by the parliament amid controversy over its interpretation of the meaning of "union-level bodies". Since then, parliament has enacted two laws, including the one governing the tribunal itself, that President U Thein Sein has described as "unconstitu-

So why is the tribunal idle?

tional".

"The new tribunal has to vet even their own [tribunal] law for conformity with the constitution," said one advocate who requested anonymity.

The offices of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw, Pyithu Hluttaw, Amyohta Hluttaw, the Auditor General and Union Election Commission entitled to submit matters to the tribunal seem reluctant to disturb its repose.

"No, we have no case to submit to the tribunal," said U Tin Tun, director general of the Union Election Commission office

"We have no case at the moment, and no instruction from my superiors concerning disagreements between the parliament and the president's office," said U Lwin Oo, the director of the Amyotha Hluttaw chairman's office.

U Ye Htut, a spokesperson for the president and deputy minister for information, said he could not comment on court-related matters.

According to the constitution, the duties of the tribunal include interpreting the provisions under the constitution, vetting whether the laws promulgated by the union, state and regional parliaments, the administrative measures of the executive authorities of the union, the states, the regions and the self-administrative areas are in conformity with the constitution, deciding the constitutional disputes among the various levels of administration and the disputes arising out of the rights and duties of the levels of administrations in implementing the union

Yangon to host constitution workshop

SANDAR LWIN

AUSTRALIAN and other foreign experts are to hold a workshop in Yangon on constitutional democracy. The workshop, from May 8-10, will be held at MiCasa Hotel Apartments.

Ms Janelle Saffin, a Labor Party MP from Australia, and the chairman of the academic advisory board of the Community of Democracies and professor of Sydney Law School, Mr Wojciech Sadurski, will head the three-day workshop, which is organised by the Sydney Law School

Participants will hear lectures from 10 speakers, including professors and postdoctoral scholars from Sydney Law School, the University of New South Wales Faculty of Law and the National University of Singapore. Speakers will discuss the meaning and the role of constitutions, constitutional maintenance, human rights commissions and their constitutional role, and the constitutional position of the military.

"We propose a workshop program to equip the custodians of Myanmar's future with the technologies they require to design and sustain a constitutional democracy. The goal is not to advocate or promote a particular position [but to] share knowledge about the various constitutional options that are 'on the table' in a country moving towards democracy, organisers said in a statement released to the media.

The Myanmar partner for the workshop is The Sun Institute (Myanmar).



Business

Exports tied to labour standards

With exporters eager to penetrate western markets, business leaders are pledging to improve working conditions and comply with international standards.



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THE sustainability of the country's economic development depends on improving labour standards and ensuring that employers respect workers' rights, speakers told the "Building a New Myanmar" conference last week.

Investing in workers, ensuring freedom of assembly and improving working conditions will boost productivity and enhance access to western markets, they said at the two-day forum, which drew delegates from 500 labour organisations, as well as ministers, business leaders and ambassadors. The forum was sponsored by the International Labour Organisation and funded by the US State Department. It followed a visit the week before by US trade representatives to discuss access to that country's market through its Generalised System of Preferences, or GSP, which gives tax breaks to imports from developing nations.

U Win Aung, chairman of the Union of Myanmar Federation of the Chambers of Commerce and Industry, said there was an urgent need for employers to recognise that valuing employees enhances productivity and competitiveness in the global market. Employers have to "take responsibility to be good. We have to recognise the value of labour since it is very important for the development of the country. I promise to do so," U Win Aung said.

Mr Jaap Wienen, deputy general secretary of the International Trade Union Confederation in Brussels, said one of Myanmar's weaknesses is a lack of direct discussions between workers and employers about the rights to which workers are entitled. Mr Wienen added that if Myanmar

cannot create forums where such discussions can take place, domestic businesses will be unable to comply with international labour standards and, as a result, will lose international contracts. Decent work is not a favour to be granted, he said.

Speaking from New Delhi, Mr Dave Welsh of the International Labor Solidarity Centre, which represents US unions overseas, told *The Myanmar Times* that there was a "quid pro quo" in access to western markets.

"Myanmar must do more than pay lip service to workers' rights," he said. International trade unions use GSP privileges to press countries to conform to labour standards. They can petition for the privileges to be scrapped if labour standards are violated.

'Myanmar must do more than pay lip service to workers' rights.'

Dave Welsh
Director
International Labour
Solidarity Centre

"This is an absolutely crucial time for Myanmar," Mr Welsh said. "All eyes are on Myanmar. The danger is [that the country duplicates] what you are seeing in Bangladesh, but if the government and business leaders strengthen labour standards and monitor them effectively, they could rid themselves of so much hassle, bad PR and litigation," he added.

U Win Aung said an employers' organisation was being formed to examine international labour standards, and he pledged that it would be "free and fair". The group will be the first of its kind, he added.

He also said that the government

was keen to improve workers' rights and was studying international labour standards with experts from organisations like the ILO.

Labour leaders agreed that the sanctions the United States imposed on Myanmar were detrimental to both workers and companies, and they called for greater cooperation to ensure smooth relationships between workers and employers.

"Employers and employees are not enemies," said Ma Lei Lei Soe, secretary of the labour organisation of Sakura Garment factory. "From the labour side I think most labour organisations are ready to cooperate with employers and the government," she said.

The Myanmar Garment Manufac-

turers' Association has said 80,000 workers lost their jobs when the US imposed sanctions in 2003.

US Ambassador Derek Mitchell said that GSP access was contingent on improving labour standards in Myanmar. "We should all remember that defending labour rights and improving working conditions is not only essential for human dignity, it is also essential for a strong and stable society," said Ambassador Mitchell.

The ambassador also discussed a visit by US Trade representatives, who discussed GSP access with officials here during the week before the conference. It is possible that about 5000 products could become exempt from import taxes in the US, the ambassador said on April 30, the second day of the conference.

Data from the Ministry of Labour shows that the number of registered labour organisations has increased dramatically over the last year, from 40 to more than 500. Some labour representatives, however, have said that not all of these organisations are legitimate. Some were set up by employers to create the impression that they are supporting workers' rights, they said.

Mr Welsh said Myanmar could benefit from labour leaders returning from abroad, who have experience negotiating with workers, employers and international organisations.



A construction worker at a new high rise in Yangon where workplace safety measures are not enforced. Photo: Kaung Htet

MYAT MAY ZIN

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FORD Motor Company held a highprofile event on April 30 to announce that it and its local partner, Capital Automotive, a subsidiary of Capital Diamond Star Group, will open their first "state of the art" showroom in Yangon by year's end.

Local car dealers told *The Myan-mar Times*, however, that they did not expect Ford to make much of a dent in the market

"I don't think there will be any significant changes with the Ford Motor brand entering the Myanmar market because I sell brands imported mainly from Japan," said one showroom owner. He said that dealers are far more worried about Toyota opening its own showrooms here. "Most sales centres here are not officially authorised by Toyota and they will face a threat when Toyota arrives," he added.

Dave Westerman, a regional manager for Ford, said at the press conference that the new showroom would be on Insein Road in Hlaing township. It will offer sales, service and spare parts, as well as warranties, he said.

Dr Soe Tun, owner of Farmer Car showroom, said it was unlikely Ford would be able to get a large share of the market here because buyers prefer Japanese cars.

Dr Soe Tun also said dealers would stage a protest if Ford was

Motor brand entering the Myanmar market because I sell brands imported mainly from Japan," said Ko Gyi.

Ford's entry into Myanmar unlikely to rev up market

Dr Ko Ko Gyi called for reduced import taxes on cars, saying this would benefit consumers and the nation

"If the government reduces the taxes on automobile imports, people can buy high-quality products," he said. "Our marketing strategy will be to sell Ford cars using flexible policies, including hire purchase plans in cooperation with banks," he added.

Ford also said its conservation and environmental grants programme would be expanded to Myanmar this year. It did not say when it would open more showrooms.

In February, local media quoted a Capital Automotive executive as saying the first Ford showroom would open last month.



A worker polishes a Ford vehicle during a press event by the US carmaker in Yangon on April 30. Photo: AFP

All eyes on the gem trade



Myanmar's tiger potential

BUSINESS 30

BUSINESS 31

Xpress enters the remittances market



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XPRESS Money announced links with two domestic banks to offer money remittances into Myanmar from 150 countries, during a launch ceremony at Traders Hotel on April 29.

The company plans to make its services available across 180 locations by the end of this year, it said.

Xpress Money services will be available from nearly 140 locations in Myanmar through the branch networks of Myanmar Citizen Bank (MCB) and Small and Medium Industrial Development Bank (SMIDB), as well as the partners of those banks.

Xpress Money is going to offer two services, cash-to-cash and cash-to-account, through these domestic banks, said Mr Sudhesh Girivan, vice president and business head of Xpress

He said Myanmar is an emerging remittance market, with more than three million of its people residing and working abroad.

"We see a lot of potential for growth here. More international money transfer operators in Myanmar means that the customer will have more choice when sending and receiving money," he said.

Xpress Money's launch in Myanmar widens the base of the nascent remittance industry in the country and is likely to have a positive impact on Myanmar's overall economic growth, he said.

Through the partnership with SMIDB and MCB, Xpress Money will be able to offer its inbound remittance services to thousands of families of migrants.



A Myanmar Citizen Bank executive announces the remittances service. Photo: Boothee

MCB's chairman U Win Myint Central Bank of Myanmar is now said the banks will offer services from 125 locations. He added that MCB will offer international payments, such as Visa and MasterCard,

U Tin Maung Htay, managing director of SMIDB, said liberalising and normalising banking operations are key to reforming Myanmar's economy and attracting international invest-

"Eastern and Western investors are interested in Myanmar, and the

'Overseas workers depended on hundi to remit money and in some instances they lost a lot of money.'

> **U Thein Zaw** Deputy Director General Central Bank

allowing money transfers through private banks, which we hope will one day see the end of the illegal hundi market," he said. The hundi money transfer network is an informal remittance network that allows migrant workers to send money back to their families in Myanmar.

U Thein Zaw, deputy director general of the Central Bank, said: "I hope the informal remittances between Myanmar and foreign countries, which we call the 'overseas hundi', will disappear soon because the Central Bank is allowing private banks to offer remittance services."

Domestic banks have already linked with international payment services such as Western Union and Q-Remit in the past year, which has also seen the Central Bank begin a managed float of the national cur-

"Previously, overseas workers depended on *hundi* to remit money and in some instances they lost a lot of money but could not take any legal action to recover it," U Thein Zaw

Fourth Korean bank arrives

AYE THIDAR KYAW ayethidarkyaw@gmail.com

A FOURTH South Korean bank has opened a representative office here and its executive vice president says a surge of investment from the East Asian nation could be on the way.

Mr Seog-Ha Yoo, executive vice president of Industrial Bank of Korea, said South Korean companies were set to rush to Myanmar and urged the government to improve the operating environment here, adding that the high price of industrial land was a major obstacle.

"South Korean companies are eager to invest, but the biggest obstacle they face is the high price of land," he said at a ceremony to mark the opening of the bank's office in Yangon on April 29.

Industrial Bank of Korea joins three other South Korean banks with representative offices here: Hana, Shinhan and Woori. IBK focuses on lending to small- and medium-sized enterprises.

Its representative office is in Lanmadaw township. It received permission to open from the Central Bank on March 14, officials said.

Mr Seog-Ha Yoo said the bank opened in Myanmar to help South Korean companies remit money and provide other services.

The Central Bank of Myanmar still has to implement several regulatory stages for banks to operate under - joint-ventures and sub-

'Korean companies are eager to invest, but the biggest obstacle is the high price of land.'

> Seog-Ha Yoo Executive Vice President Industrial Bank of Korea

sidiaries - before it allows whollyowned foreign banks to operate, he said. "We are considering all three options ... our representative office is just a beginning," he said.

"A governor at the Central Bank told me that joint-ventures will be allowed this year, and we may form one when this is allowed," Mr Yoo

Myanmar's financial market only recently opened to foreign banks. even though an updated foreign investment law was enacted last November. Mr Yoo said that a number of financial and monetary regulations still needed clarification.

He said the Central Bank appears quite aggressive and not overly accepting of foreign investment, and recommended that it ease its regulations to allow foreign companies greater independence.

Mr Yoo said one common concern of Korean companies is sanctions imposed by the United States.

He added that the most pressing consequence of this is the requirement that all international transfers in US dollars be processed within the US - with tight scrutiny on transfers to Myanmar.

Korea Trade-Investment Promotion Agency commercial officer Ko Tun Tun said companies are conducting payments between South Korea and Myanmar in euros to skirt sanctions.

"I think it is not convenient and the Central Bank should change its policy and allow joint-ventures soon because some South Korean companies only wish to do business with banks they know," he said.

He added that huge South Korean companies already working in Myanmar include Samsung, Lotte, CJ Group and SK Telecom.

Cumulative investment by South Korean firms in Myanmar amounted to nearly US\$3 billion by last month, Directorate of Investment and Company Administration data shows.

Go Further



30 **Business** THE MYANMAR TIMES MAY 6 - 12, 2013

German firms on the move



ayethidarkyaw@gmail.com

THE Germans are coming - and they mean business. The German Chambers of Industry and Commerce will open an office in Yangon within three months, its deputy chief executive officer Dr Volker Treier said on May 2.

The German Chambers of Commerce and Industry signed an agreement with the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry on the same day.

This will be the first business representative office from Europe to open in Myanmar, said federation vice-president U Win Aung, adding that the new office would support Myanmar's efforts to finalise the draft of a smalland medium-sized enterprises law.

Dr Treier said Yangon was a favoured location for many German companies. "This office will be another pillar in our worldwide network," he said. "We want to help [German] companies start businesses here and connect them with Myanmar partners."

The new office will represent German companies and offer Myanmar firms a forum to discuss any difficulties they may have in working with them. Dr Treier said.

"We want to foster an exchange of views by both sides," he said.

"Right now we want to offer you our services, products and corporations, step-by-step," he said.

German companies are showing interest in Myanmar's infrastructure projects, including railways and electricity supply. They are also interested in consumer products and the car in-

Dr Treier described the new political environment here as "open minded" and said he was hopeful stability would be achieved. Myan-

mar is also bound to benefit from integration with Southeast Asia, he said. "This is a good time for German companies think to about engagement in Dr Volker Treier, deputy Myan-**CEO** of the German mar." Chambers of Commerce

ANALYSIS

Unleashing Myanmar's tiger potential

Special economic zones have proven to be a realistic and effective tool for swift economic growth and regulatory reform

MYANMAR'S economic potential has been vastly enhanced by the access to foreign resources - in the form of new trading opportunities, the inflow of foreign investment, elevated levels of bilateral and multilateral assistance - that President U Thein Sein's commitment to political, social and economic reform has unleashed.

The relaxation of sanctions and improved relations with major powers has opened an opportunity for development after years of isolation and consequent economic stagnation.

Over the past few years real growth has been strong, but how strong is not exactly clear. Official statistics show the economy has been growing more than 10 percent a year for more than a decade, but it is difficult to reconcile these statistics with the real world in which the people of Myanmar live day-by-day.

The government has acknowledged as much by winding back the growth goal to a more realistic and achievable 7.7pc per annum in the current Five-Year Plan.

But how should Myanmar set its development ambitions now? By what standards should we measure success in economic reform? And what are the key ingredients to achieving national growth potential?

Myanmar is still very poor. Though the range of error in the estimates may be wide, per capita gross domestic product (GDP) remains only about US\$850, the lowest in ASEAN - less than Laos and Cambodia.

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) reckons that Myanmar, on its current development path, can grow at 7pc to 8pc a year over the next couple of decades. If it were to do that, per capita GDP would reach \$2000 to \$3000 by 2030 - more than three times the current level - propelling Myanmar into the ranks of the middle-income countries.

Even so, if Myanmar more than trebled its per capita income by 2030 as the ADB suggests, it will hardly change its rank as the poorest country in ASEAN. The bar to middle income status also keeps rising. Perhaps it could aim to replicate China's past long-term 10.4pc growth (9.4pc in per capita terms) and lift its per capita income to \$4724 by 2030. That would still be lower than the per capita income in Singapore, Thailand, Malaysia and Brunei two years ago.

Coming from behind, as it is. Myanmar should have a brighter future, and a bolder ambition for development

Its growth potential is enormous as it sheds the shackles of

with skills and human capital, to upgrade its trade and industrial structure. And it is strategically located between the emerging giants of China and India.

With these advantages, Myanmar will need to strive not only for growth in the quantity of per capita GDP but also to improve its quality, as the over-

'Economic zones in which trade could be freed up, legal frameworks established, and infrastructure developed were beachheads for testing and demonstrating the path to development.

U Myint

Presidential Advisor

policies that have condemned it to poverty over the past 50 years.

It has a rich resource base that, properly husbanded, can launch the mobilisation of international and domestic resources for catching up with its ASEAN neighbours. It has the riding goals of the economic and social reform to which President U Thein Sein has committed.

Foreign investment will, course, play a critical role in achieving Myanmar's real growth potential, as it has in China and elsewhere. But with-

population, properly invested out fundamental reforms in the domestic economy, foreign investment cannot be expected to produce economic miracles.

and Industry.

Photo: Supplied

Unless Myanmar's own policy frameworks are robust and reliable, how will foreign investors be persuaded to put confidence, and bring know-how and capital into the country? Without stable macro-economic policies and policy institutions. an effective taxation regime and soundly based social and capital expenditure programs, why won't foreign investors choose to go elsewhere? And why would the ordinary people of Myanmar be happy if the benefits of foreign investment are not spread widely instead of being captured by privileged few?

It will be difficult to establish quickly the policy and legal frameworks across the country in which foreign investors or the people of Myanmar can have immediate and total confidence. That is why other economies. like Singapore, China, Taiwan, Malaysia and Vietnam established special economic zones in which trade could be freed up, legal frameworks established, and infrastructure developed

that were beachheads for testing and demonstrating the path to development more broadly.

Moving to establish special economic zones near major centres is now an urgent national priority. Special economic zones such as the Thilawa project near Yangon will serve to boost economic growth dramatically. Their benefits could spread across the country.

With its highly mobile population and workforce, Myanmar is likely to achieve this more rapidly than have many other countries in the region have before it.

Getting all this right is an enormous challenge for policymakers and legislators in a newly opened economy and society. Getting it more right than wrong is a realistic ambition that will lift economic performance and social welfare to its real potential and see the birth of another Asian tiger.

U Myint is Chief Economic Advisor to the President and chief, Centre for Economic and Social Development of the Myanmar Development Resource Institute. This article is reprinted from East Asia Forum.

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Dated: 6 May 2013

Business 31 www.mmtimes.com

Jewelers set to shine on global stage

SOE SANDAR 00

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MYANMAR'S jewelry industry is on the move, expanding its presence in the international market and forging ties with international companies whose high-tech expertise will allow them to shift to value-added products, industry representatives say.

They point to this week's Myanmar International Gems and Jewelry Expo, the first international gems and jewelry show to be held here, as a signal of the industry's global potential.

The expo will showcase jewelry and gems from about 20 Myanmar companies as well as cutting-edge technology from more than 20 international firms, said Dr Aung Kyaw Win,

managing director of Golden Palace Jewelry.

Myanmar has an abundance of gems and international firms have technology and market access, he said. The expo at the Myanmar Convention Centre from May 9 to 12 will connect the two, Dr Aung Kyaw said.

"Our country has plenty of natural resources, but we have never held a gems and jewelry expo before. It will provide many opportunities to connect. to the international market," he

Dr Aung Kyaw said the domestic industry was 50 years behind those in other countries. "We lack technical expertise so we invited companies with first class technology from the United States, Italy, India and Thailand," he said. The foreign companies will display technology, not jewelry,Dr Aung Kyaw added.

Mr Michael Khaniss Jand, managing director of Asia Connect, said that despite having a massive jewelry industry Myanmar has failed to shine on the international stage because it has not had jewelry expos like those held in cities such as Hong Kong and New York.

"We will be introducing innovative technology for manufacturing, including 3D tech. We don't have a distributor in Myanmar," he said.

A second expo will be held early next year for international buyers.

"We're looking beyond the local market to the global one," Dr Aung Kyaw Win said, adding that invitations for the second expo will be delivered in September.



A local jeweller examines gems and precious stones on a ring. Photo: Supplied

'Low-end' phone fair

A MOBILE phone fair with up to 60 vendors will be held May 10-12 at the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry in Yangon's Lanmadaw township.

The fair is expected to attract thousands of consumers as a rapid expansion of Myanmar's mobile phone market is underway, organisers said.

At least 25 companies and up to 60 vendors will attend the annual event, which is being held for the third time. The fair is aimed at "lowpriced mobile users", conference organiser Zillion Business Services said.

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32 **Business** The Myanmar times May 6 - 12, 2013

Job watch

European Law firm establishing in Yangon is looking for smart associates (with 2 to 6 years working experience) for corporate work (advising foreign investors). Teamplaying, enthusiasm, international spirit and proficiency in English are requested. Interesting salaries. Please send your CV with picture to -

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Exporters say lack of rain has cut mango yields this year. Photo: Ko Taik

Price of mango on the rise



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MANGO prices are surging because yields have plunged more than 33 percent due to lack of rain, exporters say.

"Mango yields are down by one-third compared with last year," said U Kyaw Soe Naing of the Myanmar Fruit and Vegetable Producers and Exporters Association.

"Yields are down because we didn't get enough rain," he said, adding that the cost of land to grow mangoes on has also risen about 10pc over the last year.

The mango export season is

The mango export season is from late April to mid-July, with most of the fruit shipped to China, said Ko Khun Naw, owner of Shwe Thi Hann Kabar sales centre in the Shan State border town of Muse. "At the start of the season 40 to 50 tonnes of mango were being exported to China through the town a day," he said, adding that about 1 million tonnes were exported last year.

He said a 15-kilogram box of loose mangoes was selling for 60 to 90 yuan on April 29, while boxes of individually wrapped fruit went for 100-160 yuan.

Daw Lai Lai Oo, an executive at Marlarmyaing Co in Yangon, which exports the fruit by air, said demand was rising. "This year we're selling to China, Singapore, Malaysia, Korea," she said, adding that companies in some European countries have expressed interest.

33%

Amount by which mango yields have fallen this year

Exports will shoot up this month, she said.

"Sein Ta Lone [diamond] mangoes are the most popular variety in foreign markets," said U Kyaw Soe Naing, a mango seller in Mandalay. Most mangoes are grown in Mandalay Region and southern Shan State.

U Kyaw Soe Naing said a certification system is being prepared to enable export to Singapore.

The UN's Food and Agriculture Organisation and the Myanmar Agriculture Department are working together to implement it, he said.

The certificates state where the fruit is grown, and what pesticides and insecticides were used in the process.

The mango business is also becoming mechanised. "Sorting and selection of mangoes will be done by machine. For mangoes to be exported, they must be sterilised, sorted, packed and kept in cold storage before export," U Kyaw Soe Naing said.

ayethidarkyaw@gmail.com HIGH-RANKING officials from four ministries will be assigned to embassies in eight major foreign markets at the end of this month to promote trade and investment, according to the Ministry of Commerce. Ministry spokesman U Toe Aung Myint said that nine deputy directors and senior

Trade envoys

sent to major

markets

AYE THIDAR KYAW

said that nine deputy directors and senior managers from the energy, finance, commerce and planning ministries will be assigned to the commercial affairs departments of Myanmar embassies in Belgium, China, Hong Kong, India, Japan, Singapore, South Korea and Thailand.

Their objective will be to expand access to markets and increase investment in Myanmar, he said.

The beefing up of commercial affairs departments at embassies coincides with other initiatives within the commerce ministry intended to increase trade by 20 percent this fiscal year.

The ministry is targeting trade to rise to about US\$22 billion this fiscal year from about \$18 billion in the last fiscal year, U Toe Aung Myint said.

He said the International Trade Counsel and World Trade Organisation are also sending economic experts to help ministry staff identify openings for exports.

A restructuring within the ministry has also seen three departments take responsibility for international trade as well as the implementation of a national export strategy. These are the Directorate of Trade, and the Trade Promotion and Commerce and Consumer Affairs departments.

The ministry also began an upgrade of its data system this month that will allow it to more precisely identify and rank export amounts and values, U Toe Aung Myint said, adding that a new data system will be introduced over the next five years.

GEP seeks solar partners

GREEN Earth Power (Thailand) is seeking partners for joint development of its 210-megawatt solar power plant in Myanmar, the third largest of its kind in the world, *The Bangkok Post* reported.

The company also plans to raise funds on the Stock Exchange of Thailand for an even bigger plant in Myanmar, one with a capacity of 300 MW, as well as other projects in the region, according to *The Bangkok Post*.

GEP managing director Supasit Skontanarak told the *Post* a power-purchase agreement with the government should be signed within three months.

Construction of the plant in Magway division will start as soon as the agreement is signed. Construction is expected to take 18 months, the company said.

Toshiba arrives in Yangon

TOSHIBA started operating in Myanmar this month after opening an office in Yangon in late April.

The company is upbeat on Myanmar's economic prospects, saying deregulation and investment are spurring growth.

"Ensuring sustained growth will require broad investments in social infrastructure, including power generation and distribution, and the Yangon branch office will investigate the market and promote business in this and other areas," the company said in a press release.

Toshiba has sold home appliances here through distributors in Singapore since the 1980s.

Eel sellers seek bargaining power

A NEWLY formed association of eel wholesalers will give exporters more leverage in negotiating prices with buyers, its secretary said.

The 23-member association aims to increase the bargaining power of Myanmar traders, who previously had no say in setting prices, U Tine Kyaw said. "Eel wholesalers had no say in pricing. It was decided by the Chinese side, but with the association we can start negotiating the price," he said.

"Prices won't fluctuate sharply as they did before. Businessmen as well as fishermen will be pleased with this," he said.

The association will also set standards for export, he added. "There is no filter yet for eel exports, but buyers don't like eels that are too small. We will negotiate whether to filter the sizesof eels for sale or introduce regulations preventing wholesalers from buying small eels," U Tine Kyaw said.



The United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) in Myanmar is inviting qualified candidates to apply for the following positions:

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1.	Portfolio Manager (LICA 7)	Yangon	National	6-May-2013
2.	Public Health Analyst (MNCH) (LICA 6)	Yangon	National	7-May-2013
3.	MNCH Specialist (IICA 2)	Yangon	International	8-May-2013
4.	Security Guard (LICA 1A)	Yangon	National	16-May-2013

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Business 33 www.mmtimes.com

FDI makes progress

Foreign investment in manufacturing is likely to double this year, according to the **Myanmar Investment Commission**



ayethidarkyaw@gmail.com

FOREIGN direct investment in the manufacturing sector has risen sharply since the new foreign investment law was passed last November and is on track to double this fiscal year, Myanmar Investment Commission director general U Aung Naing Oo

U Aung Naing Oo also said that investment in the telecom and hotel industries is set to surge this year.

Food processing and the garment industries took the lion's share of the slightly more than US\$400 million in FDI in the manufacturing industry last fiscal year, with most of this coming from Singapore, China, Hong Kong and Japan, he said.

Senior economist Dr Maung Aung said the amount was slight when compared to

FDI flows into manufacturing in other countries in the

The 50 percent jump last vear, however, indicated that the new foreign investment law passed in November and the subsequent rules and regulations implemented in January were working, he said

The lifting of sanctions will also fuel FDI in Myanmar, he said. The European Union is lifting sanctions on all products except arms and ammunition, while the US is expected to allow Myanmar preferential access to its market by the end of this year.

Access to the EU and American markets will lead to a massive surge in investment in the manufacturing industry here, Dr Maung Aung said.

He said investment in manufacturing is critical because it creates jobs and provides technology transfers.

As a share of FDI, the manufacturing sector lags extractive industries, which receive about 80 percent of FDI, according to the Myanmar Investment Commission.



Workers at a garment factory near Yangon. Photo: Supplied

Exporters gearing up for European market

Companies scrambling for access to one of the world's richest markets

AYE THIDA KYAW

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LOCAL exporters are scrambling to take advantage of Myanmar's new access to the European market, with dozens of executives from the agriculture, manufacturing and fisheries industries gathering for a two-day seminar last week to learn how to ensure their products meet EU standards.

Daw Khine Khine Nwe, jointsecretary general of Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry - which organised the seminar on May 2 and 3 - pointed to Cambodia to show how preferential access to the EU could benefit exporters. "Cambodian officials say their export volume to EU countries increased about 66 percent since it received GSP access. We should try to do the same," she said.

Federation president U Win Aung was more cautious, saying catching up with competitors would take time because Myanmar's economic reform process was far from complete. New laws and policies are required, he said.

Still, he said that greater access to one of the world's richest markets would pay off. "Once we get market share in the EU, we will get higher prices for our exports. Primary producers should benefit," U Win Aung said, adding that more seminars and workshops are



planned to help exporters raise the quality of their products.

U Hnin Oo, vice chairman of the Myanmar Fisheries Federation, said individual exporters would be responsible for meeting EU standards. "Whether or not their goods reach the market depends on quality," he said.

The US is also considering reinstating Myanmar's GSP privileges. Its Trade Representative said a public hearing will be held on June 4 to discuss adding Myanmar and Laos to the system, and it is expected that Myanmar will be added by the end of the year.

The EU's GSP program, like the United State's Generalised System of Preferences, exempts products imported from least developed nations from import taxes and quotas.

preferences Myanmar's were withdrawn in 1997 "due to serious and systematic violations of principles of core international labour conventions", the European Commission said. It began reviewing Myanmar's status after the International Labor Organisation gave a positive review of reforms here last June.

The European Union announced that sanctions would be permanently lifted on April 24, saying the "EU is willing to open a new chapter in its relations with Myanmar".

Stephan Moser, of the International Management Group, said the lifting of sanctions will also benefit European investors. "Membership of the GSP is an attraction for EU investors or producers seeking locations [for production]," he said.

Myanmar offers European investors abundant resources, cheap labour and a strategic location, industry experts said.

Investors wary of price swings

FOREIGN investors remain cautious about entering the construction-materials market despite the access they were given last year by the new foreign investment law, an industry executive said.

U Myo Kyaw Lwin, an executive at Thitsar Saytanar Construction Materials in Mandalay, said there was some interest in the market from Chinese, Indian and Vietnamese investors, but "there are still no signs of possible investment from western firms".

Instability in the market, the taxation system and transportation costs are the main reasons potential investors are wary, he said. Prices have also fluctuated wildly this year, he said. "Even though sales are good prices of construction materials have been unstable," he said, attributing this to shortages of raw materials, currency fluctuations, power outages and unpredictable demand.

Prices are less predictable than the weather, even during the rainy season when demand is flat, U Myo Kyaw Lwin said.

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Diamond Condo faces loss of lustre

Residents and owner spar over parking spaces, facilities and fees.



HTAR HTAR KHIN

htar29@gmail.con

LIFE in Yangon's Diamond Condo has turned sour, according to many residents of the complex in Kamaryut township. They say they have repeatedly complained to the complex's management on a wide range of issues, from parking to electricity meters to CCTV cameras.

The developer, National Land Company (Asia Express), is standing its ground, however. A spokesperson dismissed some complaints as "nonsense" and says the company's patience is running out.

It all started a few months ago when National Land sought to charge residents K31,250 for the installation of CCTV cameras and K760,800 for electricity meter boxes. Residents also say the company failed to provide a Building Completion Certificate (BCC), and has not completed facilities originally advertised, such as a pool and a fitness centre.

Daw Mon Yee Win, who owns a fifth-floor unit, said: "It's the developer's responsibility to provide water and electricity meter boxes. We wrote to them in February refusing to pay. We will take this matter further if we have to."

Daw Nwe Yin Win, who lives on the seventh floor, complains of poor facilities and having to pay an extra K10,000 parking fee.

"There are only 45 parking spaces for 90 apartments in each of the two towers. I'm already paying K15,000 a month for parking. That's not fair. We paid a lot of money for these apartments."

Another issue is the charge for diesel to power the generator during blackouts. "We pay K5000 to keep the lift running, but we have to pay even when there's no power cut," said Daw Nwe Yin Win. Resident Ko Win Aung complains of having to pay for a substation. "That's the developer's responsibility," he said.

Residents say they have received little or no support from either the Yangon City Development Committee or the Yangon Region hluttaw. Now they



Residents of Diamond Condo say they are fed up with its owner. $\mbox{\rm Pic:}$ Boothee

want to form a housing management committee.

Daw Myo Mi Thu, the administrator at National Land Company, said the dispute was based on a misunderstanding.

"The contract states that residents must pay for their own meter boxes. And nothing in the contract guarantees residents their own parking space," she said, adding that the nine CCTV cameras were necessary for security. The

'We're not going to sit back and watch while some residents blacken our image.'

Daw Myo Mi Thu

Administrator National Land company has been trying to acquire a BCC since earlier this year, but this should not be a source of concern for the residents, she said.

Daw Myo Mi Thu said the company had managed to reduce the costs of meter installation from K760,000 to K600,000, and many residents were happy to pay the lower amount.

As for the parking issue, Daw Myo Mi Thu said: "It's quite clear that the initial sales contract made no mention of free parking. I don't understand why they're asking for this after seven years. It's really nonsense.

"Residents agreed to buy from the National Land company, so they should obey the company rules and regulations as laid down in the contract. We're starting to lose patience," she added.

"We're doing our best to manage and maintain this condo. But we're not going to sit back and watch while some residents blacken our image."

Families protest yet another Yangon eviction

Noe Noe Aung noenoeag@gmail.com

FAMILIES evicted from their homes in Pabedan township staged protests outside the Department of Human Settlement and Housing Development, Yangon City Development Committee and the Ministry of Education on April 29 for forcing them out to make way for a school.

Although eviction from the residential building was swift, the wait for new apartments has dragged on for three years, evictee Daw Thein told *The Myanmar Times*.

The 59-year-old mother of three said that since losing her home she has also lost her business and been forced to live with a relative.

She also said the building's former residents had been duped because they were told they would receive new apartments on the same plot.

Their plight it not unique, as the surge in property prices in Yangon is contributing to a rise in evictions, with many middle- and low-income families being driven to the city's out-

skirts. "Officials don't want to give the apartments back because prices downtown are so high now," former resident U Soe Min Thant said.

Daw Thein said the families were told their building was too dangerous to live in when they were evicted in 2009. "They gave us three days to leave and said they would evict us by force if we didn't," she said.

When officials first met with the building's residents in November 2009, they told them they were going to replace it with a new residential block in which they would be given apartments, former residents said.

After numerous complaints to officials fell on deaf ears, residents protested outside the housing department in March.

Former resident U Soe Min Thant said officials offered apartments in Dagon Seikkan township after the first protest. He said the evictees will continue to protest because they want to live in the city, not its outskirts.



The capital's upscale market is seeing a rebound, realtors say. Photo: Supplied

Sales rebound in capital

Su Hlaing Tun

NAY PYI TAW'S property market is rebounding after a dip last year, with both sales and leases rising in several wards since February, real estate agents said.

"We began seeing an increase in transactions at the end of January," said Ko Atee from Shwe Lat Pan Real Estate Agency. The recovery began in the city's centre, with sales picking up in Pyinmana township's Paung Laung ward, Ko Atee said.

Shwe Kyar Pin ward in Za Bu Thiri township has also bounced back, realtors said. "Sales are not bad and rents are increasing because the [ward] is close to ministerial offices and the hotel zone," said an agent based in the ward. Ko Atee said that both sales and rental prices had risen in Okktra Thiri township, where many ministerial offices are located. Other agents said there has been an uptick in inquiries about prices in Dek Kina Thiri township.

Ko Atee cautioned, however, that few of the new transactions were major ones. Investors looking for big deals are taking a "wait and see" approach to the capital's property market, he said. He was also less optimistic than other realtors about the prospect of a property boom due to December's SEA Games.

"It's very early to say the market will rise due to the SEA Games, but we do expect the market to continue to improve," Ko Atee said.



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WASHINGTON

Twitter tool monitors the pulse of society

Take all the comments expressed on Twitter, crunch them with an analytics program and you can get a sense of the mood of a city, state or country.

US researchers say they have come up with such a tool, called a "hedonometer," which is effectively a happiness sensor.

The project at www.hedonometer. org, which went live on April 30, has been collecting data for five years, measuring the ups and downs of the moods expressed on the popular messaging platform.

The tool analyses roughly 10 percent of all tweets posted in English, giving a sense of the mood of the internet community, albeit with a heavy weighting in the United States.

The researchers found that the day of the Boston Marathon bombings, April 15, was the saddest day measured in five years, slightly worse than the day of the Newtown, Connecticut school massacre.

The happiest days were on holidays such as Christmas or Thanksgiving

The hedonometer draws on the "psychological valence" of about 10,000 words. Using a scale of one to nine, "happy" is ranked 8.30, "hahaha" 7.94, "cherry" 7.04. At the bottom, "crash" is rated 2.60, "war" 1.80, and "iail" 1.76.

The team collects some 50 million tweets from around the world each day "then we basically toss all the words into a huge bucket," to calcu-

10%

Estimate of the volume of tweets in English analysed by the 'hedonometer'.

late a happiness score, said lead researcher Peter Dodds.

"It gives us some great insight and it works in real time," Dodds told AFP. The day of the US raid which killed Osama bin Laden was ranked as a sadder-than-average day, said Dodds, because of the negative words expressed in tweets.

"It happened to a negative person, and the texture of that day is talking about death, a negative event," he said

The hedonometer's initial measurements come from English-language tweets, but researchers say the hedonometer will soon be drawing in other data streams, like Google Trends, The New York Times, blogs, CNN transcripts, and text captured by the link-shortening service Bitly. And it will be mining data in 12 languages.

The research team in February released data from geo-tagged tweets from cell phones, to rate the happiest and saddest cities in America: Napa, California, was at the top and Beaumont, Texas, at the bottom. While some may be unnerved by the results, Dodds said the project can be useful because "we are good at making things better if we can measure them."

The hedonometer project was led by Dodds and Chris Danforth at the Computational Story Lab at the University of Vermont with Mitre, a notfor-profit group that operates federal research centers and has expertise in big data analytics.

The term hedonometer was coined by Irish-born economist and philosopher Francis Edgeworth in the late 19th century, who spoke of "an ideally perfect instrument... continually registering the height of pleasure experienced by an individual."

The researchers say that by aggregating the data from tweets, one can get a better picture of a national or regional mood than by looking at individual comments.

The researchers say they are trying to improve the tool to get information from two-word expressions, which they call "molecules," as opposed to single words, dubbed "atoms."

"The key piece is not whether we're correctly measuring atoms and molecules," says Brian Tivnan, a researcher from Mitre.

"It's the relative context that is so important: which is why the sudden drop from the Boston Marathon bombings jumps out at you. The hedonometer shows the pulse of a society." – AFP



IN PICTURES

A "moss table" demonstrates the potential for biophotovoltaic technology at an exhibition titled "En vie, au frontiers du design", at the EDF Foundation in Paris, on April 25. Biophotovoltaic technology relies on the photosynthesis of living organisms to generate renewable energy. *Photo: AFP*

SAN FRANCISCO

Obama team wins award

The technology team behind US President Barack Obama's successful re-election campaign joined a starstudded list of Webby Award winners honoured on April 30 for "internet excellence."

Members of Obama's tech team took home a Breakout of the Year award for a "historic campaigning effort (that) masterfully combined savvy political and tech genius to become the secret weapon behind Obama's commanding re-election."

The Annual Webby Awards presented by the International Academy of Digital Arts and Sciences honour the best of the internet.

Canadian musician Grimes, who became a sensation after giving her

early recordings away free online, was crowned Webby Artist of the Year for tapping into the internet to distribute music and to engage with fans.

Hollywood star Kevin Spacey and his Trigger Street Productions cofounder Dana Brunetti received a Webby Special Achievement Award for their work producing a "House of Cards" series of shows streamed exclusively on Netflix.

Comedian Jerry Seinfeld was awarded a Webby for Outstanding Comedic Performance in the Web series "Comedians in Cars Getting Coffee" while hip-hop music star Frank Ocean was chosen Webby Person of the Year after using Tumblr to come out as gay to his fans. – AFP

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IFRIISAI FM

It's not just about land, says Israeli PM

Benjamin Netanyahu responds to an Arab League initiative to revive stalled Middle East talks by saying there can be no peace until Palestinians recognise Israel as a Jewish state

PRIME Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said on May 1 that an Israeli withdrawal would not bring peace with the Palestinians because the heart of the conflict was their refusal to recognise Israel as a Jewish state.

His remarks came a day after the Arab League announced moves to revive and modify its 2002 peace initiative, drawing praise from Washington and Israel's chief peace negotiator Tzipi Livni but no official response from the Israeli government.

"The root of the conflict is not territorial. It started a long time before 1967," Netanyahu said in a meeting with foreign ministry officials, referring to the year Israel seized Gaza, the West Bank and east Jerusalem during the Six-Day War.

"You saw what happened when we left the Gaza Strip. We evacuated the last settlers and what did we get? Missiles," he said of Israel's withdrawal from the enclave in 2005.

"The Palestinians' lack of will to recognise the state of Israel as the national state of the Jewish people is the root

'The root of the conflict is not territorial.'

Benjamin Netanyahu Israeli Prime Minister

of the conflict," he said, in remarks communicated by a senior government source.

The Saudi-led proposal, which offers full diplomatic ties with the Arab world in exchange for Israel's withdrawal from land occupied in 1967, now includes a reference to the principle of mutually agreed land swaps, a move hailed by Washington as "a very big step forward."

But Netanyahu has ruled out withdrawing to the "indefensible" 1967 lines, and said on May 1 the move would not solve the conflict, which was about "the very existence of a Jewish state," the source said.

"If we reach a peace agreement I want to know that the conflict will not continue. That there won't be any more Palestinian claims afterwards," Netanyahu told the diplomats.

"The root of the conflict is Acre, Jaffa and Ashkelon and you need to say it. You don't need to apologise. You need to say the truth," he told them.

Palestinian President Mahmud Abbas downplayed Netanyahu's comments

"We have recognised the state of Israel since 1993," he said at a news conference with Serbian President Tomislav Nikolic in Ramallah on May 1. "They can call themselves what they want, it's not our business."

"We are in favour of the 1967 borders," he said, but added he would consider small changes.

"When we negotiate the demarcation of the borders, we will look at minor modifications of equal value on both sides if we need to," he said.

The initiative emerged from talks in Washington on April 29 between US Secretary of State John Kerry and an Arab League delegation.

Kerry on April 30 hailed the shift in the Arab League's position to accept for the first time the idea of land swaps between the Palestinians and Israelis in any peace deal, describing it as "a very big step forward." – *AFP*

Israel and the West Bank

Arab League agrees to concept of land swaps



BEIRU

Syrian opposition warns Hezbollah

SYRIA'S opposition on May 1 denounced what it called "threats" by the head of Hezbollah and warned against any intervention by the Lebanese Shiite group or by Iran in the Syrian conflict.

The speech was also criticised by Lebanese opposition leader Saad Hariri, who accused Hezbollah of "leading Lebanon to ruin" by intervening in Syria.

"The Syrians and the Lebanese hoped... that the Hezbollah leadership would stop their attacks on Homs and Damascus and take into account the gravity of the situation in the region," the Syrian National Coalition said in a statement.

"But they heard nothing but threats... and warnings against setting the region on fire and an admission of their interference in Syrian affairs," the key opposition movement said. On April 30, Hezbollah chief Hassan Nasrallah acknowledged that members of the group are fighting inside Syria and suggested Iran and other states could intervene to support the Damascus regime against rebels.

President Bashar al-Assad has "true friends in the region who will not allow Syria to fall into the hands of the United States, Israel and 'takfiri' groups," he said of Sunni Muslim groups battling the regime.

"If the situation gets more dangerous, states, resistance movements and other forces will be obliged to intervene effectively in the confrontation on the ground," he added

"You will not be able to bring down the regime militarily," Nasrallah told Syria's rebel forces. "The battle is still long."

The Syrian opposition has

'You will not be able to bring down the regime militarily.'

> **Hassan Nasrallah** Hezhollah chief

long accused Hezbollah of dispatching fighters to fight alongside government forces, including in Qusayr in central Homs province and at the Sayyeda Zeinab shrine near Damascus.

The Coalition called on the Lebanese government "to immediately put an end to Hezbollah military operations in the regions close to the Syrian border."

In another development on May 1, diplomats at the United Nations said UN-Arab League Syria peace envoy Lakhdar Brahimi was on the verge of quitting amid growing frustration at deadlocked international efforts to end the worsening conflict.

Brahimi, 79, who took over from former UN leader Kofi Annan in August last year, is "itching to resign but being persuaded to hang on for a few more days," said one UN Security Council diplomat.

The Arab League decision to recognise the opposition Syrian National Coalition as the legitimate government of Syria was the final straw for the veteran UN troubleshooter, diplomats said.

"He wants to resign because he feels that the Arab League has taken themselves in a direction which is a bit different from the UN," said the Security Council diplo-

- AFP

BAGHDAL

Unrest in Iraq leaves 460 dead in April

Violence in Iraq rose sharply in April, killing 460 people, show AFP figures, and May began with attacks that killed 18 people.

Most of April's deaths came during a wave of unrest near the end of the month, when security forces moved on Sunni anti-government protesters in the north, sparking clashes that killed 53 people.

Dozens more people died in subsequent violence, which included revenge attacks on security forces. That raised fears of a return to the all-out sectarian conflict that cost tens of thousands of lives from 2006 to 2008.

The late-April violence was the deadliest so far linked to protests that broke out in Sunni areas of Shiite-majority Iraq more than four months ago. The protesters have called for Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki, a Shiite, to quit. They criticise the authorities for allegedly targeting their community with wrongful detentions and accusations of involvement in terrorism.

Among those killed in April, according to the AFP figures, were 54 police, 53 soldiers, 14 Sahwa anti-Qaeda militiamen and two members of the Kurdish security forces.

Most of April's remaining casualties were civilians, although the figures also include some gunmen who died or were wounded in clashes with security forces.

Among the 18 victims of violence on May 1, were a colonel and at least three policemen killed in an attack by armed men on the police head-quarters in Tarmiyah, north of Baghdad. – *AFP*



The Dutch celebrate the crowning of King Willem-Alexander after the abdication of the former Queen Beatrix world 34

US President Barack Obama launches a new bid to shut down Guantanamo jail

WORLD 35



Western retailers under pressure over workplace safety in Bangladesh

SPECIAL 38

WASHINGTON

Green Card lottery may be last

ABOUT 100,000 people were chosen from several million on May 1 to get a head-start on a US Green Card, in what could be the last such annual lottery, slated to vanish under proposed reforms.

Created in 1995, the lottery system leads to the awarding of 50,000 permanent residency permits each year to people from countries that send relatively few emigrants to the United States.

But it has long been criticised by US Republican law-makers, who control the House of Representatives and have included a plan to scrap it in the comprehensive immigration reforms being debated in Congress.

A final vote on the reforms is not expected before this summer, but if they pass, the so-called diversity visas would vanish from next year.

This year's crop of hopefuls did now know when they applied that this might be their last chance, as would-be immigrants had to file a free online application in October 2012.

From 1600 GMT on May 1, the candidates were finally able to check their status on the government website www. dvlottery.state.gov, using their personal confirmation number.

Some 100,000 names were selected in a first round, because not everyone will com-

MILLION 7

The number of hopeful applicants who participated in this year's lottery.

plete the process for a visa, and a maximum of 50,000 Green Cards will ultimately be given out.

In last year's lottery, 7.9 million people, with 4.6 million spouses and children, submitted applications.

The proposed reforms massively increase the number of Green Cards and visas allocated to highly qualified workers.

The winners of this year's lottery will be given interviews from October, where they will have to show proof of a high school diploma or at least two years of work experience, as required under the program.

Countries that sent more than 50,000 immigrants to the United States in the past five years are excluded from the lottery. This year that includes a range of countries, including Bangladesh, Brazil, Canada, China, Mexico, Pakistan, South Korea, and Britain, except Northern Ireland.

- AF

LA PAZ

Bolivia expels USAID

PRESIDENT Evo Morales on May 1 announced the expulsion of USAID from Bolivia, accusing the US development agency of meddling in the country's internal affairs in a new souring of often-tense relations.

The United States quickly dismissed the allegations as baseless, and said Bolivia's action showed it did not want good ties with Washington.

In a fiery speech to workers on May Day, the leftist president of South America's poorest country said the US Agency for International Development was in Bolivia "for political purposes, not social ones."

"No more USAID, which manipulates and uses our leaders," Morales said in the address in La Paz's Plaza de Armas.

He did not explain why he felt the US agency was interfering in Bolivian affairs. US-AID has operated in the Andean nation since 1964.

In 2008 he expelled the US ambassador and agents of the US Drug Enforcement Administration, accusing them of meddling in Bolivia's internal affairs.

The United States responded by expelling the Bolivian ambassador and ending trade privileges that it had granted the country.

After a long period of frosty ties, the two countries in 2011 signed a framework agreement to normalise relations and exchange ambassadors again, but tensions remained. – *AFP*

BRIEFS

Riyadh SARS-like virus kills five Saudis

Five Saudis have died of a new SARS-like virus during the past few days, the health ministry said last week.

In a statement cited by the Saudi SPA news agency late on May 1, the ministry said that all the deaths occurred in the Ahsaa province in the oil-rich eastern region of the kingdom.

Known as novel coronavirus or hCoV-EMC, the virus was first detected in mid-2012 and is a cousin of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), which triggered a scare 10 years ago when it erupted in east Asia, leaping to humans from animal hosts.

Sixteen people have now died from 23 cases detected in Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Germany and Britain. Riyadh has accounted for most of the deaths, with 11 people including the five new fatalities.

Lagos

Nigeria accused of abuses cover-up

Human Rights Watch on May 1 released satellite images showing massive destruction in the Nigerian town of Baga, voicing concern that the military has "tried to cover up" abuses that should be investigated by the International Criminal Court.

The clashes between soldiers and Boko Haram Islamists sparked massive fires that left nearly half the town destroyed.

The Red Cross has said that 187 people were killed in the fighting, while an area senator put the death toll at 228.

The military has fiercely denied claims that soldiers fired on civilians or deliberately torched scores of homes.

Johannesburg Broadcaster screens images of Mandela

The first images of Nelson Mandela in almost nine months showed the South African peace icon looking frail but sitting upright on April 29.



The 94-year-old appeared slightly gaunt and showed little expression in brief images captured Monday at his Johannesburg home by state broadcaster SABC.

Wearing a black and white patterned shirt, Mandela sat in a beige armchair with his legs up and was covered with a white blanket.

They were the first public images of Mandela since then US secretary of state Hilary Clinton visited in August.

Mandela returned home on April 6 after 10 days of treatment for a recurrent lung infection.

London

Soap opera lothario charged with rape

British police on May 1 arrested "Coronation Street" star William Roache, the longest-serving star in the world's longest-running soap opera, on suspicion of rape.

Roache, 81, has played lothario Ken Barlow in the series portraying life in a fictional northern English town since its first episode on December 9, 1960.

He was arrested at his home in northwest England over an allegation of raping an under-age girl between April and July 1967.

British police have arrested a series of celebrities since sex abuse allegations against the late BBC presenter Jimmy Savile emerged last year, although the allegations against Roache are unrelated to Savile. – AFP



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NAIROBI

UN admits errors over Somali famine

ALMOST 260,000 people, half of them young children, died of hunger during the last famine in Somalia, said a UN report released on May 2 which admitted the world body should have done more to prevent the tragedy.

The toll is much higher than was feared at the time of the 2010-2012 food crisis in the troubled Horn of Africa country and also exceeds the 220,000 who starved to death in the 1992 famine.

"The report confirms we should have done more before the famine was declared," said Philippe Lazzarini, UN Humanitarian Coordinator for Somalia

"Warnings that began as far back as the drought in 2010 did not trigger sufficient early action," he said in a statement.

Half of those who died were children under five, according to the joint report by the UN's Food and Agriculture Or-

ganisation (FAO) and the USfunded Famine Early Warning Systems Network.

"Famine and severe food insecurity in Somalia claimed the lives of about 258,000 people between October 2010 and April 2012, including 133,000 children under five," said the report, the first scientific estimate of how many died.

Somalia was the hardest hit by extreme drought in 2011 that affected over 13 million people throughout the Horn of Africa.

Lazzarini said that about 2.7million people are still in need of life-saving assistance and support to build their livelihoods.

Famine was first declared in July 2011 in Somalia's Southern Bakool and Lower Shabelle regions, but later spread to other areas, including Middle Shabelle, Afgoye and inside camps for displaced people in war-ravaged Mogadishu. – *AFP*

AMSTERDAM



King Willem-Alexander of The Netherlands, his mother Princess Beatrix (centre) and his wife, Queen Maxima, wave to the crowd gathered on the Dam Square from the balcony of the Royal Palace in Amsterdam on April 30 after the abdication of Queen Beatrix. Photo: AFP

Willem-Alexander takes Dutch throne

THE Netherlands' Willem-Alexander became Europe's youngest monarch on April 30 after his mother, queen Beatrix, abdicated and his country greeted its first king in 120 years with a massive orange-hued party.

Beatrix, 75, shed a tear before signing the act of abdication at the Royal Palace in Amsterdam, witnessed by Willem-Alexander, 46, his Argentine-born Queen Maxima, 41, and members of the government.

A cry went up from the 25,000-strong crowd in the Dam, the main square opposite the palace where the signing was shown on giant screens.

Willem-Alexander, Maxima and Beatrix appeared in front of the crowds on the palace balcony, bedecked with roses and oranges – the symbol of the royal house – before heading for the enthronement ceremony in the neighbouring Nieuwe Kerk.

Beatrix accompanied the king and queen's three daughters to the church, including their eldest, now Princess of Orange Catharina-Amalia, nine. The Dutch monarch is sworn in before a joint session of the houses of parliament in the deconsecrated church, rather than crowned, because church and royalty are separated in The Netherlands.

Before taking his oath, the king thanked his "dear mother" for the "many beautiful years during which she was our queen".

"I'm treading in your footsteps. I have a clear vision of my office. But no one knows what the future brings," he said.

"Wherever that path leads and however far it goes, I will carry your wisdom and warmth with me," he said.

A who's who of monarchsin-waiting, including Britain's Prince Charles, Spain's Prince Felipe and Japan's Prince Naruhito and his wife, Crown Princess Masako, attended the ceremony.

Princess Masako is on her first trip abroad in nearly seven years, while Prince Charles also attended Beatrix's enthronement in 1980.

Willem-Alexander is the first Dutch king since 1890 and the first of a new wave of relatively youthful European monarchs.

"Beatrix has been queen for 33 years, our queen," Ruud, 49, told AFP on the Dam after the abdication, a tear in his eye.

"She was a stabilising factor and a symbol of our country. It's sad to see her go after all these years. A page in our collective history is turning."

Amsterdam's population is estimated to have doubled with about a million visitors flooding the city's streets and canals to mark the abdication and enthronement.

Although the monarchy is popular in The Netherlands, some question the cost of the royal household and republicans are seeking a reduction to the king's tax-free salary of 825,000 euros (about US\$1 million)

While Beatrix was known for her formal court, Willem-Alexander has already said that he will not be a "protocol fetishist". – AFP

DR CONGO

UN envoy expresses 'shock' at abuses

THE new UN special envoy for Africa's Great Lakes region, former Irish president Mary Robinson, expressed "shock" on April 30 over human rights abuses in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo.

"I'm shocked to see thousands of people displaced, women raped, in sum the massive violations of human rights in North Kivu which are continuing," Robinson said on her first visit to the volatile, mineral-rich region since taking up the post in February.

"I am committed," the renowned rights activist told reporters at the airport of North Kivu's capital Goma.

Speaking alongside Roger Meece, the head of the UN peacekeeping mission in the country (MONUSCO), she said: "We want a political, diplomatic solution, but also to strengthen protection for civilians."

Robinson is leading political efforts to bring an end to more than two decades of conflict in the region, and has vowed to help build the trust needed for a recent regional peace agreement to work.

"This framework must work," she said of the UN-brokered accord signed by 11 African heads of state on February 24. "It gives hope to the population"

Under the accord, the 11 states vowed not to interfere in the affairs of their neighbours, and DR Congo President Joseph Kabila promised democratic advances and improved security.

In March, the UN Security Council unanimously approved the creation of a brigade of more than 2500 troops to help MONUSCO curb violent unrest in the region, where Rwanda and Uganda have been accused of backing rebels.

South Africa, Tanzania and Malawi were to provide troops to the 3000-strong brigade.

The rebel M23 movement has warned that it will retaliate if attacked by the brigade.

- AFF

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WASHINGTON

Obama in new bid to close Guantanamo

The US president's latest push to shut the military jail comes as 100 of its 166 detainees are on a hunger strike to protest against their indefinite detention

PRESIDENT Barack Obama said on April 30 the military jail at Guantanamo Bay is damaging US interests and vowed a renewed push to close it, as about 100 prisoners take part in a hunger strike there.

Condemning the prison as a legal "no man's land," Obama told a White House news conference that it was time Congress agreed to shut the ja il and said the military was trying to keep detainees alive in the face of the hunger strike.

"I continue to believe we have to close Guantanamo. I think it is critical for us to understand that Guantanamo is not necessary to keep America safe," he told reporters.

"It is expensive. It is inefficient. It hurts us in terms of our international standing. It lessens cooperation with our allies on counterterrorism efforts. It is a recruiting tool for extremists.

'It is expensive. It is inefficient. It needs to be closed.'

Barack Obama US President

"It needs to be closed," he said

The tough words were the most extensive the president has delivered on Guantanamo for months and reflected his frustration with Congress, which he blamed for blocking his efforts to shut the jail during his first term.

A spreading hunger strike among inmates, who are protesting against their indefinite detention without charges or trials, has put Guantanamo back in the headlines and placed Obama in a difficult position.

The US president said it

The US president said it was "not a surprise to me" that there were "problems" at Guantanamo.

Out of 166 inmates held at the remote US naval base in southeastern Cuba, 100 are on hunger strike, showed the latest tally from the Pentagon. Of those, 21 detainees are being fed through nasal tubes.

The military has sent extra medical staff to cope with the hunger strike, which is entering its 12th week.

"I don't want these individuals to die," Obama said.

Obama has long argued for prosecuting enemy combatants in civilian courts and transferring those cleared of wrongdoing to their home countries.

As a candidate in 2008, Obama pledged to close the jail and announced plans to



A US military guard at Guantanamo monitors detainees at a life skills class, in a file photo taken on March 30, 2010. Photo: AFP

close Guantanamo immediately after entering office in 2009.

But a majority of lawmakers, particularly Republicans, have insisted that the jail stay open, that the detainees are too dangerous to be held on the US mainland and that suspects should only be tried before military tribunals.

"The President faces bipartisan opposition to closing Guantanamo Bay's detention center because he has offered no alternative plan regarding the detainees there, nor a plan for future terrorist captures," Buck McKeon, the Republican chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, said in a statement.

Obama said he would try again to persuade Congress to find a way to close Guantanamo, which was set up by his predecessor, George W. Bush, to hold those captured in Afghanistan and elsewhere after the attacks of September 11, 2001.

Rights groups, which have long branded the prison as a legal "black hole," welcomed Obama's remarks but said he could do more.

The American Civil Liberties Union said Obama could use his authority now to transfer more than half the inmates out of Guantanamo. – *AFP*

WASHINGTON

US-Japan accord covers islands, says Hagel

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chance

ISLANDS at the centre of a territorial row between Japan and China are covered by a military protection accord between Washington and Tokyo, US Defence Secretary Chuck Hagel said Monday.

"The United States does not take a position on the ultimate sovereignty of the islands, but we do recognise they are under the administration of Japan and fall under our security treaty obligations," Hagel said at a news conference with his Japanese counterpart Itsunori Onodera.

Hagel's comments came amid rising tension over the uninhabited islands known in

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Japan as the Senkakus and in China as the Diaoyus.

On April 23, Japan's prime minister vowed to "expel by force" any Chinese landing on the islands after a flotilla sailed into the disputed waters in the East China Sea.

Calling the dispute a key regional security challenge, Hagel said it "must be resolved peacefully and cooperatively between the parties involved."

Washington "opposes any unilateral or coercive action that seeks to undermine Japan's administrative control," he said, in reference to the recent Chinese actions. – *AFP*

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Phone: 372416 Dated: 6th May, 2013

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WASHINGTON

Obama's red line dilemma

In August last year, US President Barack Obama warned the Syrian regime that using chemical weapons against civilians would cross a 'red line' that could trigger American intervention. It's a warning that has come back to haunt him, writes **Stephen Collinson**

"THE Buck Stops here," said the famous sign on Harry S Truman's desk, encapsulating the lonely dilemmas power presents to US presidents, one of which now confronts Barack Obama over Syria.

Obama is trapped in a conundrum, partly of his own making, after Syria apparently called his bluff by using chemical weapons in an escalation of an vicious civil war – and in the process, challenged a US "red line."

Unless he can find wiggle room, the president may have to reconcile the conflict between a need to prove his personal credibility with a desire to avoid being dragged into another Middle Eastern war.

Obama mused on the humbling demands on the modern president when he honoured George W. Bush at the opening of the George W. Bush Presidential Center in Dallas, Texas, on April 25.

"There are moments where you make mistakes. There are times where you wish you could turn back the clock," he said.

Obama might have been reflecting on the moment last August when, in the heat of his re-election bid, he warned President Bashar al-Assad that using or moving chemical weapons would change his "calculus" on Syria.

That comment came back to haunt him earlier this month, when news broke that US intelligence believes Syrian forces did use chemical weapons.

The size of the action, its human toll and whether it was designed as a deliberate test of Obama's limits or to draw America into a new quagmire were unclear

But the revelation sparked heat on

Obama to live up to his threats, creating a messy political problem, as calls mounted for him to arm anti-Assad rebels, pummel Syria with air power or establish a no-fly zone.

"The president did say that there's a red line, and once the United States lays out a red line, some action has to be taken," said Peter King, a congressman from New York on NBC's "Meet the Press."

Obama's predicament laid bare the risk in laying down "red lines" on key national security crises: sooner or later someone might cross them.

'It's no longer a question of just Syria. It has a lot to do with his personal credibility.'

> Aaron David Miller Former Middle East peace negotiator

It is for this reason Obama, unlike Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, is reluctant to pinpoint the moment when Washington might strike to thwart any Iranian breakout towards nuclear weapons.

Another problem with the Syria "red line," according to Republican Senator John McCain, is that it convinced Assad any atrocity short of using chemical weapons would not rouse Washington.

"The president drew a red line on

chemical weapons, thereby giving a green light to (Assad) to do anything short of that, including Scud missiles and helicopter gun ships and air attack strikes and mass executions," he told NBC.

Obama's actions on Syria will be closely watched – especially in Tehran.

"It's no longer a question of just Syria. It has a lot to do with his personal credibility," former Middle East peace negotiator Aaron David Miller told *AFP*.

"Everyone says no to the United States these days without cost or consequence. So how he comports himself with respect to Syria will be read, interpreted, by the Iranians and others with great significance."

His media team's linguistic contortions reveal the tricky ground Obama is on

Asked on April 29 to define the red line, spokesman Jay Carney refused to say whether a small scale use of chemical weapons would cross it.

The White House, wary of the kind of faulty intelligence that prefaced the Iraq war, wants more clarity on the alleged chemical attacks.

US history is pockmarked by unwise decisions driven by a desire to spare the blushes of a president – including the reluctance of Lyndon Johnson and Richard Nixon to look weak by retreating from Vietnam.

"It can't be that a president just makes the decision to use force – to send American troops into a war to protect his credibility," said Julian Zelizer, a Princeton University professor of history.

"We want him to make this decision based on a true evaluation on what is going on in Syria and when force is absolutely essential."



US President Barack Obama greets former president George W. Bush at the opening ceremony for the George W. Bush Presidential Center in Dallas, Texas, on April 25. The faulty intelligence that led George W. Bush to go to war against Iraq has made the White House extremely wary about claims that the Syrian regime has used chemical weapons against civilians in the country's civil war. Photo: AFP

While using chemical weapons against civilians in Syria would present Obama with a grave humanitarian decision, Washington is most concerned about what will happen to the weapons when Assad falls.

The fear that motivated the war in Iraq – that terror groups could get hold of weapons of mass destruction – could become reality and would likely

guarantee US military action. But Obama does not yet appear to

be at that point.

There were signs on April 29 he may try to leverage the alleged use of chemical arms to convince Russia to finally get tough with its ally, when he raised concern about the situation in a call with President Vladimir Putin.

- *AFP*

WASHINGTON

The US president's unfinished business

Unresolved domestic and foreign policy challenges and a divided Congress threaten Barack Obama's ability to achieve some key goals, says **Scott Wilson**

PRESIDENT Barack Obama's appearance before the media on April 30 highlighted how much his second and final term remains consumed by the unfinished business of his first.

From his policy toward Syria to health care legislation to his inability to close the prison at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, Obama faced many of the same questions from journalists that have defined his time in office.

He used long, sometimes defensive answers to portray himself as undaunted by the unresolved challenges, yet also limited in his ability to secure the changes he has sought for years because of his continuing confrontation with a divided Congress.

That self-assessment of his political power also is largely consistent with his message to the nation since Democrats lost control of the House in 2010. His domestic agenda has largely ground to a halt since then.

Now his window for progress in Congress is even smaller than it once was, and may likely close entirely by the 2014 midterm elections unless his party can retake control of both chambers. It was unclear on April 30 how he intends to revive his political prospects after setbacks on gun control and fiscal negotiations to avoid across-the-board spending cuts that

he acknowledged are undermining the economy.

"Rumours of my demise may be a little exaggerated at this point," Obama said during the news conference, in a phrase reminiscent of Bill Clinton's 1995 assertion of his own relevance after his party lost the House the previous year.

But in responding to a reporter's assertion that he appears powerless in dealing with Congress, Obama responded, "You seem to suggest that somehow, these folks over there have no responsibilities and that my job is to somehow get them to behave."

"That's their job," he said.

The news conference – Obama's third domestic one this calendar year – fell on the 100th day of what already has been a difficult final term.

Just last month, Obama lost his bid for stricter gun control following the December shooting in Newtown, Connecticut, which killed 20 children and six adults. Days after that Senate defeat, the first large-scale bombings in the post-September 11, 2001 era killed three and wounded more than 200 others near the finish line of the Boston Marathon, an attack allegedly carried out by a pair of young Muslims "self-radicalised" through anger over the American wars abroad.

Obama acknowledged on April 30 that preventing such attacks may be harder than defending against those directed by foreign terrorist organisations, especially in a way that protects American civil liberties.

Obama also faces a new challenge abroad, given the mounting evidence that Syria's government used chemical agents against the population.

Obama had warned previously that President Bashar al-Assad would cross a "red line" if he used such weapons. Now Obama is faced with how to respond at a time when, in his words "the tide of war is receding" after his departure from Iraq and withdrawal deadline in Afghanistan. So far he appears to be hoping to buy some time.

"What we now have is evidence that chemical weapons have been used inside of Syria, but we don't

'Even if we do everything perfectly, there will still be glitches and bumps.'

> Barack Obama US President

know how they were used, when they were used, who used them," Obama said.

Then, tacitly invoking the legacy of the Iraq war when US credibility suffered because the Bush administration's promised weapons of mass destruction never turned up, Obama told a war-weary nation, "If we end up rushing to judgment without hard, effective evidence, then we can find ourselves in the position where we can't mobilise the international community to support what we do."

Although public support for direct intervention in Syria is low, Obama faces the challenge of ensuring American credibility in how he proceeds.

But Obama offered few clues on April 30 to how he intends to proceed with any of the unfinished items on his agenda.

He pledged to re-engage Congress in his effort to close the Guantanamo military prison, where a prisoner hunger strike has highlighted again the legal ambiguities surrounding their detention. Obama has been working to close Guantanamo since the day after he took office and again he cited Congress as the chief obstacle.

"Congress determined that they would not let us close it and despite the fact that there are a number of the

folks who are currently in Guantanamo who the courts have said could be returned to their country of origin or potentially a third country," Obama said. "I'm going to go back at this."

His health-care law – the signature legislation of his presidency – also is a work in progress. Obama defended what is a complicated implementation process underway that will extend health care to the estimated 15 percent of the population that does not have it.

In assuring the public that the process is not nearly as messy as some members of Congress have suggested, Obama said anyone who has health insurance will likely see no further changes as the law takes full effect. He also warned of challenges ahead.

"Even if we do everything perfectly, there will still be glitches and bumps," Obama said. "But if we stay with it and we understand what our long-term objective is, which is making sure that in a country as wealthy as ours, nobody should go bankrupt if they get sick."

As Obama continues to try to turn his re-election into political power inside Washington, it appears "staying with it" is the core of his strategy in a still-divided capital, in counter-terrorism policy, and in his diplomacy in the tumultuous Middle East.

- The Washington Post



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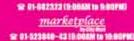


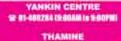
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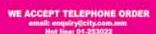
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PARIS

Tragedy triggers a backlash

The tragic collapse of a garment factory has focused attention on workplace safety standards in Bangladesh and put pressure on Western retailers to do more to improve them.

THE deadly collapse of a Bangladesh garment factory has piled pressure on Western fashion stores that churn out the season's hottest looks at cheap prices, many of which are sourced from sweatshops in poor countries.

The country's worst industrial disaster, which had left at least 400 dead as of May 1, came after deadly fires in other factories and years of concerns over the flouting of safety standards in the bargain-basement clothing industry.

Bustling high-street retailers are routinely accused of turning a blind eve and making a fortune off the backs of cheap labourers working in dangerous conditions.

A week after the April 24 disaster in a suburb of the capital, Dhaka, with hundreds still missing under the rubble, the backlash is growing against these brands.

Clothing retailers such as Britain's low-cost retailer Primark and Canada's Loblaw

have offered compensation to victims and their families, but activists have demanded they do more.

"International brands must take responsibility for what has happened there," said Laila Blanch from anti-poverty group War on Want, which has launched an online petition against high street brands Primark, Matalan and Mango.

"They outsourced the production to countries such as Bangladesh and China because of the lowest wages in the world," she said, accusing them of ignoring "very poor health and safety standards".

The organisation has demanded these brands sign the Bangladesh Fire and Building Safety Agreement.

"I've been in many factories and what I've seen is that for instance emergency exits are normally blocked with boxes, are blocked with rubbish from the factory," said Blanch.

"The windows of the factory... there are bars, so basically if there is a fire, workers can't escape from the windows as

Ineke Zeldenrust from Clean Clothes Campaign backed up these demands, saying brands' safety proposals in the past had been "insufficient".

"Workers need a structural solution, not a quick fix. The lack of action demonstrated by brands amounts to criminal negligence," Zeldenrust said.

Aid agency Oxfam welcomed the offer by Primark and Loblaw - who were both supplied from the collapsed Rana Plaza complex - to compensate victims.

"Other companies who had premises in the building should follow their example," Oxfam's Bangladesh country director Gareth Price Jones said in a statement.

Spanish label Mango said it had placed orders for sample items at the factory, while Italian group Benetton has also admitted it had products

A notice taped to a shop near the collapsed building appeals on April 30 for information about a missing garment worker. Western fashion retailers are under pressure to do more to raise safety standards in Bangladesh's textile sector. Pic: AFF

recently made in the building. Benjamin Martin of PR agency Publicis Consultants told AFP that these companies "can no longer feign surprise" after a November 2012 fire left 111 dead in a Bangladesh factory, which made clothes for the likes of US giant Wal-

"There is clearly a problem of transparency and traceability in the industry," said Julie Stoll of the French Fair Trade Platform, referring to apparent confusion among companies as to whether their suppliers were involved.

The country's US\$20-billion (15-billion-euro) garment industry is the world's second-biggest after China's, and Bangladeshi textile bosses pleaded with Western clothing giants last week to keep doing business with them.

Worried that Western firms could look elsewhere, manufacturers met representatives of at least 30 leading brand names such as Walmart, H&M and Gap on April 29 in a bid to assure them about safety standards.

The meeting ended with an announcement that the manufacturers and buyers had agreed to form a joint panel to come up with a firm safety action plan.

Shahidullah Azim, of the Bangladesh Garments Manufacturers and Exporters Association, said the brands were told "that we're taking action to prevent a repeat of such tragedies" and urged "not to cancel orders and shipments".

"We need their help - they are part of us," said Azim, whose organisation represents more than 4500 facto-

Jenefa Jabbar, the regional

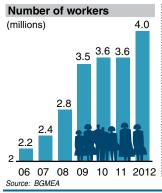
social responsibilities director of US clothing chain JC Penney, said retailers wanted to see "a top-down approach... to address the fire safety and building safety issues".

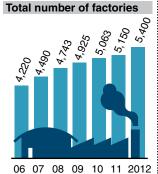
The industry accounts for 80 percent of the country's exports and more than 40pc of its industrial workforce.

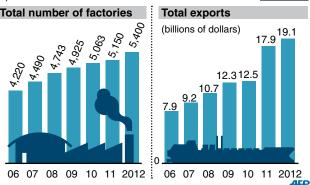
A typical textile worker earns less than \$40 a month. with most working about 10 hours a day, six days a week.

Bangladesh textiles industry

The Ready-Made Garments (RMG) sector







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in respect of: - "Compact Powder, Blush on, Eyeshadow, Lipstick, Shampoo, Soap, Talc Powder, Roll on Deodorant, Perfume, Nail Enamel"

Any fraudulent imitation or unauthorized use of the said trademarks or other infringements whatsoever will be dealt with according to law.

U Kyi Win Associates

for BETTER WAY (THAILAND) CO., LTD.,

P.O. Box No. 26, Yangon.

Phone: 372416 Dated: 6th May, 2013

BANGLADESH

A last survivor's valiant struggle

Garment worker Shahina Akter survived amid the rubble of the collapsed building for five days, only to die in a fire as she was being carried to safety.

WIDOW Shahina Akter's vain 110-hour struggle to survive in the collapsed Bangladesh factory block has made her one of the tragic public faces of the nation's worst industrial disaster.

Rescuers said the 30-yearold never abandoned hope of getting out alive so she could be reunited with her toddler son, clinging on despite the sweltering heat and surrounding stench of corpses trapped in their concrete tomb.

But her five-day resistance from the morning of April 24 to the evening of April 28 came to an end in flames when a worker using a mechanical cutter started a fire that engulfed the wreckage.

On a day of intolerable strain as the death toll continued to climb towards 400, many rescuers were left inconsolable as the last known survivor slipped from their grasp.

"I've never seen anyone so brave in my life," Abul Khayer told AFP, weeping, as he and other firefighters pulled her **Tve never seen** body from the pancaked rubble on April 29.

Akter's battle to live had gripped the nation which had been watching live television pictures as rescuers squeezed themselves into narrow tunnels and jagged concrete in a race against time to save her.

It was a tragic end to a story that began with Akter's migration from rural Bangladesh to a Dhaka suburb to work in a squalid, congested garmentmaking district.

Her journey - like that of so many other Bangladesh workers making garments for Western labels - was prompted by financial need - and usurious moneylenders.

"Our mother had a gallstone operation 20 years ago and we took a 5000 taka (US\$60) loan from the money lender. It became 70,000 taka with the huge interest. She and I had to migrate to repay it," her brother, Jahirul Islam, told AFP.

anyone so brave in my life.

Abul Khayer Firefighter

Akter, the fourth child of a landless farming family from a coastal district, started working when she was only 13 and she was "hard worker", he

"Some days she would work through the night," he recalled.

She earned a paltry 4200 taka (\$53) a month but with overtime she could make a couple of thousand more that she would send to her parents, he recounted.

"She also was a very beautiful woman - and the most stubborn," Islam said.

"She fell in love with another garment worker and married him without our consent. We heard he died in an accident, leaving her three month's pregnant," he

Islam said his sister's son became "the centre of her life" and she would pick him up after returning from the factory late in the evening.

"She told us that she wouldn't marry again. Her dream was to ensure a higher education for Robin. She dreamt of making him a doctor or an engineer," her brother said.

The boy has no idea what happened to his mother. "He plays all day long. But in the night he asks her aunt Jasmine, 'When will mother come?" Islam said.

Her heartbroken father, Motaleb Goldar, said the familv only learnt on the fourth day after the disaster that Akter was trapped alive under

"We prayed. But Allah took her to heaven," he said. - AFP

CONGRATULATIONS

We heartily congratulate

U Aung Ko Win

Chairman of the Kanbawza Bank Ltd.

For receiving the **State Excellence Award**

(First Prize among the entrepreneurs serving the highest tax payments to the State Budget's Revenue)

recognized as the highest taxpayer in Myanmar for FY 2011-2012 and for excellent service provided to the state in the areas of Religion,

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under the new government administration.

We wish him continued contribution to our society and country in coming years.

Board of Director

CB Bank

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Our heartiest congratulations to the KBZ Group of Companies for winning the award

"Best Corporate Governance in Myanmar for 2013"

conferred by "World Finance", a London based prestigious organization on 3rd April 2013.

We also wish for further success of the **KBZ Group of Companies** in future endeavours.

Board of Director

CB Bank



Make Walking Safe ဘေးကင်းစွာ လမ်းလျှောက်ပါ။



UN raps India's sex crime laws

A UN special envoy says sex crime laws passed in India since the horrific fatal gang-rape of a student last December are inadequate.

India's new sex crime laws do not go far enough to protect women or tackle gender inequality, the UN Special Rapporteur on violence against women said on May 1.

The legislation was passed following the fatal gang rape of a student on a Delhi bus in mid-December that sparked nationwide demonstrations over the lack of safety for women.

New measures passed by Indian lawmakers in March increased punishments for sex offenders to include the death penalty if a victim dies, and broadened the definition of sexual as-

But Rashida Manjoo, the UN special rapporteur on violence against women, said the laws were still not tough enough.

She told a news conference it was unfortunate that the opportunity to establish a substantive framework "to protect and prevent against all forms of violence against women, was lost".

Her comments echoed those of other Indian women's activists who praised the intent of the legislation but said it still had huge holes.

Campaigners are unhappy about lawmakers' refusal to criminalise marital rape or increase the punishment for acid attacks on women from a minimum seven-year jail term.

The UN official, who toured sev-

eral Indian states to obtain first-hand reports about violence against women, said she would release her findings to the world body next year.

She said she had heard on her 10day visit about "sexual violence, domestic violence, cast-based discrimination and violence, dowry related deaths, crimes in the name of honour" and other offences.

She quoted one person on her trip as describing violence against women as spanning the "life cycle from womb to the tomb".

Her trip came in the wake of a call in December by UN rights chief Navi Pillay for India to help rid itself of the "scourge" of rape after the

The number of crimes against women reported in India in 2011.

23-year-old bus victim died of injuries inflicted by six drunken men.

A total of 228,650 incidents of crime against women were reported in India during 2011 as compared to 213,585 the previous year, show the latest figures of the government's National Crime Records Bureau.

Manjoo said women belonging to minority Muslim and Christian communities are also subjected to "indiscriminate attacks" during religious rioting in India.

"This issue is of particular concern to many as the wounds of the past are still fresh for women who were beaten, stripped naked, burnt, raped and killed because of their religious identity in the Gujarat riots of 2002," she said.

The anti-Muslim riots in the western state left more than 2000 mainly Muslim people dead in an orgy of violence and arson, according to rights groups. The Gujarat government puts the death toll at about 1000. - AFP

BRIEFS

North Korea sentences US citizen to 15 years' jail

North Korea said on May 2 it had sentenced a Korean-American tour operator to 15 years' hard labour for "hostile acts", stoking tensions with the United States, which had pleaded for his

Pae Jun-Ho, known in the United States as Kenneth Bae, was arrested in November as he entered the northeastern port city of Rason. He had been accused of trying to "topple the DPRK" (North Korea).

Seoul-based activist Do Hee-Yoon said he suspected Bae was arrested because he had taken photographs of emaciated children in North Korea as part of efforts to appeal for more outside aid.

Sydney Australia uncovers **SKorean spy ring**

A South Korean spy ring has been uncovered in Australia trying to cultivate public servants to obtain trade secrets, a report said on May 2.

The Sydney Morning Herald said previously suppressed information revealed that South Korea's National Intelligence Service had sought "to obtain sensitive information" on trade negotiations between Canberra and Seoul. Foreign Minister Bob Carr declined to comment on the case, but said South Korea was one of Australia's largest export markets and trading partners and relations were unlikely to be hurt.

Dhaka

War crimes court indicts British Muslim leader

Bangladesh's war crimes court on May 2 indicted a Bangladesh-born British Muslim leader for his alleged role in the murder of top intellectuals during the country's 1971 liberation war.

'The court has taken into cognizance the charges of war crimes against Chowdhury Mueen-Uddin and issued a warrant to arrest him," International Crimes Tribunal registrar Nasiruddin Mahmud told AFP.

Mueen-Uddin has held senior positions in a host of Islamic organisations in Britain and was involved in the setting up of the Muslim Council of Britain, according to his website.

Surabaya

Dancing policewomen keep protesters happy

A group of policewomen took an unusual approach to crowd control at a May Day protest in Indonesia on May 1, breaking into a performance of "Gangnam Style" to keep demonstrators happy.

Thousands of protesters in the city of Surabaya in eastern Java cheered with excitement as around 80 female officers did the signature horse-riding dance from South Korean rapper Psy's global

"We'd been practising for three days and I think it really helped keep everyone calm and happy," said senior policewoman Elly Wahyuningtyas. – AFP



IN PICTURES

in an image taken on April 27 and released on May 1. A new account of a brawl on Mount Everest which emerged on May 1 said one of the foreign climbers involved had sworn at a group of Nepalese guides and challenged them to a fight. Famed climbers Ueli Steck of Switzerland and Simone Moro of Italy, who were being accompanied by Griffith, were involved in the April 27 incident, which has shocked the mountaineering community. Photo: AFP/Jonathan Griffith

Farming threatens region's remaining forests, warns WWF

Demand for farmland may strip the Greater Mekong region of a third of its remaining forest cover during the next two decades without swift government action, a leading conservation group warned on May 2.

Forests are being cleared for commodities such as rubber and rice while illegal logging is decimating many protected zones, WWF said in a report, adding a contentious dam on Mekong river will deepen already severe ecosystem damage.

"The Greater Mekong is at a crossroads," said Peter Cutter of the WFF, adding Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar lost between 22-24 percent of their forests from 1973 - the first

point of available data - to 2009. while 43pc of woodland was stripped from Thailand and Vietnam.

"One path leads to further declines in biodiversity and livelihoods... but if natural resources are managed responsibly, this region can pursue a course that will secure a healthy and prosperous future for

Myanmar, a nation expected to undergo rapid economic growth after the end of junta rule, is on a "deforestation front" - especially in its border areas - as are the southern Mekong sections of Vietnam and Cambodia, the study found.

The reform-minded government

has banned the export of logs from next year in a bid to tackle rampant illegal logging of its precious woods.

The WWF said large undisrupted areas of "core forest" across the region have also been fragmented by plantations and rapid urbanisation. while swathes of mangroves have been converted into rice paddy and for shrimp farms.

If deforestation continues, the report warned that 34pc of remaining woodlands "will be lost and increasingly fragmented" by 2030 with only 14pc of core forest left, destroying the habitat of wildlife including tigers and elephants.

The Xayaburi dam in Laos was

'The Greater Mekong is at a crossroads.

Peter Cutter

also highlighted as a "key threat" to the Mekong river ecosytem, saying it will have "devastating consequences" for 60 million people - blocking fish and vital sediment from reaching the lower areas of the water system.

The US\$3.8 billion hydroelectric project, which is due to be completed in about five years, has sharply divided the four Mekong nations -Laos, Vietnam, Cambodia and Thai-

Impoverished Laos hopes the dam will help it become "the battery of Southeast Asia" and plans to sell most of the electricity to Thailand. but Cambodia and Vietnam say it could ruin their farming and fishing

The report offers glimmers of hope saying Thailand has made great strides to protecting its forests - the kingdom has an extensive network of national parks - while the other nations have all backed policies to prevent deforestation. -AFP

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Fierce wind and blinding snow: climbing to Everest base camp



zonpann08@gmail.com

HERE is no limit to what people can achieve when they set their minds to it. This point was proven by two men from Myanmar who last month hiked to Mount Everest base camp in Nepal, braving a fierce blizzard along the way, despite having no experience with high-altitude trekking.

Ko Mo Tun Kyaw and Ko Thike Tun started walking from the Khumbu region of northeastern Nepal on April 1 and reached the 5356-metre-high (17,675 feet) Everest base camp on April 12.

"Neither of us had experience scaling high mountains, except for Mount Kyaikhtiyo when we were young and 4095-metre Mount Kinabalu in Malaysia in 2011," said Ko Mo Tun Kyaw.

"We both love adventure. After we reached Mt Kinabalu on Borneo island two years ago, we lost our hearts to mountaineering."

He said that after the Kinabalu climb, they started making the acquaintance of a growing circle of mountain climbers.

"We asked some of them which mountain would be best for an amateur who wants to conquer only one mountain in his life. It had to be somewhere beautiful, reachable without technical complexities, and financially affordable. Many of them suggested Everest base camp," he

Ko Mo Tun Kyaw said that when he heard the words "Mount Everest",

the first image that came to mind was a beautiful mountain capped with snow.

"But there is another side of the coin: The trip involves dangers like heavy snowfall, biting wind, avalanches and insufficient oxygen at high altitude," he said.

Ko Mo Tun Kyaw said that when they arrived in Nepal, locals told them they had never heard of anyone from Myanmar trekking to Everest base camp.

"Once we heard that, we were very excited to reach the camp and set up a Myanmar flag," he said.

"When we reached the base camp, we saw national flags from England and many other countries, but there were no Myanmar flags. Not everyone who reaches the base camp necessarily sets up a flag, so I don't know how many Myanmar climbers might have been there before, but I think the number would be very few."

The celebration at the base camp was short-lived as it was interrupted by the arrival of an unseasonal snowstorm. "Soon after we set up the flag at the base camp, a snowstorm blew through. The snow fell heavily and the wind blew bitingly," said Ko Thike Tun, who works as a photographer for *The Myanmar Times*.

"It was already 5pm, and our guide figured our chances of trekking back down the mountain were slim. It would have been impossible to fight our way through a raging storm."

He said the guide, who had been leading treks in Nepal for more than 18 years, suggested the trekkers request emergency evacuation.

"We agreed to his advice, and we kept calling for emergency evacuation by helicopter. Unfortunately, visibility was too low to fly, and they said they would try to rescue us the following morning."

With no prospects for immedi-

With no prospects for immediate rescue, the trekkers turned their attention to finding a place to sleep for the night.

"There was an expedition camp on a nearby hill that we could see from the base camp. We walked there and sheltered from the severe storm in the kitchen," Ko Thike Tun said.

The helicopter arrived from Kathmandu early the next morning and evacuated them from the camp.

"We wouldn't have survived if we had not taken refuge in the kitchen. Fortunately, the cook at the expedition camp was a friend of our guide and he allowed us to stay there for a

'Not everyone who reaches the base camp necessarily sets up a flag, so I don't know how many Myanmar climbers might have been there before, but I think the number would be very few.'

Ko Mo Tun Kyaw

amateur mountain climber

night," said Ko Mo Tun Kyaw. "Later, the guide told us there was very little possibility of snowstorms occurring April. It was an exceptional occurrence."

He said trekking to the Everest base camp taught him to be more patient, humble and determined.

"When we started to climb, we didn't worry what would happen on day 10 or 11. We just considered how to overcome today," he said.

"We encountered harsh conditions, like walking on ice-covered stones. At that time, we didn't make ourselves feel depressed by looking up the mountaintop, which was still far away. Instead we focused on the next turn in the trail. After we passed that turn, we focused on the next turn."

He said other climbers looked down on them because they climbed very slowly, but some of them had to turn back later because of injuries.

"They said we Asians are very slow. Later I saw some of them being taken away by helicopter because they couldn't finish the climb," Mo Tun Kyaw said.



MUMBAI

BY RACHEL O'BRIEN

NE hundred years after the screening of a black-and-white silent film, India's brash, song-and-dance-laden Bollywood film industry celebrates its centenary later this week

The milestone will be marked with the release of *Bombay Talkies*, made up of short commemorative films by four leading directors, while India will be honoured as "guest country" at next month's Cannes festival.

Exhibitions in the capital New Delhi are showcasing a century of cinema, including onscreen kissing scenes that originally fell foul of the

It is also a time for reflection on how the industry has evolved, from its early screen adaptations of Hindu mythology to the garish romantic escapism of modern blockbusters.

Commercially, cinema is thriving: India produced almost 1500 movies last year and the industry is expected to grow from US\$2 billion to \$3.6 billion in the next five years, according to consultancy KPMG.

Leading the way is Hindi-language Bollywood, which took the "B" from its home in Bombay and won the hearts of movie-mad Indians.

But old-timers complain that it has become superficial, neglecting to deal with pressing social concerns of the age

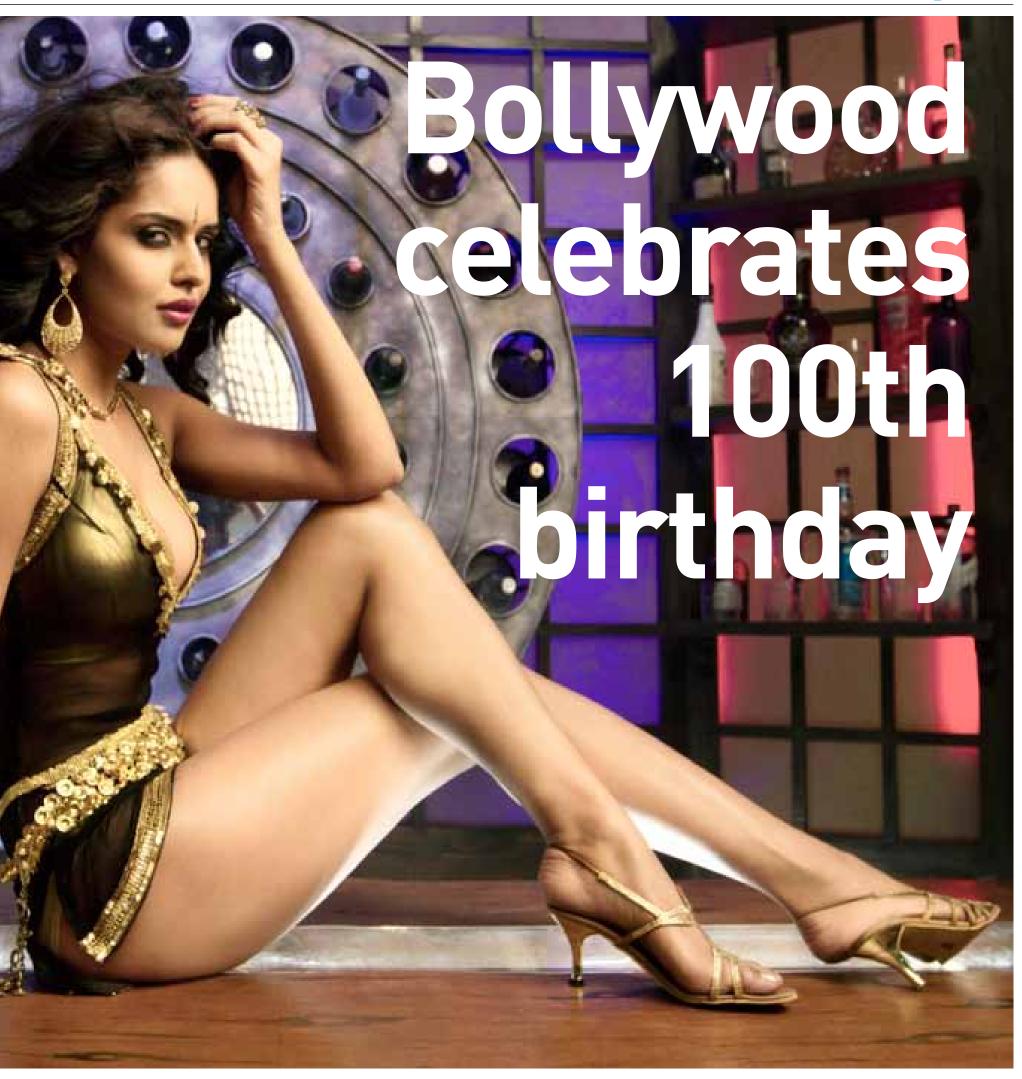
"There's a dumbing down that has taken place in the content. I think we are suffering from what is called the narrative crisis," said veteran director and producer Mahesh Bhatt.

He contrasts modern filmmakers with Dhundiraj Govind Phalke, known as the "father of Indian cinema", who



Ko Mo Tun Kyaw and Ko Thike Tun display the Myanmar flag at Mount Everest base camp in Nepal on April 12. Photo: Boothee

www.mmtimes.com the pulse 47



brought the first all-Indian feature film to the silver screen in Bombay (now Mumbai) on May 3, 1913.

A tale from the Hindu epic Mahabharata, *Raja Harishchandra* quickly became a hit despite its female characters being played by men – women acting was still widely frowned upon.

Phalke made more than 100 films until his silent style fell victim to "talkies" in the 1930s, but the advent of sound technology allowed India cinema to flourish.

Bollywood plotlines today can involve stars breaking into song, often in picturesque far-flung locations, apropos of nothing – a style that may bemuse a Western audience, but one that helps to set Indian cinema apart.

"If it was exactly the same thing as Hollywood, Hollywood would have run us over. We don't have that money," said film critic Anupama Chopra. For her and many others the "golden age" of cinema was the 1950s, when movie greats emerged such as Satyajit Ray, India's most renowned filmmaker, who hailed from the alternative film hub of West Bengal.

It was the era of newly independ-

of the "masala" movie – a family entertainer that typically mixed up romance and action, songs and melodrama, a comedy touch and a happy ending.

Parallel Cinema continued to focus on realism, with films such as

'There's a dumbing down that has taken place in the content. I think we are suffering from what is called the narrative crisis.'

Mahesh Bhatt

Bollywood director

ent India, searching for an identity and producing films such as Mehboob Khan's 1957 hit *Mother India*, which combined social concerns with popular appeal.

The 1970s and 1980s saw a growing commercialism with the rise

Mahesh Bhatt's *Arth* (Meaning) in 1982, a gritty tale of an extramarital affair that presented strong female characters.

It was a path-breaker in a decade described as the "dark ages" of Hindi cinema, which struggled with the advent of colour television, rampant piracy and dependence on the Mumbai underworld for funding.

Things improved after India's economy opened up in the early 1990s, and again a decade later when filmmaking won formal "industry" status. Both steps encouraged foreign firms, such as Fox and Disney, to invest in Bollywood.

But subsequent leaps in technology have not been matched by advances in storytelling, say critics, who lament the formulaic plots, passive roles for women and the copying of Hollywood.

Bollywood's escapist fantasies have long held mass appeal because "there's enough realism in the common man's life", said Bhatt.

But with ever more TV shows, the internet and easily available global films, such movies may no longer meet the demands of the educated middle-class.

This expanding group "wants to see something better than trash which caters to the common man who drives auto-rickshaws. They want to see a different kind of cinema", said veteran actor Rishi Kapoor.

A new crop of experimental filmmakers has started to appear, such as "Hindi indie" darling Anurag Kashyap who is a fixture on the global film festival circuit.

Trade analysts say the growth in multiplex cinemas has also encouraged mainstream films to diversify: a surprise hit last year was *Vicky Donor*, a romcom about sperm donation.

Raj Nidimoru is co-director of upcoming *Go Goa Gone*, one of India's first zombie films, and he believes the move away from staple Bollywood is only just beginning.

"This is just a ripple right now, it's going to become a wave." – AFP

48 the pulse local THE MYANMAR TIMES MAY 6 - 12, 2013

Myanmar's story told through images

Thirty photographers from around the world, including nine from Myanmar, spent last week capturing images that will create of a nation emerging from decades of oppression.

a portrait

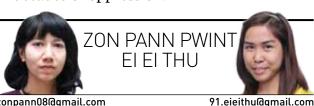
WENTY-ONE experienced photographers from around the world and nine from Myanmar travelled throughout the country last week to capture the lives of all classes of society in the midst of the changing political landscape.

The project, titled "Seven Days in Myanmar", kicked off on April 27 and ended May 4.

The project was organised by Editions Didier Millet publishing house, which selected the 30 participating photographers and will use the resulting images to publish a book ${\it titled} \ {\it Seven Days in Myanmar}$

'I like to be with people and generally I like to photograph the lighter side of life, like celebrations.'

Catherine Karnow American photographer



zonpann08@gmail.com

in December.

One participating photographer, Catherine Karnow from the United States, said it was a "great honour" to be in

Ms Karnow, whose work has appeared in National Geographic and other top publications, came to Myanmar for the first time in October 2011. Soon after she arrived in the country, she fell in love with Yangon.

"I am very excited and happy to be here again because I love this country," she told The Myanmar Times at Chatrium Hotel in Yangon on April 27, following a press conference that launched the project.

"I am going to photograph high society, including film stars, television stations, movie sets, food and painters in Yangon. I like to stay in the town because I want to photograph the city, I like all the energy and excitement of the city," she

Ms Karnow started the project on April 27 by photographing the wedding of famous singer Rebecca Win.

"Even though I am interested in other places and area so the other photograand cover different themes,"

"I am not a news photographer. I like to be with people and generally I like to photograph the lighter side of life, like celebrations. I like to choose issues that make people happy, such as weddings, parties and children's birthday

Local photographer Min Zayar also chose Yangon, to cover youth culture, the daily lives of people in the streets and healthcare in the city.

"I'm interested in other places like Kachin State where other photographers would like to go, but I deferred

other subjects, it is best that I have to choose the particular phers can go to different areas she said.

> to others. Besides, I'm also chose Yangon," he said. Min Zayar said he planned



The nine local participants in the "Seven Days in Myanmar" project pose at the kickoff press conference at Chatrium Hotel in Yangon on April 27. Photo: Aung Htay Hlaing

interested in the role of youth and healthcare in the city, so I

to shoot images of graffiti and street artists, music bands, pop culture, and health clinics and hospitals.

French wildlife photographer Alain Compost said he was very excited to take photos in Myanmar, which he had never visited before.

"I'm very exciting to come

to Myanmar for the first time. I have focused on wildlife in Southeast Asia for 30 years and this country is part of the region, so I am very interested," Mr Compost told The Myanmar Times.

He was assigned to shoot in the Ayeyarwady delta, where he expected to see birds and other animals in wildlife reserves.

"I don't have much information about the delta and it's difficult for me to know what

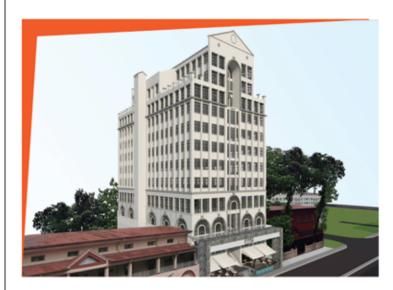
I'll be able to photograph. Because I have specialised in wildlife, I will try see what kinds of wildlife I might discover after I learn the nature of delta, then I will try to take pictures," he said.

Raghu Rai from India said he planned to photograph the Indian communities in Myanmar.

"I will try to capture how Hinduism and Buddhism intermingle to create harmony. It is a complex subject," he said.

Gold Panning In Myanmar's Retail Market

THE MYANMAR IS SEEN AS THE LAST GREAT POTENTIAL MARKET IN THE SOUTHEAST ASIA. MANY GIANTS WANT TO SET A DEEP ROOT IN THE MARKET, ESPECIALLY THE RETAIL SECTOR WHOSE CONSUMERS NEED MODERN TRADING





Parkson FMI - Opening - 11.05.2013

The 2013 Outlook for the retail and consumer products sector in Asia released by PwC and the Economist Intelligence Unit says that reflecting the global economic slowdown, Asia Pacific's retail sales growth volume is forecast to grow at 6% in 2013. Asia remains a top destination for global retail chains. Private labels have new opportunities to increase their market share that has been slow growing. Asia's fashion and apparel market will continue to lead global growth. Rising incomes continue to drive growth of fast-moving consumer goods companies.

GREAT POTENTIAL OF MYANMAR

With economic and political reforms now sweeping Myanmar, the world is turning its eyes on the former reclusive nation and seeing vast potential for business. Asia's so-called last frontier is brimming with promise, and investors from across industries are eager to clinch the first ride to the boom before it quickly fades into the sunset.

A study published by Ipsos Thailand in November 2012 showed 90% of retail establishments in Myanmar are still considered "traditional trade," occupying an average of 35-45 square metros, with SKUs of 550 to 1,100. The 10% that are classified as "modern" are mostly supermarkets. Clearly, this is the great potential for the development of the country's retail sector. It's a supply driven commodity market, dependent largely on traditional trade models that account for 90% of the markets. Emergence of hypermarkets in Yangon and Naypyidaw are the first signs of the shifting dynamics in retail sector in Myanmar. Rising aspirations of over 50 million people and the vast opportunities that abound in Myanmar has attracted global investors to this yet untapped and complex market.

GIANTS COME, MODERN MARKET OPENS

Companies like Japanese convenience store chain 7-Eleven, mall developer Aeon (which owns the Jusco hypermarket chain amongst other retail brands) and Asia's department store giant Parkson had all announced plans to set foot in the market prior to the new rules being passed.

Invested by Myanmar Parkson Co., Ltd – the joint venture between Parkson Retail Asia Limited - the leading Asia department store chain, Yoma and FMI - well-established players in the real estate in Myanmar, Parkson FMI Yangon will be opening to the public earlythis month. Located at a prime address in the heart of business and shopping Yangon district, it will be the first modern international department store in Myanmar featuring a totally new shopping style for consumers in Myanmar.

Mr. Tham Tuck Choy, Managing Director of Myanmar Parkson Co., Ltd. commented: "We are glad to co-operate with Yoma and FMI to bring the first Parkson department store to Yangon and excited to bring many famous global brands into Myanmar for the first time with guaranteed affordable prices. This really encourages us to commit in long-term investment in this highly potential market in order to bring local and foreign customers international shopping and entertainment experiences."

Together with Parkson, many international brands have accompanied to Myanmar for the first time, serving the demand for high-end & quality goods for the style lovers such as Lancôme, Estee Lauder, Clinique, Shiseido, Kosé, Coach, Dolce &Gabbana, Gucci, Lacoste, Hugo Boss, Escada, Tommy Hilfiger (fragrances), Springfield, Puma, Triumph, Van Heusen Besides the world's famous brands, Parkson also brings the new lifestyle, beauty and fashion trend to diversify the living standard in Myanmar.

Over the past 26 years, Parksonhas built an unrivalled reputation as Asia's leading department store. Today, Parkson operate 126 stores across 66 cities in Malaysia, China, Vietnam, Indonesia and Sri Lanka.

Mandalay FM goes live

MANDALAY FM radio station celebrated its fifth anniversary on May 1 by launching a twohour live program titled "Mingalar Nya Nay Khin" (Good Evening), which airs Monday to Friday from 4pm to 6pm.

The show is produced in cooperation with Swedish Radio, which trained local staff and provided technical support to Mandalay FM.

Hla Yin, a manager at Mandalay FM, said the station has produced one-off live broadcasts in the past - including Thingyan programs, the Myanmar Academy Awards and football matches - but "Mingalar Nya Nay Khin" will provide a different experience.

"We conducted a survey of our listeners and we created this program according to their interests," Hla Yin said at a press conference on May 1.

"The audience was bored with the 20-minute talk shows we had broadcast in the past. With this new program, people will be able to listen to five topics in two hours, along with good songs and a new presentation style."

The show includes daily segments on current affairs, a women's panel and traffic reports, the latter updated every 30 minutes.

"The traffic report will be a test because we don't know how useful it will be for our listeners. By the time they reach the places we are talking about, the traffic situation might have changed," U Kyaw Win said. "We'll listen to feedback from our listeners to decide whether to continue."

Mandalay FM started broadcasting in Yangon in April 2008 at 87.9 MHz. -Nuam Bawi and Ei Ei Thu

Mother's Day Dinch Brunch or Dinner



IANGON

Sunday May 12th

"Club Lounge" for Sky Brunch

"Dufu - Chinese Restaurant" serves a Set Menu with a Surprise

"Orzo - Simply Italian" is presenting Brunch and

Dinner at the "Riviera"

"The Lobby" will serve at Afternoon

"Dorchester" Style High Tea with the Sounds of the

"Orchestra of the Conservatory of Music"

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50 the pulse reviews THE MYANMAR TIMES MAY 6 - 12, 2013

A potent reminder of the bad old days



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EN years ago one of the most common book recommendations for new arrivals in Myanmar was The Trouser People by Andrew Marshall. The book's relentless attack on the ruling military junta, and its subsequent suppression by authorities, ensured that it was also highly sought-after by local readers.

LONG

I did my own small part to meet this demand by bringing along three copies of the book when I moved to Yangon in 2003 and making them available to any Myanmar friends who wanted to read them. I also made a point of using Marshall's writings in a reading group I ran for local journalists.

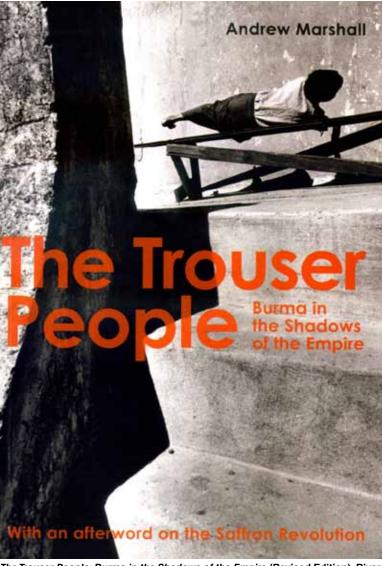
Over the next few years the book became increasingly difficult to find, and in 2008 it was supplanted by Thant Myint-U's River of Lost Footsteps as a favourite among newcomers to Myanmar.

But the two books are very different, with River providing a more complete historical overview of the country, but falling flat as a travelogue. Marshall is far more entertaining, and his book is based on outstanding firsthand observations collected during travels around the country, mixed with careful research focusing on very specific and colourful aspects of Myanmar's past.

Last year $\it The\ Trouser\ People$ the title is derived from the term used by longyi-clad locals to refer to white colonialists - once again became easy to find on Bangkok bookshelves, with the release of a revised edition that includes a new chapter on Marshall's experiences during the 2007 pro-democracy demonstrations in Yangon.

Historically, the book focuses on British adventurer George Scott's forays into Burma in the late 19th century. Aside from being credited with introducing football to the country, he was tasked by the colonial administration with establishing British rule in the jungle-choked wilds of the

Scott was a flamboyant, largerthan-life character who often waded into dangerous situations and blustered his way out the other side unscathed. He was a complex personality: an imperialist who "pacified" the Shan but who was also sympathetic to the various cultures he encountered along the way. He wrote a well-known book about tra-



The Trouser People: Burma in the Shadows of the Empire (Revised Edition), River Books, 2012.

ditional Burmese lifestyles called The Burman, as well as the authoritative Gazetteer of Upper Burma and the Shan States.

The excerpts from Scott's newspaper dispatches and personal diaries make for evocative reading. On the effects of the British imposing their rule on Mandalay in the 1880s, he wrote: "The pigs have all been eaten up and the pariah dogs poisoned by municipal order; A, B and C roads testify to the unromantic stolidity of the Military Intelligence Department; electric trams make it easier for the Burman to move to the suburbs and leave the town to the hustling foreigner. There are no agreeable scallywags. The Palace, instead of being tawdrily magnificent, smells horribly of bats."

Marshall is likewise no slouch when it comes to describing his travels through Myanmar in pursuit of Scott's ghost. His writing is pointed and humourous, as with this description of a government ferry plying

the Ayeyarwady River: "Standing on a spur of sand, where a man was lovingly washing his bicycle, I got my first real view of the ship. It was not a pretty sight. It was a Japanese vessel with an English engine, flat-bellied, snub-nosed and weeping with rust. I'd seen better-looking boats 120 feet beneath the ocean with an air canister on my back."

Marshall also pulls no punches when it comes to his view of military rule, which was imposed in 1962 and, to paraphrase the author, resulted in the replacement of history with propaganda.

In one section he details the abuses of the junta's vicious Four Cuts campaign, which was aimed at cutting off supplies of food, funds, intelligence and recruits to the Shan State Army: "What it amounted to in practice was a systematic campaign of terror against a civilian population, in which mass killings, gang rape and torture by Burmese troops were routine."

Readers might question the relevance of rehashing the "bad old days" of malevolent junta rule. But with riot police burning Buddhist monks at Letpadaung, authorities doing little to quell rioting between Buddhists and Muslims, and reports of sketchy army tactics filtering out of war-torn areas of Kachin and Shan states, these past atrocities are well worth remembering.

Older Myanmar friends tell me of a time when the people respected the Tatmadaw, as the country's armed forces are known. But then 1988 happened: In the midst of crackdowns against the pro-democracy

In the midst of crackdowns against the pro-democracy movement, protestors expected the Tatmadaw to rescue them from the brutality of the riot police. Instead, the soldiers betrayed the trust of the citizens they were meant to protect, and shot them dead in the streets.

movement, protestors expected the Tatmadaw to rescue them from the brutality of the riot police. Instead, the soldiers betrayed the trust of the citizens they were meant to protect, and shot them dead in the streets.

A repeat performance in September 2007 — during which, among other unmeritorious acts, soldiers assaulted Buddhist monks in their own monasteries - further soured the public's view of the armed forces.

For me, the new chapter in *The* $Trouser\ People\ detailing\ the\ events$ of 2007 is particularly fascinating. In this case, I can confirm the veracity of Marshall's account because I witnessed some of these events myself including the September 27 attack on protestors at Sule Pagoda. State media later said demonstrators "mobbed the security forces, throwing stones and sticks at them, using catapults and swords". But what I saw were protestors sitting on the ground and praying when security forces swooped in and started killing.

The absurd disconnect between the actual events and the junta's fantasy version might have been humorous had the crackdown that day not resulted in the deaths of at least nine people, including Japanese videographer Kenji Nagai, who was shot point-blank by a sandal-wearing soldier of the Myanmar army.

With this bleak track record hanging over their heads, the burden is on Myanmar's "security forces" to prove that they really are dedicated to taking courageous steps towards positive change, and that they are now working in accord with the best interests of the people of Myanmar, rather than standing by and waiting for orders to once again brutalise the populace for the benefit of the powerful few.



described by state media as having "mobbed the security forces, throwing stones and sticks at them, using catapults and swords". Photo: Douglas Long

WEEKLY PREDICTIONS

MAY 6 TO 12

AQUARIUS

Knowing how to get along with people and contribute to social welfare will provide the framework for your success. Pay more attention to information provided to you, and use your wisdom to pick the relevant points out of any communications, and then apply this new data toward achieving your profession goals.

PISCES

Contemplate deep questions with faith and confidence, and your subconscious will take over and answer for you. The principle reason for your weakness is your inability to understand your elders. Allow your imagination to gain the day and guide your actions. You cannot understand love that comes from out of the blue.

ARIES

Listen to the changing tones, cadences

and moods in the voices of the people you meet every day. Activity without direction is like a blind man burdened by many actions Your sweet tongue and natural charisma will supply the power you need to open the heart of the one you desire. Allow your heart to become an echo chamber, to better allow you to live in a state of harmony.

All you have to do is open your mental eyes and behold the treasure house of harmony within yourself. Nothing outside yourself is going to make you happy — you must work to make yourself happy. To achieve your dreams you must be focused, disciplined. persevering, caring, worthy, excited, enthusiastic and passionate. Life is short. Live it

Empathy is the heart and soul of giving. Don't allow pessimistic influences to force you to change your values, especially those that drive you to help others in need. Spending time with a new circle of friends

could lead to romance. Know that life requires purification with a smile.

Be aware of how your lifestyle affects your environment and adjust it accordingly to reduce any negative impact on the social community. Take charge of management matters with the aim of maintaining a good balance in the long term. Learn how to use periods of change as opportunities to improve your professional prospects.

Find ways to show respect for others and work out differences from the angle of quality. Matters taking only a few minutes at a time can add up to a big difference on a cumulative basis. Be wary of colourful advice and communication, which can act as a kind of powerful delusion. Your search for love will test your endurance and emotional attachment.

Try to view each moment as a learning op-

portunity, and you might find a way to apply these lessons toward finding a better path in The most important principle of time life. An old friend's suggestion will encourage you to fulfill your desires in love, life and family relationships. What seems nasty, painful and evil can become a source of beauty, joy and strength if faced with an open mind.

You will find yourself in a peaceful atmosphere of good fortune, where it's often better to live in silence. Develop a sense of working for the cause that you feel is right. What is essential in right thinking is to program the negative onto a positive. Check your current position and organise yourself to prevent your heart from getting stupid.

Enrich your life with understanding, and your heart will be happy. The less you say, the better you will be able to bring your knowledge and experience to bear. Your social contribution will bear fruit as gains in social power and position in social rela-

management is concentration, which you must practice willingly. Walk continually toward your problematic ground and decide to play a simple game with your creative talents. Take time to solve the interpersonal conflicts that disturb you most. Learning to suffer for love is one of the great qualities of the human race.

CAPRICORN

The key is to manage your fears by confronting the very things that frighten you the most. A sense of perspective is essential to solve any problem of a different colour. Your actions and deeds should make more waves than words in

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If the fiesta is in your mouth, invite the shredded chicken!

Phyo cuts through culture to reveal life's true taste. **Phyo Zar Thwin**

THIS week I am continuing my South of the Border theme with Mexicanstyle shredded chicken with green peppers. It is easy to make and highly recommended for dazzling the taste buds.

I usually cook two portions: one for immediate use, and one for the freezer. On a busy day, the frozen dish can become a quick and easy lunch or dinner. I also retain a little bit of watery gravy for the frozen dish — it's easy to reheat and the meat is soaked in its flavour.

I make a few variations of this recipe, including mixing in red kidney beans or green beans.

MEXICAN SSHREDDED CHICKEN NGREDIENTS (SERVES 4)

- 2 skinless chicken breasts
- (450-500g) 1 teaspoon of chili powder
- 1 teaspoon of paprika ½ teaspoon of salt
- 2 tablespoons of vegetable oil
- or olive oil 6 tomatoes (boiled and peeled)
- 2 chopped green peppers
- 3 cloves of garlic (crushed)
- 34 cup of chicken stock
- 2 onions (roughly chopped)
- ½ large lime

PREPARATION Cut the chic

Cut the chicken breasts into strips and marinate with salt, pepper, chili powder and paprika for at least 30 minutes

Boil the tomatoes and peel the skin off. Then chop them roughly.

Heat the oil in a wok or frying pan and sear the chicken for 3 minutes, or until it changes to a golden colour. Add the roughly chopped

onions into the pan and fry for 2 more minutes.

When the onions become clear, add the crushed garlic and fry until the aroma is released.

Add the chopped tomatoes and green peppers and stir well. Add the chicken stock and bring to boil, then turn the heat down, cover the pan with a lid and simmer for 30 minutes.

When the chicken becomes soft enough, shred it in the pan with a wooden spoon. Remove the lid and turn the heat up to reduce the stock. Be careful during this stage because the liquid will evaporate quickly — you need to stir frequently and make sure the chicken does not burn on the bottom.

When most of the liquid has evaporated, turn off the heat and squeeze the lime over the chicken. Serve with steamed rice, tortillas or naan.

RED BEAN SALAD VERSION INGREDIENTS (SERVES 4)

- 1 cup of *pae ya pwa* beans (uncooked)
- 1 cup of coriander (picked leaves) 1 onion (finely chopped)
- 3-4 green chilies (finely sliced) 200g of grape tomatoes, or
- 3-4 large ripe tomatoes
- (chopped, deseeded) 1 small cucumber
- (finely chopped, deseeded) 3 tablespoons of olive oil 3 tablespoons of lime juice

Salt and pepper to taste

PRFPARATION

After washing them well, soak the beans overnight, then boil them in lightly salted water for 30 minutes or until they are soft. Drain well. Halve the grape tomatoes or slice the big tomatoes and remove the seeds, then chop them.

Halve the cucumber and remove the seeds, then cut it into pieces the same size as the tomatoes. In a big bowl, soak the beans in oil and season with salt and pepper.

Before serving, add the remaining ingredients and toss well.

For the rest of the recipe, follow the steps for Mexican-style shredded chicken. Add the red bean mixture during the stock-boiling phase.

MAIN TIPS

If you serve the shredded chicken with rice, retain a bit of water in the gravy and add one tablespoon of vegetable oil.

Cooking the beans: After the water boils, turn the heat down and cook over medium-low heat. They should soak in hot water rather than being boiled. Put vegetable scraps to the water for added flavour.

Pae yay pwa are red beans that are available at all supermarkets. Tortillas can be found at Marketplace or Sharkv's.

QUAFFING QUOTE

"Cooking is the art of adjustment." — Jacques Pepin (French chef and author)

NEXT WEEK

Hot and spicy Mexican-style chicken

WINE REVIEWS

RED WINE

Ghost Pines Cabernet Sauvignon 2009 Neither offensive nor overly impressive, this Napa Valley red has a passable, mellow flavour that matches with meaty pizza. The label design gets a 9/10.

K 19,600

Barefoot Moscato 2011 This sweet California wine, class champion at the prestigious Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo Wine Competition, goes well with canned shrimp, Wonder bread and Velveeta processed cheese product.

K 6,700 Score: 5/10

WHITE WINE

Forget K-pop, it's time to jump on the K-burger express

SOUTH Korean fast food chain Lotteria opened up shop in Yangon's trendy Junction Square over the Water Festival holiday, giving Myanmar residents a taste of international quick eats.

The menu is the standard fare of fast-food grub: burgers, fries, chicken sandwiches and soft-serve ice cream, with a few Asian-centric items like squid rings and fish bites.

Looking for something similar to my beloved Golden Arches without having to board a flight for Bangkok, I went with the classic cheeseburger, French fry and cola set, with a healthy dose of ketchup, and received my order almost instantly.

The fries were fantastic. Hot and crispy, a welcome change from the greasy half-cooked potato pieces that pass for the real thing at Yangon beer stations. I enjoyed them so much, I went back for another order, much to amusement of the cashier.

The burger, in an attempt to

ensure that the "fast" in fast-food was honoured, was clearly made a bit too far in advance. The sandwich had cooled considerably by the time I took my first bite but its potential was evident. With a few more degrees of heat, it would have been a good-to-very-good burger for this type of restaurant.

The real heartbreaker came at the end of the meal, when I was informed that the ice cream machine had not yet been installed. -TM

LOTTERIA

Junction Square Kyan Taw Road Kamaryut township, Yangon

Food: 7 Drink: 8 Atmosphere: 9 Service: 10 X-factor: 9 Value for money: 8 Score: 8/10



Opening day at Lotteria in Yangon. Photo: Thiri

52 the pulse Socialite



Mr Cobriel Cheng @ Star City Unit B Sales Launch



Anniversary of Israeli Independence Day



Dr Sein Myint and Mr Tara Nath Acharya @ 65th Anniversary of Israeli Independence Day



Kunkongkaphan @ Chatrium Hotel 15th Anniversary



Models @ Lotteria Grand Opening



Eaindra Kyaw Zin and May Sweet @ Lotteria Grand Opening



U Thein Wai and guests @ Star City Unit B Sales Launch



Htet Htet @ Samsaung Galaxy S4 Product Launch

Product Launch



 ${\tt @ Chatrium\ Hotel\ 15^{th}}$ Anniversary



 $\operatorname{\mathbf{Mr}}\nolimits\operatorname{\mathbf{Kim}}\nolimits\operatorname{\mathbf{Chang}}\nolimits\operatorname{\mathbf{Kyu}}\nolimits,\operatorname{\mathbf{U}}\nolimits\operatorname{\mathbf{Aung}}\nolimits\operatorname{\mathbf{Win}}\nolimits\operatorname{\mathbf{and}}\operatorname{\mathbf{Mr}}\nolimits\operatorname{\mathbf{Choon-Seop}}\nolimits\operatorname{\mathbf{@}}\nolimits\operatorname{\mathsf{Lotteria}}$ **Grand Opening**



 $\textbf{Daw Win Min Kaung and U Kyaw Min Oo} \ \texttt{@} \ \texttt{Lotteria Grand}$



Mr Kaushik Charaborty @ Ranbaxy New Product Launch



Wine Su Khine Thein @ Samsaung Galaxy S4 Product Launch



U Aung Khine Lin and Ms Nutthaya Tiannanon @ Chatrium Hotel 15th Anniversary



U Kyaw Swa Lin 🖯 Samsaung Refrigerator



Mr Nan Sik Ahn 🖯 Samsaung Galaxy S4 Product Launch



U Win Htein Win and Daw Aye Thiri Mon @ Star City Unit B Sales Launch



THE heat of April has a way of beating everyone down, and since summer started Socialite has already gone through about 10 tubs of sun-block to protect her beautiful, precious skin from harmful UV rays, but that didn't stop her from making the rounds of all the ever-so-exciting events on offer in modern metropolis of Yangon. (Now that the Hledan Flyover has opened, our city is nearly indistinguishable from Bangkok!) She kicked off the week on April 25 with a visit to the 65th anniversary of Israel's Independence Day at Inya Lake Hotel, and the next day she was thrilled to attend the Samsaung Galaxy S4 launch at Park Royal Hotel, the Star City Unit B sales launch at Grand Mee Ya Hta Hotel, and the 15th anniversary celebration of Chatrium Hotel, held (you guessed it) at Chatrium Hotel. On April 27, Socialite was present at the Ranbaxy new product launch at Park Royal Hotel, then she went to Junction Square for the opening of Lotteria fast food restaurant, and she also chilled out at the Samsung refrigerator launch.



Aung Ye Lin and Sithu Maung @ Samsaung Galaxy S4 Product Launch



Ko Zaw Ko Ko Tun @ Samsaung Galaxy S4 Product Launch



Ma May Myat Mon Win @ Chatrium Hotel 15th Anniversary



Models @ Samsaung Refrigerator Launch



Daw Khine Khine Zaw $\, \mathbb{G} \,$ Ranbaxy New Product



U Zaw Min Oo @ Lotteria **Grand Opening**



@ Chatrium Hotel 15th Anniversary



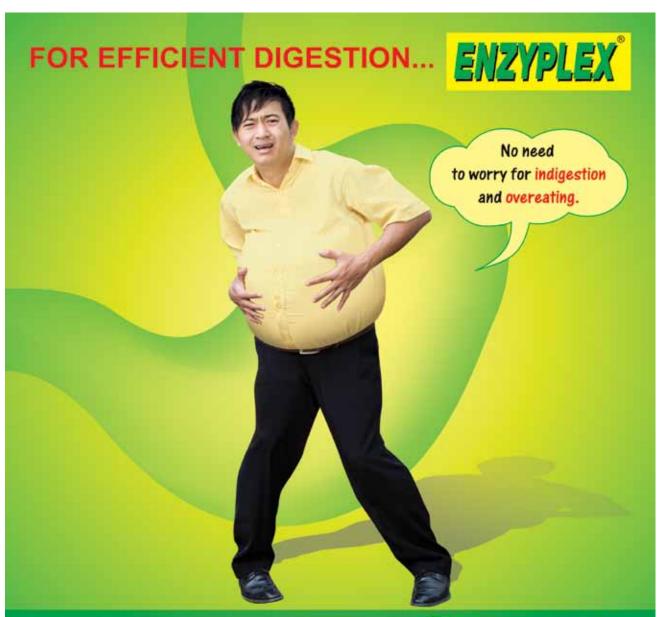
Khine Thazin Ngu Wah @ Samsaung Galaxy S4 Product Launch



@ Samsaung Refrigerator Launch



Thinzar Nwe Win @ Samsaung Galaxy S4 Product Launch



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DOMESTIC FLIGHT SCHEDULES

Days	Flight	Dep	Arr	Days	Flight	Dep	Arr	Days	Flight	Dep	Arr
VA	NCON TO NA	V DVI '	TAW	FRI	YJ 211	7:00	8:25	FRI	YJ 211	7:00	8:25
MON	NGON TO NA	6:20	7:15		YJ 891	6:10	8:15		YH 910	8:10	10:15
IVIOIN	UB-A1	7:45	8:45		6T401 YJ211	6:20 11:30	8:25 12:55		YJ 892 6T 402	8:30 8:45	10:25 10:45
	UB-B1	11:30	12:30		YH 909	6:30	8:10		K7 223	9:00	11:05
TUE	UB-C1 UB-A1	16:00 7:45	17:00 8:45		K7 222	6:30	8:40		YJ 143/W971431	9:20	11:15
IUE	UB-B1	11:30	12:30		YJ 143/W97143 YJ 001	7:00 8:00	9:05 8:55		Y5 132 YJ 002	9:30 11:00	10:30 11:55
	UB-C1	16:00	17:00		Y5 131	8:00	9:00		YJ 212	12:00	13:25
WED	UB-A1 UB-B1	7:45	8:45		YJ 751/W97751	11:00	12:55		6T 502/K7 225	16:50	19:00
	UB-C1	11:30 16:00	12:30 17:00		YH 727 K7 824	11:15 13:00	13:25 14:25		YH 728 YH 732	16:45 17:10	18:10 19:15
THUR	UB-A1	7:45	8:45		YJ 791	14:30	16:25		K7 825	17:40	19:05
	UB-B1	11:30	12:30		6T 501/K7 224 YH 731	14:30 15:00	16:35 17:10		YJ 792 YJ 752/W97752	16:40	18:45 19:00
FRI	UB-C1 UB-A1	16:00 7:45	17:00 8:45	SAT	YJ 891	6:10	8:15		YJ 752/W97752	16:55 17:50	19:15
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	6T 211	15:30	16:25		6T 401 YH 909	6:20 6:30	8:25 8:10		YH 918 YJ 892	8:30 8:30	10:25
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SUN	UB-A1	15:30	16:30		K7 244	6:45	8:10		K7 223	9:00	11:05
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IVIOIN	UB-B2	13:00	14:00		YJ 601	11:00	12:25		YJ 202	11:30	12:55
	UB-C2	17:30	18:30		YH 729 YJ 781	11:15 14:30	14:15 15:55		YJ 762 YJ 602	12:35 16:10	14:00 17:35
TUE	UB-A2	9:15	10:15		6T 501/K7 224	14:30	16:35		YJ 782	16:10	18:15
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	UB-C2	17:30	18:30		YJ 251/W97251	11:00	12:25		YJ 212	12:00	13:25
SAT	UB-A2	10:00	11:00		YJ 751/W97751	11:00	12:55		YJ 782	16:10	18:15
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	6T 501/K7 224	14:30	16:35		8M 6604	17:10	18:30		YH 917	6:10	7:45
WED	YH 731 YJ 891	15:00 6:10	17:10		YH 730	18:00	19:25		6T 401 K7 222	6:20 6:30	7:40 7:50
VVED	YH 917	6:10	8:15 8:30		K7 823 YJ 252/W97252	18:00 18:05	19:25 19:30		YH 909	6:30	8:55
	6T 401	6:20	8:25	WED	YJ 252/W9/252 YH 910	8:10	19:30		YJ 143/W97143	7:00	8:20
	YH 909	6:30	8:10		YH 918	8:30	10:25		6T 501/K7 224 YH 731	14:30 15:00	17:20 17:55
	K7 222 YJ 143/W97143	6:30 7:00	8:40 8:20		YJ 892 6T 402	8:30 8:45	10:25	FRI	YJ 891	6:10	7:30
	YJ 201	7:00	8:25		K7 223	9:00	10:45 11:05		YH 917	6:10	7:45
	YJ 001	8:00	8:55		YJ 143/W97143	9:20	11:15		6T 401 K7 222	6:20 6:30	7:40 7:50
	Y5 131	8:00	9:00		Y5 132	9:30	10:30		YH 909	6:30	8:55
	YJ751/W97751	10:45	12:40		YJ 002 YJ 202	11:00 11:30	11:55 12:55		K7 242	6:45	8:05
	K7 622 YJ 791	12:00 14:30	13:25 16:25		K7 623	16:40	18:05		YJ 143/W97143 6T 501/K7 224	7:00 14:30	8:20 17:20
	6T 501/K7 224	14:30	16:35		YJ 792	16:40	18:45		YH 731	15:00	17:55
	YH 731	15:00	17:10		6T 502/K7 225 YH 732	16:50 17:10	19:00 19:15	SAT	YJ 891	6:10	7:30
THUR	YJ 201	6:00	7:25 8:15		YH 732 YJ 752	17:10	19:15		YH 917 6T 401	6:10 6:20	7:45 7:40
	YJ 891 YH 917	6:10 6:10	8:15 8:30	THUR	YH 910	8:10	10:15		K7 222	6:30	7:40
	6T 401	6:20	8:25		YH 918	8:30	10:25		YH 909	6:30	8:55
	YH 909	6:30	8:10		YJ 892 6T 402	8:30 8:45	10:25 10:45		YJ 143/W97143	7:00	8:20
	K7 222	6:30	8:40		K7 223	9:00	11:05		YJ 781 6T 501/K7 224	14:30 14:30	16:40 17:20
	YJ 143/W97143 YJ 001	7:00 8:00	9:05 8:55		YJ 143/W97143		11:15		YH 731	15:00	17:55
	Y5 131	8:00	9:00		Y5 132 YJ 002	9:30 11:00	10:30 11:55	SUN	YJ 891	6:10	7:30
	8M 6603	9:00	10:10		K7 227	15:50	17:15		YH 917 6T 401	6:10 6:20	7:45 7:40
	YJ 511/W9 7511		11:25		YJ 762	16:35	18:00		K7 222	6:30	7:50
	YJ 601 YH 729	11:00 11:15	12:25 14:15		YJ 602	16:10	17:35		YH 909	6:30	8:55
	K7 226	12:00	13:25		6T 502/K7 225 YJ 202	16:50 10:30	19:00 11:55		YJ 143/W97143 YJ 781	7:00 14:30	8:20 16:40
	YJ 201	11:30	12:55		YH 732	17:10	19:15		6T 501/K7 224	14:30	17:20
	YH 731	15:00	17:10		8M 6604	17:20	18:30		K7 224	14:15	16:25
	6T 501/K7224	14:30	16:35		YH 730	18:00	19:25		YH 731	15:00	17:55

Days	Flight	Dep	Arr	Days	Flight	Dep	Arr
N	YAUNG U TO	YANG	ON	TUE	YJ 891	6:10	9:00
MON	YH 918	7:45	10:25		YH917 6T401	6:10 6:20	9:15 9:20
	YJ 892	7:45	10:25		YH 711	10:30	11:55
	6T 401 YH 910	8:30 8:55	11:20 10:15		YJ 761	11:00	12:10
	K7 225	16:40	18:00		K7 822	11:30	13:45
	YJ 782	16:55	18:15		6T 501/K7 224	14:30	15:40
	6T 502/K7 225 YH 732	17:40 17:55	19:00 19:15	WED	YH 731 YJ 891	15:00 6:10	16:25 9:00
TUE	YJ 892	7:45	10:25	WED	YH 917	6:10	9:00
	YH 918	7:45	10:25		6T401	6:20	9:20
	6T 401	7:55	10:45		YJ 143/W97143	7:00	9:50
	YH 910 YJ 782	8:55 16:55	10:15 18:15		YJ 751	11:00	12:10
	6T 502/K7 225	17:40	19:00	-	K7 826	12:30	13:45
	YH 732	17:55	19:15		K7 224 YJ 791	14:15 14:30	15:30 15:40
WED	YJ 892	7:45	10:25		6T 501/K7 224	14:30	15:40
	YH 918 6T 401	7:45 7:55	10:25 10:45		YH 731	15:00	16:25
	YJ 143/W9 7143		11:15		YJ 792	15:55	18:45
	YH 910	8:55	10:15	THUR	YJ 891	6:10	9:00
	K7 225	16:40	18:00		YH917	6:10	9:15
	6T 502/K7 225	17:40	19:00		6T401	6:20	9:20
THUR	YH 732 YJ 892	17:55 7:45	19:15 10:25		YJ 761 YJ 143/W97143	11:00 7:00	12:10 9:50
ITION	YH 918	7:45	10:25	-	K7 828	10:00	11:15
	6T 401	7:55	10:45		YH 711	10:30	11:55
	YJ 143/W9 7143		11:15		6T 501/K7 224	14:30	15:40
	YH 910	8:55	10:15		YH 731	15:00	16:25
	6T 502/K7 225 YH 732	17:40 17:55	19:00 19:15	FRI	YJ 891	6:10	9:00
FRI	YJ 892	7:45	10:25		YH917	6:10	8:40
	YH 918	7:45	9:50		6T401	6:20	9:20
	6T 401	7:55	10:45		K7 242 YJ 751	6:45 11:00	9:00 12:10
	YJ 143/W9 7143		11:15		YH 727	11:15	12:40
	YH 910 K7 225	8:55 16:40	10:15 18:00		YJ 791	14:30	15:40
	6T 502/K7 225	17:40	19:00	-	6T 501/K7 224	14:30	15:40
	YH 732	17:55	19:15		K7 224	14:15	15:30
SAT	YJ 892	7:45	10:25		YH 731	15:00	16:25
	YH 918	7:45	10:25	CAT	YJ 792	15:55	18:45
	6T 401 YJ 143/W9 7143	7:55 8·35	10:45 10:45	SAT	YJ891	6:10	9:00
	YH910	8:55	10:15	-	YH917 6T401	6:10 6:20	9:15 9:20
	K7 225	16:40	18:00		K7 224	6:45	9:00
	YJ 782	16:55	18:15		YJ 761	7:00	8:10
	6T 502/K7 225	17:40	19:00	-	K7 826	12:30	13:45
SUN	YH 732 YJ 892	17:55 7:45	19:15 10:25	-	K7 224	14:15	15:30
3011	YH 918	7:45	10:25		6T 501/K7 224	14:30	15:40
	6T 401	7:55	10:45	CUN	YH731	15:00	16:25
	YJ 143/W9 7143		10:45	SUN	YH917 6T401	6:10 6:20	9:15 9:20
	YH 910 YJ 782	8:55 16:55	10:15 18:15	-	YJ 751	11:00	12:10
	6T 502/K7 225	17:40	19:00		YH 505	10:30	11:55
	YH 732	17:55	19:15		YH 737	11:15	12:40
V	NGON TO MY	/ITI/VI	NA		K7 822	11:30	13:45
					6T 501/K7 224	14:30	15:40
MON	YJ 201 YJ 511/W9 7511	10:00 10:00	12:50 12:55	-	K7 224 YH 731	14:15	15:30
	K7 622	12:00	14:55		ונ/חו	15:00	16:25
TUE	YJ 201	6:00	8:50		НЕНО ТО УА	NGON	l
	YJ 251/W9 7251		13:55	MON	YH 918	9:15	10:25
WED	K7 622 K7 622	12:00 12:00	14:55 14:55		YJ 892	9:15	10:25
THUR	YJ 201	12:45	15:35		6T 402	10:10	11:20
	YJ 511/W9 7511		12:55		K7 223	9:50	11:05
FRI	YJ211	6:30	9:20		YJ 761 6T 501/K7 224	11:00 16:00	12:10 19:00
SUN	YJ 211 YJ 251/W9 7251	6:00 11:00	8:50 13:55		YJ 762	15:50	18:00
	K7 622	12:00	14:55		YH 728	16:00	18:10
8.6	VITVVINA TO	VANC	40		YH 732	16:25	19:15
	YITKYINA TO				K7 829	16:30	17:45
MON	YJ 202 K7 623	13:05 15:10	15:55 18:05	TUE	YH 918	9:15	10:25
TUE	YJ 202	9:05	11:55		YJ 892	9:15	10:25
	K7 623	15:10	18:05		6T 402 K7 223	9:35 9:50	10:45 11:05
11/50	YJ 252/W9 7252		19:30	-	YH 712	11:55	14:00
WED THUR	K7 623 YJ 202	15:10 15:50	18:05 18:40		6T 501/K7 224	16:00	19:00
SUN	YJ 202 YJ 211	9:05	12:25		YJ 762	15:50	18:00
	K7 623	15:10	18:05		YH 732	16:25	19:15
	YJ 252/W9 7252	16:35	19:30		K7 823	17:10	19:25
	YANGON TO	HEHO)	WED	YH 918	9:15	10:25
MON	YH917	6:10	9:15		K7 243	9:15	11:30
	YJ891	6:10	9:00		YJ 892 6T 402	9:15 9:35	10:25 10:45
	6T 401	6:20	9:55		K7 223	9:50	11:05
	K7 828	10:00	11:15		YJ 143/W9 7143		11:15
	YJ 761 YH 727	11:00 11:15	12:10 12:40		6T 501/K7 224	16:00	19:00
	6T 501/K7 224	14:30	15:40		YH 732	16:25	19:15
	K7 224	14:15	15:30		K7 827	16:30	17:45
	YH 731	15:00	16:25		YJ752/W9 7752	17:40	18:50
	mestic						

Domestic

6T = Air Mandalay

W9 = Air Bagan

YJ = Asian Wings

YH = Yangon Airways

UB = FMI UB Charter

Y5 = Golden Myanmar Airlines

K7 = AIR KBZ

Days	Flight	Days	Flight					
THUR	YJ 892	Duy						
HION	YH 918	9:15 9:15	10:25 10:25		YANGO			
	6T 402	9:35	10:45	MON	K7319			
	K7 223	9:50	11:05	TUE	K7319 YJ301			
	YJ 143/W9 7143	10:05	11:15	WED	K7319			
	YH 712	11:55	14:00	WLD	6T 707			
	YJ 762	15:50 16:25	18:00		YJ301			
	YH 732 6T 501/K7 224	16:00	19:15 19:00	THUR	K7319			
	YJ 602/W9 7602	16:25	17:35	FRI	K7319			
	K7 829	16:30	17:45	SAT	K7319			
FRI	YH 918	8:40	9:50		6T 707 YJ301			
	YJ 892	9:15	10:25	SUN	K7319			
	K7 243	9:15	11:30	3014	6T 707			
	6T 402	9:35	10:45					
	K7 223 YJ 143/W9 7143	9:50 10:05	11:05		MYEIK			
	YH 732	16:25	11:15 19:15	MON	K7 320			
	6T 501/K7 224	16:00	19:00	TUE	YJ 302			
	YH 728	16:00	18:10	WED	K7 320			
SAT	YJ 892	9:15	10:25	WED	K7 320 6T 708			
	YH 918	9:15	10:25	THUR				
	6T 402	9:35	10:45	FRI	K7 320			
	K7 223	9:50	11:05	SAT	K7 320			
	YJ 762	11:50	14:00		YJ 302			
	YH 732	16:25	19:15		6T 708			
	6T 501/K7 224	16:00	19:00	SUN	K7 320			
	K7 827	17:10	18:25		6T 708			
SUN	YH 918	9:15	10:25	١,	YANGON			
	6T 402 K7 223	9:35 9:50	10:45 11:05					
	YH 506	11:55	14:00	MON	K7 420 YH 503			
	6T 501/K7 224	16:00	19:00		6T 607			
	YH 732	16:25	19:15	TUE	K7 422			
	YH 738	16:40	18:50		YH 711			
			_	WED	YH 711			
	YANGON TO S			THUR				
MON	6T 607	11:45	13:10	FD1	YH 711			
TUE	K7 422 6T 603C	6:45 7:00	8:40	FRI	YH 503 6T 605			
	6T 611	14:30	9:05 15:55	SAT	YH 505			
WED	6T611	14:30	15:55	SUN	K7 422			
THRU	6T 603C	7:00	9:05		YH 505			
	6T 611	14:30	15:55					
FRI	6T 603C	7:00	9:05		THANDW			
	6T 605	11:15	13:15	MON	K7 421			
SAT	6T611	11:30	12:55		YH 504			
SUN	K7 422 6T 611	6:45 14:30	8:40	TUE	6T 608			
	01011	14.50	15:55	IUE	K7 423 YH 712			
	SITTWE TO Y	ANGO	N	WED	YH 712			
MON	6T 608	13:30	15:30	THUR				
TUE	K7 423	8:55	10:50		YH 712			
	6T 612	16:15	17:40	FRI	K7 243			
WED	6T 612	16:15	17:40		YH 504			
THUR	6T 612	16:15	17:40	CAT	6T 605			
FRI SAT	6T 606 6T 612	13:35 13:15	15:00 14:40	SAT	K7 245 YH 504			
SUN	K7 423	8:55	10:50	SUN	K7 423			
3011	6T 612	16:15	17:40	3011	YH 506			
D	moetic	Λ:	lima					
DO	mestic	All	line	S				
Air	· Bagan I	_td.		As	ian Wi			
(W9) Tel: 951 51								
Tol. 512222 512722 09-731-3								
504888, Fax: 515102								
Yangon								
AIT NBZ (N/)								
	Tel: 372977~80, 533030~39 [Airways] Tel: (+95-1)							
	port) . 272982				, 700 264			
	: 372983							
Air Mandalay (6T) FMI Air								



Dep Arr

YANGON TO MYEIK

Tel: (Head Office) 501520, 525488, Fax: 525937. Airport: 533222~3, 09-73152853. Fax: 533223.

sian Wings (AW) l: 951 516654, 532253, -731-35991~3.Fax: 951 2333

angon

irways(YH)

: (+95-1) 383 100, 383 7, 700 264, Fax: 652 533.

MI Air Charter -Sales & Reservations

Tel: (95-1) 240363, 240373 / (+95-9) 421146545

International Airlines



Air Asia (FD) Tel: 251 885, 251 886

Air Bagan Ltd.(W9) Tel: 513322, 513422, 504888, Fax: 515102

Air China (CA)

Tel: 666112, 655882 Air India

Tel : 253597~98, 254758. Fax: 248175

Bangkok Airways (PG)

Tel: 255122, 255 265, Fax: 255119

Subject

to change

without notice

Condor (DE) Tel: + 95 1 -370836 up to 39 (ext: 810)

Dragonair (KA) Tel: 95-1-255320, 255321, Fax : 255329

Malaysia Airlines (MH)

Tel : 387648, 241007 ext : 120, 121, 122 Fax : 241124

Myanmar Airways International(8M) Tel : 255260, Fax: 255305

Silk Air(MI) Tel: 255 287~9, Fax: 255 290

Thai Airways (TG) Tel : 255491~6, Fax : 255223

Vietnam Airlines (VN) Fax: 255086. Tel 255066/ 255088/255068.

Qatar Airways (Temporary Office) Tel: 01-250388, (ext: 8142,

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INTERNATIONAL FLIGHT SCHEDULES

Days	Flight	De	p Arr	Days	Flight	De	p Arr	Days	Flight	Dep	o Arr	Days	Flight	Dej	p Arr
	NGON T		NGKOK 09:30		ON TO R		LUMPUR 11:50		ANGON NH 914				IGAPOR SQ 998		ANGON 09:20
,,,on	8M 333 8M 335	08:20	10:05 10:25	MOIN	AK 1425 MH 741	08:30			NH 914	21:30	06:40+1 06:40+1	IVIOIN	3K 585 8M 6231	09:10	10:40
	TG 304 PG 702	09:50 10:30	11:45 12:25	TUE	AK 1421 8M 501	16:45 07:50	21:00 11:50	MAI	NDALAY	TO BA	NGKOK		8M 232 MI 520	13:25 22:10	14:50 23:35
	TG 302 8M 331	16:30	16:50 18:15		AK 1425 MH 741	12:15	16:30	TUE	8M 335 8M 335	08:25	10:45 10:45 11:55	T. I.E.	Y5 234 MI 518	14:20	17:05 15:45
UE	PG 704 TG 306 PG 706	19:45	20:15 21:40 09:30	WED	AK 1421 MH 743 AK 1425	16:55	21:00		TG 782 8M 335 8M 335	08:25	10:45	TUE	SQ 998 3K 585 8M 6231	09:10	09:20 10:40
UL	8M 333 8M 335	08:20	10:05 10:25	VVED	8M 501 MH 741	07:50	11:50 16:30	FRI	8M 335 TG 782	08:25	10:45 11:55		VN 943 8M 232	11:40	13:25 14:50
	TG 304 PG 702	09:50	11:45 12:25	THUR		16:45	21:00	SAT	8M 335 TG 782		10:45		MI 518 Y5 234	14:20	15:45 17:05
	TG 302 8M 331	14:55	16:50 18:15	IIIOII	MH 741 AK 1421	12:15	16:30	SUN	8M 335 TG 782	08:25 09:30	10:45	WED	SQ 998 3K 585	07:55	09:20 10:40
	PG 704 TG 306	19:45	20:15 21:40	FRI	AK 1425 8M 501	08:30 07:50	12:45 11:50				IGAPORE		8M 6231 8M 232	09:10 13:25	10:40 14:50
WED	PG 706 8M 333	08:20	09:30 10:05		MH 741 AK 1421	16:45		TUE	Y5 233 8M 335 Y5 233	08:10 08:25			MI 518 Y5 234	15:35	15:45 17:05
	8M 335 TG 304 PG 702	09:50	10:25 11:45 12:25	SAT	MH 743 AK 1425		12:45		8M 335 Y5 233	08:25	15:15 14:40	THUR	SQ 998 3K 585	09:10	09:20 10:40
	TG 302 8M 331	14:55	16:50 18:15		8M 501 MH 741 AK 1421	12:15	11:50 16:30 21:00		8M 335 Y5 233	08:25	15:15 14:40		8M 6231 VN 943 8M 232	11:40	10:25 13:25 14:50
	PG 704 TG 306	18:20	20:15 21:40	SUN	AK 1421 AK 1425 MH 741	08:30		FRI	8M 335 Y5 233	08:25	15:15 14:40		MI 518 Y5 234	14:20	15:45 17:05
THUR	PG 706 8M 333	07:15	09:30 10:05		AK 1421 MH 743	16:45	21:00	SAT	8M 335 Y5 233	08:25	15:15 14:40	FRI	SQ 998 3K 585	07:55	09:20 10:40
	8M 335 TG 304	09:50	10:25 11:45		ANGON	TO BE	IJING		8M 335 Y5 233	08:25	15:15 14:40		8M 6231 8M 232	09:10	10:40 14:50
	PG 702 TG 302	14:55	12:25 16:50	WED	CA 906 CA 906	14:15	21:55 21:55	BA A NI		08:25			MI 518 Y5 234	14:20	15:45 17:05
	8M 331 PG 704	18:20	18:15 20:15	SAT	CA 906 CA 906	14:15	21:55 21:55	MON	FD 2761	10:45			8M 234 MI 520	22:10	21:55 23:35
FRI	TG 306 PG 706 8M 333	07:15	21:40 09:30 10:05		CA 906		21:55 NKFURT			10:45	13:10	SAT	SQ 998 3K 585	09:10	09:20 10:40
	8M 335 TG 304	08:40	10:25 11:45	WED	DE 2369	06:10	19:35	FRI	FD 2761 FD 2761	10:45	13:10 13:10 13:10		8M 6231 8M 232	13:25	14:50
	PG 702 TG 302	10:30	12:25 16:50		CZ 3056	17:40			FD 2761				MI 518 Y5 234 8M 234	15:35	15:45 17:05 21:55
	8M 331 PG 704	16:30	18:15 20:15		8M 711 CZ 3056	11:20			MDALAY MU 2030		JNMING 17:20	SUN	MI 520 SQ 998	22:10	23:35 09:20
SAT	TG 306 PG 706	07:15	21:40 09:30	FRI	8M 711 CZ 3056	17:40			MU 2030	14:40	17:20 17:20	CON	8M 6231 3K 585	08:55	10:25 10:40
	8M 333 8M 335	08:40	10:05 10:25	SAT	CZ 3056 8M 711		15:50 13:15	THUR FRI	MU 2030 MU 2030	14:40	17:20 17:20		VN 943 8M 232	11:40	13:25 14:50
	TG 304 PG 702 TG 302	10:30	11:45 12:25		YANGON CI 7916		16:10	SAT	MU 2030 MU 2030				MI 518 Y5 234	15:35	15:45 17:05
	8M 331 PG 704		16:50 18:15 20:15		CI 7916 BR 288	10:50	16:10 17:20	TUE	IANDAL	AY TO 11:10			8M 234 MI 520	20:30 22:10	21:55 23:35
SHIN	TG 306 PG 706	19:45	21:40 09:30		CI 7916 CI 7916	10:50	16:10 16:10	THUR	8M 603	11:10 11:10 11:10	12:15		EIJING 1 CA 905	08:05	
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	TG 304 PG 702	09:50	11:45 12:25		CI 7916 BR 288	11:35	16:10 17:20	MON	TG 303 PG 701	07:55 08:50	08:50 09:40	SAT	CA 905 CA 905	08:05	13:15 13:15
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KUNMING TO MANDALAY

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STOCKHOLM

ABBA museum opens in Sweden

Fans of the legendary Swedish disco group ABBA can hardly wait: Next week, Stockholm will open the doors to the world's first museum dedicated to the iconic foursome.

After ABBA The Movie in 1977, the Mamma Mia musical and movie, and a 2010 travelling museum exhibit, the world's first permanent ABBA museum will open in central Stockholm on May 7.

"We're going to offer visitors a unique experience," museum director Mattias Hansson said, revealing that they may even get a chance to speak live with a band member.

After months of construction, the modern, blonde wood building in the leafy Djurgarden neighbourhood is nearing

As opening day looms, convoys of trucks roll up to the site to deliver the furnishings and items that will make up the collection: flamboyant sequined costumes, gold records and re-creations of their recording studio and dressing rooms, among other things.

Workers bustle to finish what will be a temple to the creators of some of the biggest hits of the 1970s, including "Voulez Vous", "Dancing Queen" and "Waterloo", the song that won the band the 1974 Eurovision Song Contest and thrust them onto the international scene.

Through the museum's big windows, passersby can catch a glimpse of a large main room. Few people have been authorised to enter the premises, as organisers are intent on keeping things under wraps until the official

But they have let slip a few details.

For example, fans who have dreamt of becoming the

'Fans who have dreamt of becoming the fifth member of the band will be able to appear on stage with the quartet and record a song with them thanks to a computer simulation.

fifth member of the band will be able to appear on stage with the quartet and record a song with them thanks to a computer simulation.

In another room dedicated to the song "Ring, Ring", a 1970s telephone will be on display. Only four people know the phone number: ABBA members Agnetha Faeltskog, Anni-Frid (Frida) Lyngstad, Benny Andersson and Bjoern Ulvaeus, who may occasionally call to speak live with museum visitors.

"It was Frida's idea ... so of course she'll call," said curator Ingmarie Halling.

The museum will naturally pay homage to ABBA's mu-

"We have to have the best isolation in the world to be able to play different music in each room," Hansson joked.

But he doesn't expect visitors to flock to the museum to hear the group's hits, since fans already know them by heart. Rather, they will get to relive the band's active years and get a sense of their lives behind the scenes.

ABBA last appeared on stage together in 1982, and split a year later. They have repeatedly refused to reunite.

"We will never appear on stage again," Ulvaeus said in a 2008 interview with Britain's Sunday Telegraph. "There is simply no motivation to regroup. Money is not a factor and we would like people to remember us as we were."

After the split, the band members each went their own way and they've rarely appeared in public together, so getting all four involved in the making of the museum is a

Halling – the band's stylist from 1976 to 1980, an era she describes as "fun and magnificent" - has been instrumental in collaborating with them.

"They've lent us lots of stuff and I call them to tell them

my ideas and they say, 'sure, go ahead!'," Halling said. As the person behind some of their glitzy and flamboy-

ant costumes, Halling has made sure that many of their outfits are included in the exhibit.

The group has sold some 378 million albums worldwide, outdone only by Elvis Presley and the Beatles.

The museum's website said it expects to attract a quarter of a million visitors in 2013.

"It's very exciting," said Micke Bayart, a 45-year-old who headed the band's official fan club in the 1980s. "ABBA is part of Sweden's musical history, it's only right that there be a museum dedicated to them: they deserve it."

Tickets for the museum - which cost 23 euros (US\$30) - are almost sold out for the first few weeks, going primarily to tourists from abroad, museum director Hansson said.

Those who can't get their hands on a ticket will have to be content with a glimpse of some of the band's costumes on display at the arrival hall of Stockholm's Arlanda air-

CONGRATULATIONS

We heartfeltly congratulate to Wunna Kyaw Htin Sithu *U Aung Ko Win,Patron Of Myanmar Football Federation and C*hairman of KBZ Bank Limited for receiving the State Excellence Award (First Prize among the entrepreneurs serving the highest tax payments to the State Budget Revenue) recognized as the highest taxpayer in Myanmar conferred by the President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar on the occasion of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar President's State Excellence Awards Presentation Ceremony held on 30th April 2013.

We all wish him continued contribution to our society and country in coming years.



Myanmar Football Federation and Myanmar National League Committee



CONGRATULATIONS

We heartily congratulate to Wunna Kyaw Htin Sithu *U Zaw Zaw*, President of Myanmar Football Federation and Chairman of Max Myanmar Group of Companies (*For receiving the certificate of honour among the entrepreneurs serving the highest tax payments to the State Budget Revenue*) recognized as the highest taxpayer in Myanmar conferred by the President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar on the occasion of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar President's State Excellence Awards Presentation Ceremony held on 30th April 2013.

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English. (2) Language Speaking Tour Operator (German, French, Spanish)- 1

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and Outlook. Good
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(1) SALE & Marketing Manager (Lignting) M/F 1 Post. (2) Sale & Marketing Executive (Lighting) M/F 2 Post. (3) Electrical Installation M 1 Post. (4)M&E Engineer (E.P. Only, AutoCAD, Draft) - M 1 Post: Age above 30. (5) Chief/ Senior/ Junior Accountant F 1 Post. (6)Driver - M 2 Post. Myint Mo Hein Co., Ltd, No.(107/A), Damazedi Rd, Kamaryut, Yangon. THEPROMISE set up the branch in Myanmar the branch in Myanmar in 2009 to dedicate development is seeking
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1 Post in Yangon : Myanmar University degree – Bachelor's Degree or equivalent in Accounting, equivalent in Accounting, Finance or related field, Basic skill in spoken & written English, Basic skill in spoken & written Korean (Desirable), Computer skill in MS Office (Microsoft Word & Excel, etc.,), Willing to learn or adapt to new ideas & procedures, Salary: From 130,000 to 150,000 MMK (Providing lunch). lunch). Pls submit an application letter, with full application letter, with full CV detailing experience, knowledge and skills by email to thepromise. mm@gmail.com or The Promise Myanmar office: 12(B/1), Sandar Myang Condo, Hledan St, Kamaryut, Yangon, Ph: 503307(217). Email: thepromise.mm@gmail. thepromise.mm@gmail. com Your application letter should include a contact email address & phone number. Closing date: May 24, 2013. Salary is commensurate with experience.

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- M/F 1 Post in Yangon. - M/F 1 Post in Yangon.
(3) Asst: HR Manager
- F 1 Post in Yangon.
(4) Admin Officer - M
1 Post. (5) Executive
Secretary - M/F 1 Post.
(6) Chief Accountant
- M/F 1 Post. (7) Driver
- 3 Posts. Pls submit an application letter, with application letter with updated resume, clear details of qualification, a passport photo, a copy of NRC & labor registration card, work experience to date, contact Ph & other date, contact Ph & other related & supportive documents to Myanmar Offshore Ltd, HR Department, No.77, Pyi Htaung Su Avenue Rd, Dagon Tsp, Yangon, Myanmar. Email: ssa@ myanmaroffshoreltd.com: tns@myanmar com; tps@myanmar offshoreltd.com;
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Brazil 56, Pyay Road, 6th mile, Hlaing Tsp, Yangon. tel: 507225, 507251, 507482. fax: 507483. email: Administ.yangon@ itamaraty.gov.br.

Brunei 17, Kanbawza Avenue, Golden Velly (1), Bahan Tsp, Yangon. tel: 566985, 503978, fax: 512854 email: bruneiemb@ bruneiemb. com.mm

Cambodia 25 (3B/4B). New University Avenue Road, Bahan Tsp, Yangon. tel: 549609, 540964, fax: 541462, email: RECYANGON @mptmail net.mm

China 1, Pyidaungsu Yeiktha Road, Yangon. tel: 221280, 221281, 224025, 224097, 221926, fax: 227019, 228319

Egypt 81, Pyidaungsu Yeiktha Road, Yangon. tel: 222886, 222887, fax: 222865, email: egye mbyangon@mptmail.

France 102, Pyidaungsu Yeiktha Road, Yangon. tel: 212178, 212520, 212523, 212528, 212532, fax: 212527, email: ambaf rance. rangoun@ diplomatie.fr

Germany 9, Bogyoke Aung San Museum Road, Bahan Tsp, Yangon. tel: 548951, 548952, fax: 548899 email: info@rangun. diplo.de

India 545-547. Merchant Street, Yangon. tel: 391219, 388412, 243972, fax: 254086, 250164, 388414, email: indiaembassy @mptmail. net.mm

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Immigration etel: 286434.

€tel: 254563, 370768.

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591387.

Police emergency stel: 199.
Police headquarters stel: 282541, 284764.
Red Cross stel:682600, 682368
Traffic Control Branch stel:298651

Ministry of Education @tel:545500m 562390 Ministry of Sports @tel: 370604, 370605

Ministry of Communications **tel: 067-407037. Myanma Post & Telecommunication (MPT) **tel: 067-

Department of Post & Telecommunication etel: 591384,

Myanma Post & Tele-communication (Accountant Dept)

Ministry of Foreign Affairs @tel: 067-412009, 067-412344.

Ministry of Health @tel: 067-411358-9. Yangon City Development Committee @tel: 248112.

Central Women's Hospital @tel: 221013, 222811. Children Hospital @tel: 221421, 222807

Naypyitaw Hospital (emergency) **etel: 420096. Worker's Hospital **etel: 554444, 554455, 554811.

Ear, Nose & Throat Hospital @tel: 543888

Indonesia 100 Pyidaungsu Yeiktha Road, Yangon. tel: 254465, 254469, 229750, fax: 254468, email: kukygn @indonesia.com.mm

Israel 15, Khabaung Street, Hlaing Tsp, Yangon. tel: 515115, fax: 515116, email: info@ yangon.mfa.gov.il

Italy 3, Inya Myaing Road, Golden Valley Yangon. tel: 527100, 527101, fax: 514565 email: ambyang.mail@ esteri.it

Japan 100, Natmauk Road, Yangon. tel: 549644-8, 540399, 540400, 540411, 545988, fax: 549643

Embassy of the State of Kuwait Ćhatrium Hotel, Rm: No.416, 418, 420, 422, 40 Natmauk Rd, Tarmwe Tsp, Tel: 544500.

North Korea 77C, Shin Saw Pu Road, Sanchaung Tsp, Yangon. tel: 512642, 510205, fax: 510206

South Korea 97 University Avenue, Bahan Tsp, Yangon. tel: 527142-4, 515190, fax: 513286, email: myanmar@mofat.go.kr

Lao A-1, Diplomatic Quarters, Tawwin Road, Dagon Tsp, Yangon. tel: 222482, fax: 227446, email: Ĺaoembcabíd mptmail. net.mm

Malaysia 82, Pyidaungsu Yeiktha Road, Ýangon. tel: 220248, 220249, 220251, 220230, fax: 221840, email: mwkyangon@mptmail. net.mm

Nepal 16, Natmauk Yeiktha, Yangon. tel: 545880, 557168, fax: 549803, email: nepemb @mptmail.net.mm

Pakistan A-4, diplomatic Quarters, Pyay Road, Yangon. tel: 222881 (Chancery Exchange) fax: 221147, email: pakistan@ myanmar. com.mm

Philippines 50. Savasan Road, Bahan Tsp, Yangon. tel: 558149-151, fax: 558154, email: p.e. yangon@gm<u>ail.com</u>

Russian 38, Sagawa Road, Yangon. tel: 241955, 254161, fax: 241953, email: rusinmyan@mptmail .net.mm

Serbia No. 114-A, Inya Road, P.O.Box No. 943-Yangon. tel: 515282, 515283. fax: 504274. email: serbemb@ yangon.net.mm

Singapore 238, Dhamazedi Road, Bahan Tsp, Yangon. tel: 559001, fax: 559002, 559922, email: singemb_ygn@_ sgmfa. gov.sg

Sri Lanka 34 Taw Win Road, Yangon, tel: 222812, fax: 221509, email: slembassy. yangon@gmail.com, info@slembyangon.org, www.slembyangon.org

Thailand 94 Pyay Road, Dagon Township, Yangon. tel: 226721, 226728, 226824, fax: 221713

United Kingdom 80 Kanna Road, Yangon. tel: 370867, 380322, 371852, 371853, 256438, 370863, 370864, 370865, fax: 370866

United States of America 110, University Avenue, Kamayut Township, Yangon. tel: 536509, 535756, 538038, fax: 650306

Vietnam Building No. 72, Thanlwin Road, Bahan Township, Yangon. tel: 511305, fax: 514897, email: vnemb myr@ cybertech.net.mm

Royal Embassy of Saudi **Arabia** No.287/289, U Wisara Rd, Sanchaung Tsp. tel: 01-536153, 516952, fax: 01-516951

281443, 256131.

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IOM 12th Flr, Traders Hotel, 223, tel: 252560 ext. 5002

UNAIDS Rm: (1223~1231), 12 Fl, Traders Hotel. tel: 252361, 252362, 252498. fax: 252364. UNDCP 11-A, Malikha St,

Mayangone tsp. tel: 666903, 664539. fax: 651334. UNDP 6, Natmauk Rd, Bahan

tel: 542910-19. fax: 292739. UNFPA 6. Natmauk Rd.

Bahan tsp. tel: 546029.

UNHCR 287, Pyay Rd, Sanchaung tsp. tel: 524022, 524024. fax 524031. UNIAP Rm: 1202, 12 Fl,

Traders Hotel.tel: 254852, 254853 UNIC 6, Natmauk St., BHN tel: 52910~19

UNICEF 14~15 Flr, Traders Hotel. P.O. Box 1435, KTDA. tel: 375527~32, fax: 375552 email: unicef.yangon@unicef. org, www.unicef.org/myanmar.

UNODC 11-A, Malikha Rd., Ward 7, MYGN. tel: 666903, 660556, 660538, 660398, 664539, fax: 651334. email: fo.myanmar@unodc.org www. unodc.org./myanmar/

UNOPS Inya Lake Hotel, 3rd floor, 37, Kaba Aye Pagoda Rd, Mayangone Tsp. tel: 951-657281~7. Fax: 657279.

UNRC 6, Natmauk Rd, P.O. Box 650, TMWE tel: 542911~19, 292637 (Resident Coordinator), fax: 292739, 544531.

WFP 3rd-flr, Inya Lake Hotel, 37, Kabar Aye Pagoda Rd. tel: 657011~6 (6-lines) Ext: 2000.

WHO 12A Fl, Traders Hotel. tel:250583.

ASEAN Coordinating Of. for the ASEAN Humanitarian Task Force, 79, Taw Win st, Dagon Township. Ph: 225258.

FAO Myanma Agriculture Servicé Insein Řd, Insein. tel: 641672, 641673. fax: 641561

Yangon Children Hospital @tel: 222807, 222808, 222809.

Yangon General Hospital (New) etel: 384493, 384494,

Yangon General Hospital (West) etel: 222860, 222861,

Yangon General Hospital (YGH) ≘tel: 256112, 256123,

39, Bo Aung Kyaw St. (near British Council Library). 🕾 tel:

Yangon General Hospital (East) @tel: 292835, 292836, 292837.

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Chatrium Hotel Royal Lake Yangon 40 Natmauk Rd, Tarmwe.

tel: 544500. fax: 544400.



No.7A, Wingabar Road, Bahan Tsp, Yangon. Tel : (951) 546313, 430245. 09-731-77781~4. Fax: (01) 546313. www.cloverhotel.asia. info@cloverhotel.asia

Confort Inn 4, Shweli Rd, Bet: Inya Rd

& U Wisara Rd, Kamaryut, tel: 525781, 526872



Rd, Tamwe Township, Yangon, Myanmar. Ph: 542826, Fax: 545650 Email: reservation@ edenpalacehotel.com

Hotel Yangon 91/93, 8th Mile Junction,

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MGM Hotel No (160), Warden Street, Lanmadaw Tsp, Yangon, Myanmar. +95-1-212454~9. www. hotel-mgm.com



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Seasons of Yangon Yangon Int'l Airport Compound. tel: 666699.

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73, Damazedi Road, San Chaung Tsp, Ph: 539152

Sedona Hotel Kabar Aye Pagoda Rd, Yankin. tel: 666900.

Strand Hotel 92 Strand Rd. tel: 243377. fax: 289880

Summit Parkview Hotel 350, Ahlone Rd, Dagon Tsp. tel: 211888, 211966. Thamada Hotel

5, Alan Pya Phaya Rd, Dagon. tel: 243639, 243640, 243641.

Traders Hotel 223 Sule Pagoda Rd. tel: 242828. fax: 242838.

Windsor Hotel No.31, Shin Saw Pu Street, Sanchaung Yangon, Myanmar. Ph: 95-1-511216~8, www. hotelwindsoryangon.com Winner Inn

42, Than Lwin Rd, Bahan

Tsp. Tel: 503734, 524387. email: reservation@winner innmyanmar.com Yangon YMCA

263, Mahabandoola Rd,

Botataung Tsp. tel: 294128, Yuzana Hotel 130, Shwegondaing Rd,

Bahan Tsp, tel : 01-549600, 543367

Yuzana Garden Hotel 44, Alanpya Pagoda Rd, Mingalar Taung Nyunt Tsp, tel: 01-248944

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MiCasa Hotel Apartments 17, Kabar Aye Pagoda Rd, Yankin Tsp. tel: 650933. fax: 650960.

Sakura Residence 9, Inya Rd, Kamaryut Tsp. tel: 525001. fax: 525002. The Grand Mee Ya Hta

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General 83-91, G-F, Bo Aung Kyaw

St, Kyauktada Tsp, tel : 706223, 371906

BARS 50th Street

9/13, 50th street-lower,

Botataung Tsp. Tel-397160.



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INYA 1 Restaurant & Bar No.(1), Inya Road,

Kamayut Tsp. Tel: 01-527506 email: inyaone@gmail.com www.inya1.com



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No. 475 C, Pyi Road, Kamayut, Yangon. Tel: 09-431-28831



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- 15(B), Departure Lounge, Yangon Int'l Airport
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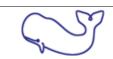
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EMYANMARTIMES

62 Sport The Myanmar times MAY 6 - 12, 2013

YANGON

U-23 squad heading to Vietnam

AUNG SI HEIN aungsiheinmm8@gmail.com

MYANMAR'S U-23 football team is set to play a friendly against Vietnam in Ho Chi Minh City on June 11 in a warm-up for December's Southeast Asian Games.

The team consists of young players from the Myanmar National League and is under the direction of national team coach Park Sung.

Prior to their match in Vietnam, the team will spend 10 days in Taunggyi, Shan State, for a training camp starting on May 21. They will then face off against Kawbawza FC before departing for Vietnam.

Myanmar is scheduled to play an

international friendly match on June 4 but the team they are going to play has not yet been announced.

Despite the upcoming matches, team organisers said that they are still actively searching for new players to add to the first team roster and the reserve squad. A roster for the Vietnam trip has not been released.

Tin Myint Aung, manager of the U-23 team, said the reserve team is important if there is a decline in first team performance or injuries strike the team during their upcoming matches.

ISLAMABAD

Pakistan appeal rejected

PAKISTAN on May 1 vowed to fight on after the tennis world governing body rejected their appeal over their forfeited Davis Cup tie against New Zealand.

The International Tennis Federation (ITF) upheld the decision to award the match played in Yangon last month to New Zealand because the court was unplayable.

Pakistan were 1-0 up and leading in the second match when Sri Lankan referee Ashita Ajigala stopped the match and awarded the tie to New Zealand, as the courts were Pakistan's responsibility.



Aqeel Khan of Pakistan hits a shot during his Davis Cup match against New Zealand's Artem Sitak in Yangon on April 5. Pic: Aung Htay Hlaing

The Asia Oceania group II tie was shifted to Myanmar over security fears in Pakistan.

The ITF's Davis Cup committee rejected the appeal by the Pakistan Tennis Federation (PTF) on April 30, but PTF President Kaleem Imam said the fight would go on.

"The ITF have said that the referee's decision was right but we will take the appeal to another forum and will fight on against the injustice done to us," Imam told AFP.

"If the referee had felt the courts were not up to the mark, why did he start the tie in the first place?"

Announcing the appeal had been rejected, the governing body said the PTF could now take their case to the ITF board of directors.

Pakistan was forced to shift the tie to a neutral venue after the ITF declared Pakistan as unsafe and unsuitable for an international event.

Pakistan has been a no-go area for international sports teams since militant attacks on the Sri Lankan cricket team bus in Lahore in March 2009. – *AFP*



Myanmar National League president Zaw Zaw speaks at the Park Royal Hotel in Yangon on April 26 alongside former Manchester United players Clayton Blackmore and Denis Irwin . Pic: Aung Htay Hlaing

YANGON

Old Trafford legends to play in Yangon

KYAW ZIN HLAING kyawzinhlaing91@gmail.com

A MANCHESTER United legends team will play a friendly match against a Myanmar side in a charity event on June 9 at Thuwana Stadium in Yangon.

Former Manchester United players Denis Irwin, Andy Cole, Clayton Blackmore and Lee Sharpe will be on the roster for the English giants. The Myanmar team will be made up for Myanmar national team members and foreigner players drawn from the Myanmar National League.

The match is being hosted by Ayeyarwady Foundation, CEA Myanmar

and Park Royal Hotel, with ticket proceeds and other donations going to monastic education, local hospitals and HIV rehabilitation efforts.

"Hopefully we can raise a lot of money for the charities.

We've been around today we've had our eyes opened looking at some of the young children who haven't got families and HIV. I've got children myself and it hurt me a little bit today watching the little ones all on their own, but hopefully everyone is going to come out and support all of the events and we are going to have a great time," said

former Manchester player Mr Clayton Blackmore on April 26.

Blackmore appeared in 251 matches for the club and won 39 caps for the Welsh national team

"We've got a couple of our friends coming along as well, Andy Cole and Lee Sharpe, and we are going to have a great time."

Blackmore and Denis Irwin visited

Thuwana Stadium on April 26 to inspect the grounds, which they found to be up to international standards.

Invin a former fullback spent 12

Irwin, a former fullback, spent 12 successful seasons at Old Trafford.

Tickets for the match will cost between K500 and K1000.

KUALA LUMPUR

Bahrain's Sheikh Salman romps to AFC presidency

BAHRAIN royal Sheikh Salman bin Ebrahim Al Khalifa became scandal-hit Asian football's new leader on May 2 with a crushing election win that followed a campaign filled with intrigue and controversy.

The sheikh, who has faced claims of outside interference and even rights abuses, won 33 of the 46 votes to become president of the Asian Football Confederation (AFC), replacing disgraced ex-leader Mohamed bin Hammam.

With Yousef Al Serkal of the UAE and Thailand's Worawi Makudi gather-

ing just six and seven votes respectively, it was a landslide victory for the Bahraini FA chief who will now complete bin Hammam's current term, which finishes in 2015.

"Today, the Asian football family is at a crossroads. Today we have the power to erase a chapter in our history," Sheikh Salman said.

Sheikh Salman was referring to the spectacular demise of Qatar's bin Hammam, who challenged for the FIFA presidency but was accused of votebuying and then of financial wrongdoing in office. He stepped down last year.

The presidential election result was greeted by loud celebratory cheers and shouts in Arabic from the floor after a speedy process carried out at a plush hotel in the Malaysian capital, Kuala Lumpur

However, Asian football appears to have a long way to travel towards transparency after the build-up to the vote was dominated by claim and counter-claim of meddling by outside powers.

The powerful Olympic Council of Asia was accused of lobbying on behalf of Sheikh Salman, and FIFA expressed concern over allegations that bin Hammam had also been active behind the scenes, despite his ban from football activities.

Former Saudi Arabian candidate Hafez Ibrahim Al Medlej, who withdrew from the race late on May 1, also suggested that FIFA had brought its influence to bear on the process.

Meanwhile, human rights groups accused Sheikh Salman of leading a purge of players and officials during Bahrain's violent crackdown on prodemocracy protests in 2011 and urged FIFA to block his candidacy. -AFP



Sheikh Salman bin Ebrahim Al Khalifa at a press conference in Manama on April 16. Photo: AFP

CONTINUED FROM SPORT 60

did not know of any other gay players in the NBA.

"Statistically speaking, I'm probably not the only one," Collins said. "Since no one else has raised their hand, you don't know for sure. I'm 99.9 percent sure there are others."

Several US women's team athletes have played while openly gay, including retired Women's NBA (WNBA) and US Olympic star Sheryl Swoopes, and 2012 US Olympic women's football gold medalist Megan Rapinoe.

Brittney Griner, this year's WNBA top draft pick, revealed earlier in April she is a lesbian.

Collins said openly gay tennis legend Martina Navratilova has been a role model for him.

"I look at her as one of my heroes," he told the *Times*. "Hopefully going forward I can be someone

else's role model.

Collins told ABC his message to young gay NBA hopefuls was to keep working.

"It doesn't matter that you're gay, but the key thing is that it's about basketball," he said. "It's about working hard. It's about sacrificing for your team. It's about dedication."

Collins is seeking a new contract at age 34 and said several NBA coaches have supported him, confident he will not be snubbed for a new deal because of his revelation when the next NBA season opens in six months.

"I'm sure teams will look at my basketball, look at what I have to offer," he told the *Times*. "I'll be ready at any moment."

Collins said he hopes to marry a man and raise children, adding: "I'm very optimistic of what the future brings." – *AFP*

YANGON

Two teams disciplined over ref disputes

AUNG SI HEIN aungsiheinmm8@gmail.com

THE Myanmar Football Federation's disciplinary committee has charged second division clubs Chin United FC and Best United FC for mistreatment of referees.

The charges against Chin United FC stem from a defeat on April 6. After losing 1-0 to Mawyawady FC 1- 0 at Yangon's Padonmar Stadium, Chin United coach San Win reportedly entered the referee's locker room and insulted the referees, blaming them for the loss.

After investigating the matter, the disciplinary committee deemed San Win's behaviour to be "wrong and unfair" and issued him a warning on April 25.

San Win denied the charge, saying that he had not received any official letter pertaining to the warning.

articles in journals but I did not receive any letter from the federation," he said. He did however admit to losing his

"I just heard about the charge from

"I had never parotested against referees' decisions. This is the first time ${\rm I}$

'The referee's unfair

and biased judgment during the game was inexcusable.'

San Win

Coach, Chin United FC

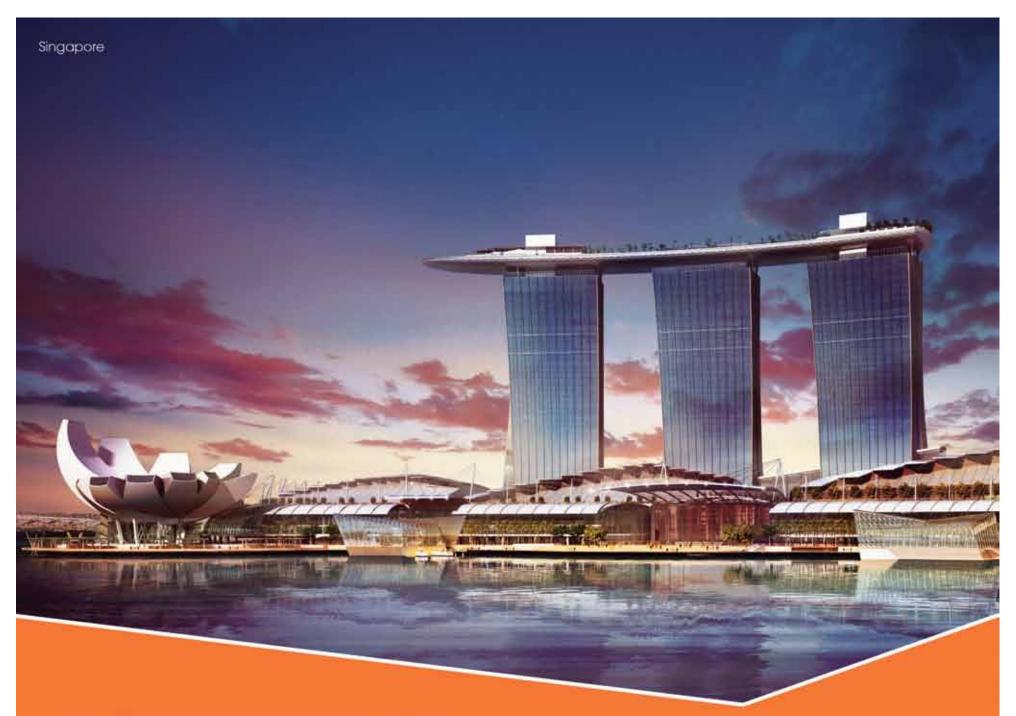
stood up to a referee in my life," he said.
"The referee's unfair and biased judgment during the game was inexcusable.

We are working for the country. The team owners are competing, putting a lot of money into the team. At the end of the football season we want to get into the league one," San Win told *The Myanmar Times* on April 30.

The disciplinary committee also charged Best United FC's assistant coach Aung Khin and players, Kyaw Lin Phyo and Kyaw Kyaw Tun who challenged a referee during the team's match against GFA FC on April 19 at Padonmar Stadium.

Aung Khin has been fined K100, 000 and hit with a one match ban.

Kyaw Lin Phyo and Kyaw Kyaw Tun have also both been banned one match each.



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Man Utd greats will

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'Couldn't be prouder'

Obama lauds Collin's historic coming out

WITH President Barack Obama praising his courage, NBA center Jason Collins was awestruck on April 30 after becoming the first major US professional team sport athlete to reveal he is gay.

"Not even in my wildest dreams could I ever imagine the support that I've received," Collins told ABC television in his first interview since revealing his sexuality on Monday in an essay for Sports Il-

"Random people just come up and shake your hand and say 'thank you,' and it touches you and you just feel honored and humbled."

Obama, who telephoned Collins to express his support on April 29, called the overwhelming support for the seven-foot (2.13m) veteran of 12 NBA seasons a sign of growing acceptance of homosexuality in American society.

"I told him I couldn't be prouder," Obama said at a White House news con-

"One of the extraordinary measures of progress that we've seen in this country has been the recognition that the (Lesbian-Gay-Bisexual-Transgender) munity deserves full equality - not just partial equality, not just tolerance, but a recognition that they're fully part of the American family."

Collins, who helped New Jersey reach the NBA Finals twice in younger days, began dealing with the change from unheralded journeyman to gay role model.

"It doesn't get any bigger than the leader of the free world giving you a call and saying you did a good thing. I did something not only to help myself but to empower others," Collins told the New York Times on April 30.

Celebrities and athletes from around the sports world expressed support for Collins, including a host of NBA players.

"All my respect and support to Jason Collins," tweeted Argentine guard Manu Ginobili of the NBA San Antonio Spurs. "Thanks to his courage perhaps someday an athlete's sexual preference will be irrelevant, Congrats,

Not everyone was supportive, with ESPN NBA commentator Chris Broussard calling Collins a "sinner."

"I don't agree with his statement," Collins told the Times. "This is all about tolerance and acceptance. This is where the discussion begins."

"You can't please everyone," Collins told ABC. "You just try to live your life by your values and go about your business."

Retired NBA star Charles Barkley says there are gay NBA players who have chosen not to come out.

"We've all played with gay guys. We didn't treat them bad," Barkley said. "For us to have an honest discussion, if guys don't like it, they should be able to say it and not get crucified."

Collins said he

MORE ON



BRIEFS

NEW YORK

Avalanche land top draft pick from

The Colorado Avalanche, who finished with the second-worst record in the National Hockey League this season, will pick first in June's NHL Draft after winning the top spot in the draft lottery

The Avalanche had the second-best chance of claiming the top pick at 18.8 percent but came through to the disappointment of Florida, which had the best chance at the top pick, 1-in-4 odds, but must settle

for the second selection.

Tampa Bay will pick third, followed by Nashville, Carolina, Calgary, Edmonton, Buffalo, New Jersey, Dallas, Philadelphia, Phoenix, Winnipeg and Columbus.

KARACHI Hair stylist grooms budding

Pakistan bowlers

The tough-guy fast bowlers of yesteryear might not approve, but Pakistan's budding young quicks were coached on their appearance at a training camp last week - by a hair

The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) organised the 10-day camp led by legendary paceman Wasim Akram after concerns were raised over the standard of fast bowlers coming through from the youth ranks.

As well as being drilled in technique and fitness, the players were also given a lecture by top Pakistani stylist Nabila Ahmed on how to look good off the field. - AFP

YANGON

during an

NBA games.

Photo: AFP

3-on-3 basketball tournament at Aung San Stadium

The Ministry of Sport and Myanmar Basketball Federation have jointly organised a 3-on-3 summer basketball tournament to be held at Aung San Indoor Stadium in Yangon from May 11 to 15.

Teams from three different categories will compete. There will be an open format for male and female players and separate games for players under 16 and players under 18.

Around nearly 50 teams are expected to compete in this year's tournament. - Kyaw Zin Hlaing

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Pinpointing the most influential demographic in Myanmar

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MYANMARTIMES

HEARTBEAT OF THE NATION



A look at the new Myanmar Times





The sun rises for us in the daily era

WENDY MADRIGAL

Chief Operations Officer of MCM

THE Daily Era has dawned in Myanmar and Myanmar Consolidated Media (MCM) is poised to make history once again. With the launch of daily versions of our award-winning weeklies, MCM will again raise the bar for publishers nationwide by pushing our international-standard reporting and design to even greater heights.

Making history is nothing new for MCM. When it launched The Myanmar Times in 2000, the company made history by becoming the nation's first privately owned English language newspaper in more than 30 years, as - the first of their kind in the country - have well as the first Myanmar-foreign joint venture publication since 1962.

In 2012, The Myanmar Times became the nation's first newspaper to win international acclaim, receiving an award for Excellence in Journalism from SOPA (The Society of Publish-

MCM upcoming dailies are poised for even more ground-breaking achievements. Featuring unbeatable news coverage, a top-level readership, and high-end advertisers, our dailies will quickly rise head and shoulders above the

Soon after launching, our daily publications will expand to include special lift-out sections on various sectors of the market, including Prime Location (property) on Tuesdays, Wheels (auto industry) on Wednesdays, Lift (youth and to quality information and analysis, education) on Thursdays, and The Pulse (weekend scene) on Fridays.

MCM's history shows that it has always been on the leading edge of publishing in Myanmar. A year after launching The Myanmar Times in English, MCM launched the Myanmar language edition and opened a bureau in Mandalay. When the capital moved to Nay Pyi Taw in 2005, the company quickly opened a third bureau in order to remain close to the nation's key decision makers.

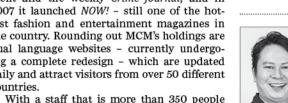
In 2006, MCM expanded its operations to include a successful book publishing depart-

ment and the weekly Crime Journal, and in 2007 it launched NOW! - still one of the hottest fashion and entertainment magazines in the country. Rounding out MCM's holdings are dual language websites - currently undergoing a complete redesign - which are updated daily and attract visitors from over 50 different countries

strong, MCM takes pride in serving as a model of responsible business management and staff development - while focusing on breaking the news that matters most to the public. Over the last 10 years, our journalism training courses produced more than 200 highly qualified reporters. Many of our staff writers produce stories picked up by international news outlets, including AFP and Bloomberg, and they are frequently awarded coveted fellowships for ad-

vanced training abroad.

While the print market in other parts of the world may be shrinking, our exponential growth pattern shows that it remains a strong player in the Myanmar media industry. There's no doubt that newspapers are the strongest medium for shaping public opinion in Myanmar, and The Myanmar Times takes that role seriously. With the launch of its dailies, The Myanmar Times will cement its position as the nation's most trusted source of news, built over the years through our unrivalled commitment













HTAY MAUNG AUNG KYAW 00







KHIN THANDAR KAUNG HTET

HEAD OF

FOREIGN EDITORIAL EXPERTS



SPECIAL SECTIONS

















JESSE GAGE





As Myanmar reintegrates we serve as an outstanding model for government and private-sector leaders

THE new daily era promises a brighter, stands as one of the most successful in inclusive press that represents the varmar Times Editor-in-Chief Ross Dunkley looks at the future of the industry of journalism and our thirst for pro- magazines - requires that we as edi- tage of by virtue of our experience, skill reliable information and intelligent and the place the newspaper will occupy as an essential part of the nation's challenging of circumstances.

yesterday. U Myat Swe

Taunggyi Prison in Shar

was released from

under a presidential

amnesty after serving

a 14-year sentence.

more than eight years o

since The Myanmar Times opened its commitment. At a time when many of zealously guard our independence in excellent model for government and electorate well and within society it is doors – a substantial achievement and the world's publishers grapple with dean age where many mainstream media private-sector leaders. built by the earnest labours of count- clining revenues, plunging circulation outlets have fallen prey to multinationless dedicated journalists. Some have and the mass migration of readers to al conglomerates and corporate spin. hard to imagine that just a decade ago it is in the government's interest to

press is but one element of that. We tions in a nation that still falls far short the nation reintegrates with the global lications and a single state-owned and ground clatter that such a step engenstand witness to some of the most of its potential for sound and informacommunity. The natural progression operated daily newspaper. substantial changes in half a century tive publishing. to Myanmar broadly and to the media in particular. A new mood has spread lack of access to computers and the to dailies. Under any definition of de- Myanmar's official press has become newspapers have played well for more through the nation's newsrooms, internet limit the impact of cutting- mocracy, this right should serve as the less relevant in the new Myanmar. Its than a century. and journalists toiled under the excru- theless embrace as others have the cept it.

recent times. Its success confirms the ger has fuelled an explosion of new tutions will bring liberalisation within the energy and enthusiasm of a nation loyalty we have attracted through 13 difficult years and reinforces our love decade - some 150 weeklies and 200 are uniquely prepared to take advanducing the best news under the most tors and reporters constantly update and devotion to a sector that demands analysis remain essential, and shining

SECONDARY POINTERS Other major stories get a brief summary on the front page to give

news you need to know

MORE than 13 years have passed these circumstances remains a chief tent available. It also requires that we to embrace the world, we serve as an moved on. Others remain to this day. free online news portals, *The Myanmar* The nation is in a new era and the Times continues to expand its opera-changes looming in the years ahead as than a dozen or so regular weekly pub-wheeling press, despite all the back-

We know our readers: busy professionals who

briefs provides just that.

Trader

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Numbers

of our efforts on behalf of the country In a region where, for the moment, and its people lies in our transition daily news fare since the early 1960s, life and at a nominal cost – a role that

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Serving a readership whose hun-that liberalisation of the nation's insti-interests of their readers and reflect publications in Myanmar in the last the media sector, a development we eager to embrace the world and a new our approach to ensure that we offer the most rigorous standards of integlight in dim places is more essential Confronting and transforming the most exclusive and relevant con-rity. At a time when Myanmar aims than ever.

Publications such as The Myanmar integral part of the nation's fabric. from readers and advertisers alike and relevant to our unique surroundings. Our newsroom looks eagerly to the day of tomorrow because they serve the Phnom Penh Post in Cambodia.)

a forum for feedback whilst acting as a We've come a long way. Indeed, it is mechanism for correction. Ultimately, We also stand ready to embrace the the nation home-produced no more nurture the criticism typical of a freeders. A healthy society needs news that While maintaining a monopoly on is available to people from all walks of

where for decades publishers, editors edge global media strategies, we none-baseline for all who are prepared to accontinued existence must remain in As we enter into this historical daily doubt, as it holds readers' attention by era, we do so with the unbridled opti-

Flu virus 'one of most lethal', says WHO

QATAR A

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announce The Myanmar Times daily but we are confident we are giving ing will be giving our readers qualmay go are the editors, reporters and rienced - will raise the bar on what will have a 32-page standard before our readers one of the best newspaity journalism and great judgment. owners of publications who forget a today's readers expect from their liftouts and specials. More often than pers in the region. not readers can expect up to 48 pages With a 100-strong team of report- mar. in the daily, making it a compreheners and sub editors, editors, photogsive read and a must have for those raphers, translators, designers and always debating how to deliver our reader, both informing and enter- the tradition of journalistic excelwho wish to keep abreast of the correspondents we have the largest news via new forms to increase readbreathtaking changes that continue news gathering force in the country, ership and reach. And while we are A new order is now definitely unago as a weekly. to sweep the country.

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> cial bias have no part in fair and objective reporting - not for the readers As they contract in most parts of and certainly not for The Myanmar

booming. We believe Myanmar is Today we celebrate a change in time we have been as fair and inde-

That's where we will win in Myan-newspaper's most precious asset: the newspaper. They will open the door bond with its readers. We need to fo- for a younger generation of reporters

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