



Kyat devaluation sparks inflation pressure concerns

BUSINESS 24-25



British soldier Lee Rigby slain in gruesome attack

WORLD 32



Matinee madness: Death metal in the afternoon

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Hluttaw extends curfew despite NLD opposition

The Pyidaungsu Hluttaw agreed to President U Thein Sein's request to extend the Meiktila curfew for another 60 days on May 21, despite National League for Democracy leader Daw Aung San Suu Kyi telling MPs that there is no need for a curfew if the government does its job properly. **NEWS 3**

Families to appeal Meiktila convictions

The families of seven men convicted over the killing of a Buddhist monk in Meiktila said they would appeal sentences handed down on May 21, which ranged from two years to life in prison. Critics have also questioned why only Muslims have been tried so far over the March violence in Meiktila. At least 44 people were killed and around 12,000 displaced before order was eventually restored.



A Muslim man struggles as he is taken back to a police van after being sentenced at Meiktila's township court on May 21.



NEWS 4

IDPs wait over relocation delays

The Rakhine State Government says its plans for rehousing people displaced by violence last year ahead of the monsoon season are running up against opposition from NGOs, local communities and even the IDPs themselves.

NEWS 20

China's diplomats turn to Facebook

The social networking site is banned in China but for the country's embassy in Yangon it has become a valuable outreach tool in its efforts to counter widespread anti-Chinese sentiment.

BUSINESS 25

Shan State clashes will not delay pipeline: CNPC

The Shwe gas pipeline will open as planned at the end of this month, a spokesperson for majority investor CNPC says, despite recent clashes between the Tatmadaw and Shan rebels near the pipeline route in northern Shan State.

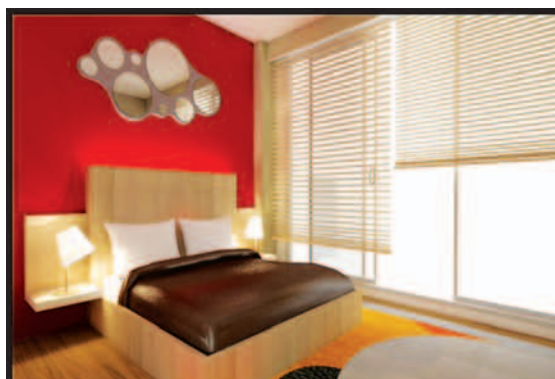
PROPERTY 30

Buyers race across the river

Renewed speculation that a bridge will be built to link Dala township to downtown Yangon has sparked a property boom across the Yangon River, where an acre of land is selling for K7-8 million, around double the market price in December.

PAGE 09

PHOTO BY AP



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THE INSIDER

The local lowdown & best of the web

Cyber island-hopping

Google has announced a new addition to its Street View Trekker, which will allow online viewers to digitally traverse the Galapagos Islands.

In early May, Google representatives travelled to the islands to collect 360-degree imagery on land and in water. The images will be available on Google Maps in late 2013.

Gangnam Style at Cannes

A man from rural France successfully impersonated South Korean 'Gangnam Style' entertainer Psy at the Cannes Film Festival, eating, drinking and partying with the stars for two days.

The double was dressed exactly like Psy, with his trademark jackets and round sunglasses. He spent a day at the top-ranked Martinez beach restaurant and partied at night at the A-listers' Carlton hotel.

The 34-year-old Psy lookalike is Denis Carre, from Clermont-Ferrand. He said his resemblance to the entertainer first caused him trouble in a Dublin club last September.

"A crowd of people gathered around me, and the situation got totally out of control. We were only able to get out with the help of the bouncers. Then it happened again and again, to the point that the resemblance (to Psy) was causing problems in my private life," he said.

The original Psy appears to have been unfazed by the identity theft. He tweeted: "Seems like there's another ME at Cannes... say Hi to him." - AFP

Public's hunger grows for food substitute

An online funding campaign for a food replacement called Soylent has more than doubled its original goal of raising US\$100,000, attracting \$271,156 in donations a month ahead of its deadline.

The product, named in reference to the 1973 sci-fi flick *Soylent Green*, was developed by 24-year-old software engineer Rob Rhinehart. It attracted online attention when he consumed nothing but the homemade cocktail of vitamins, minerals and macro-nutrients for 30 days and documented his progress on his blog. His philosophy is

simple, as summarised in the product pitch:

"For many people, on many occasions, food is a hassle, especially when trying to eat well. Suppose we had a default meal that was the nutritional equivalent of water: cheap, healthy, convenient and ubiquitous."

He also believes Soylent could have implications on a global scale: "Food is the fossil fuel of human energy. It is an enormous market full of waste, regulation, and biased allocation with serious geo-political implications. And we're deeply dependent on it. In some countries people are dying of obesity, others starvation."

While there are currently plans to distribute the product only in the US, there is an understandable amount of interest in the product's potential due to the fact it does not require refrigeration, is easy to transport, is cheap and environmentally friendly to produce, contains no pesticides, hormones, or preservatives, requires just clean water to prepare, does no harm to animals and drastically lowers sanitation requirements.

Tweet of the week:

Comedian Ricky Gervais stirred up controversy on Twitter this week, when he pointed out that MTV and various celebrities using the "pray for Oklahoma" hashtag might find they are able to be more effective in aiding the relief effort by making donations to The Red Cross.

He wrote a short rant comprising several tweets which said that praying for a situation does nothing to resolve it, and proposed #ActuallyDoSome-



Ricky Gervais
@rickygervais



Following

"@MTVNews: Beyoncé, Rihanna & Katy Perry send prayers to #Oklahoma #PrayForOklahoma"

I feel like an idiot now...I only sent money.

thingForOklahoma might be a better use of time and resources. The self-proclaimed

atheist deleted the original tweet after it raised the ire of many religious Twitter users.



Style Statement

NOW!

Model and actress Soe Nandar Kyaw was born in Yangon on August 16, 1994. She is in Grade 11. After taking up modelling in 2012, her career has moved along impressively. She now has two film credits and one TV series 'The Signs of Love' under her belt, not to mention appearances in various TV advertisements. She was named Miss Lily, Style Star and Miss Photogenic for MRTV4 in 2012.

Bio: Ei Ei Thu, Photo: Htet Aung Kyaw (Studio HAK)

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REGIONAL INSIDER

Malaysian election sends positive message

THE Malaysian election three weeks ago brought great satisfaction to all dispassionate observers.

Despite some sour protests to the contrary, it showed that democracy is alive and well in Malaysia, and it sent a positive message around the region, especially to dictatorial backwaters like Laos and Vietnam.

"Malaysian voters reaffirmed their commitment to democracy and civic participation with an amazing and peaceful 80 percent turnout," said Phil Robertson, deputy Asia director for Human Rights Watch.

As for the actual result, the governing National Front coalition and its leader, Prime Minister Najib Razak, won comfortably, picking up 133 seats to the opposition People's Alliance's 89.

But hidden within that seemingly handsome 45-seat margin were some nasty gremlins that will test the PM's character and Malaysia's social cohesion.

After its woeful 2008 election per-

formance, the Front's dominant member, the United Malays National Organisation (UMNO), quickly dumped the incumbent PM Abdullah Badawi and shunted in Najib to turn around its fortunes.

But on May 5, not only did he fail to do that, but an additional seven seats were lost, the key state of Selangor was not regained, and most shocking of all, the Front lost the popular vote by a margin of almost 400,000.

It was the narrowest election victory in Malaysian history.

Only among rural Malays in its northern heartland did the Front's vote hold up. It clawed back Kedah state and made gains in Kelantan and Perak.

But it lost ground heavily in the richer and more politically strategic states of Johor and Selangor, as well as in Najib's home state of Pahang and in resource-rich Sabah.

That said, while the opposition Alliance under its dynamic leader An-

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war Ibrahim, did extremely well in urban and non-Malay areas, it failed to win over the huge vote bank of rural Malay Muslims.

The Alliance's star performer was its Chinese component, the Democratic Action Party (DAP), which won a stunning 38 seats - second only to UMNO in the party rankings.

As well, the DAP's veteran leader Lim Kit Siang hammered the Johor chief minister in the election's most watched constituency, Gelang Patah.

In contrast, the government's main Chinese partner won only seven seats, despite massive resources and government sweeteners.

Najib called the setback an unexpected "Chinese tsunami", but in fact the giant wave of discontent began 40 years ago when non-Malays were officially designated as second-class citizens.

The PM had sought to pare back the apartheid-like Malay privileges, but he simply lacked the clout within UMNO to do it.

Still, his anti-reformist opponents within the Front's more rabid Islamic wing were themselves soundly defeated - as were many of the opposition's fundamentalist members.

So another positive aspect of the election was the way it confirmed that a majority of Malaysians have no time for Islamic extremists.

So where does all this leave Najib and Anwar?

Well, the elder Anwar, 65, had promised to step down if the Alliance did not win the election, but he has already reversed that vow.

If anything, the electorate's mes-

sage to Anwar was that he should cede the opposition leadership to someone whose personal life is less tainted and whose political decision-making is less erratic.

As for Najib, 59, while he is better off, his failure to reverse the opposition gains made in the last election and his penchant for dithering means that his grip on the premiership is far from secure.

Later this year, UMNO will hold its annual assembly and it is virtually certain that calls will be made for a leadership review.

The chances are they will fail, not because of Najib's performance, but because there is a dearth of dynamic and visionary figures in the senior ranks of the party.

Consequently, the incremental gains by the opposition are likely to steadily continue, and one day a tsunami will wash away the ruling party's half-century hold on power - and the world will not end.

MPs extend Meiktila curfew order for 60 days



THE Pyidaungsu Hluttaw has approved a 60-day extension to the state of emergency declared by President U Thein Sein following the violence at Meiktila. The decision came despite Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and most National League for Democracy MPs voting against keeping the curfew in place.

The president issued the decree, ordinance 1/2013, on March 22, as days of bloody unrest in the town in Mandalay Region left 44 dead and nearly 1600 homes damaged or destroyed by arson. The inter-communal violence later spread to Bago Region.

Under the constitution, the order has to be approved by parliament within 60 days.

At a special session of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw called to discuss the question, MPs approved a 60-day extension 489 to 43, with 13 members abstaining. However, parliament voted against the option of extending the curfew indefinitely.

While the president had urged MPs to accept an extension, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi said during the discussion that if the authorities acted under existing laws there was no need to extend the state of emergency.

“We will have to reconsider whether the state of emergency is really needed,” she told the meeting, adding that a state of emergency should be invoked only if the authorities had failed to take effective action under existing laws.

“If the executive branch can keep the peace, there is no need to extend the state of emergency,” said Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, who chairs the Pyithu Hluttaw’s Rule of Law, Stability and Peace Committee.

The National League for Democracy leader was one of 13 MPs who discussed the proposed extension. Pyithu Hluttaw representative U Thein Nyunt of Thingangyun said that if the authorities had carried out their duties “energetically” before the violence broke out, things would not have reached the stage where a state of emergency was necessary.

“Risk to life and property can be prevented by invoking section 144,” he said, noting the public-order powers at the disposal of magistrates, the police and the armed forces. Their failure to act had made the presidential decree necessary, he said.

“In the transition [to democracy], there may be demonstrations, riots and unexpected challenges. Are we going to have to declare a state of emergency every time we encounter them?” he asked, saying the violence and the response to it had damaged the country’s image.

In an interview with *The Myanmar Times*, Minister for Religious Affairs U San Sint conceded that the government “failed to cope with this problem effectively during the first two days of rioting”.

“The delay was caused because the police force was insufficient. But later we handled the problem effectively with strong and united security forces,” he said.

During the hluttaw debate, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi said: “It’s difficult to make an analysis due to the lack of transparency in the way the government handled the Meiktila riots. The declaration of a state of emergency should be followed by a return to normal conditions as soon as possible, and the public needs to know what efforts are being undertaken for the restoration of normality.”

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi said the invocation of a state of emergency should be subject to strict rules and regulations, adding that the wording “danger to life and property of citizens” had “an enormously broad range of meanings”.

She also criticised the president’s right to declare a state of emergency after consulting with the 11-member National Defence and Security Council. “Is it right that a team that does not contain any members who are directly given responsibility by the public has the authority to decide on this order?” she said.

But Yangon Region Amyotha Hluttaw representative Daw Khin Waing Kyi said another member of the NLD, U Win Htein of Meiktila, had supported an extension of the curfew.

“It seems Meiktila is not very stable yet. That’s why the president wants to extend the order for another 60 days. ... U Win Htein of Meiktila has already told us that it needs to be extended for safety reasons,” Daw Khin Waing Kyi told *The Myanmar Times*.

However, U Win Htein said he only wanted to extend it for 30 days so instead of backing the motion he abstained.

Meiktila resident U Htein Lin Khine said he wanted the order to be lifted as soon as possible.

“Most of the people in Meiktila ... want the curfew to be lifted and the military forces to protect civilians under the law, instead of using section 144,” he said last week.

Myitkyina peace talks set for May 28

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PEACE talks will finally resume this week between the government and the Kachin Independence Organisation on Myanmar soil, sources close to the peace process are reporting.

An attempt to resume the talks in the long-running conflict on April 6 collapsed because – according to activists – China would not allow the presence of international observers.

The third round of the talks is now scheduled to begin in Myitkyina, capital of Kachin State, on May 28. “Both sides have confirmed May 28, and they are now preparing a detailed program for the talks,” said U Hla Maung Shwe, a peace facilitator from Myanmar Peace Centre.

“[Head government negotiator] U Aung Min said the government agrees to allow observers invited by the KIO. I expected the talks to succeed because both sides want results, but I don’t know how long the talks will take,” said U Hla Maung Shwe.

It was not clear, however, whether any observers would attend. The United States has previously stated it would only get involved in the talks if it was invited by both sides.

Lamai Gum Ja of the Peace-talk Creation Group said: “We are now preparing Majewel Hall to hold the peace talks. We were informed that the KIO had invited observers, but we don’t have the list.”

Mizzima reported on May 22 that United Nations special adviser on Myanmar Vijay Nambiar would attend the talks, quoting a Kachin activist.

A 17-year ceasefire between the government and KIO broke down in June 2011. The conflict is thought to have displaced almost 100,000 people.



IN PICTURES

A volunteer distributes pots of water to pilgrims at Shwedagon Pagoda on May 24, the full moon day of Kasone. Thousands visited the pagoda during the day, which marks the birth of the Guatama Buddha, to pour water over banyan trees, Buddha images and stupas. *Photo: Aung Htay Hlaing*

Police charge Thanlyin farmers

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A LAND dispute near the Thilawa Special Economic Zone has intensified with the Myanmar Navy applying to file criminal charges against farmers. Police have arrested, charged and bailed five local farmers for allegedly trespassing and obstructing public officials.

The charges come after the farmers, from Thanlyin’s Alwan Sut village, began cultivating the disputed land in Thanlyin township. They say they notified the authorities of their plan to prepare the fields but received no response.

One of the farmers, U Hla Myint, told *The Myanmar Times* on May 21 that the group was anxious about the charges.

“The police said a warrant officer from No 1 War Vessel had filed a complaint concerning the five of us,” he said.

“I was shocked to hear of the military complaint and didn’t dare go to the police station because I was afraid I would be locked up. But on May 21 the police told us we had to face charges. Not only have we lost our farmlands, now we’re accused of crimes.”

The long-running dispute was investigated by a parliamentary commission in December, when commission members met naval officers, district administration officers and farmers.

Pyithu Hluttaw representative U Aung Zin said commission members had recommended that the government pay reasonable compensation to the farmers.

They also advised both the farmers and the navy to take no action pending a resolution of the dispute but U Hla Myint said the navy had ignored the order.

“We’ve been waiting a long time for a decision. We can’t wait any more. We’ve been telling the government that we fear for our livelihood because we couldn’t earn any money last year, but received no reply. We told the officials we were going to farm the land in mid-May, but they did not respond, so we went ahead,” he said.

U Lwin Oo, police second lieutenant at the station in Thanlyin, said the farmers had been charged under sections 447, 186 and 114, which relate to criminal trespass, obstruction and abetting. “Officers from No 1 War Vessel filed the complaint on May 19. It’s up to the court to decide what will happen to them,” he said.

U Hla Myint
Farmer from Alwan Sut village

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UN urges end to use of child soldiers in Myanmar

UNITED Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said the government has made progress in reducing the recruitment of children into the armed forces but still needs to stamp out the practice.

In June 2012, the government signed an agreement with the United Nations to end the recruitment of children under the age of 18 as child soldiers.

While complaints about recruitment of child soldiers in Myanmar

declined to 32 cases in 2012 from 172 cases in 2009, a new report to the Security Council found that the military continued to target unaccompanied children and orphans found in workplaces, streets, bus and train stations, ferry terminals, markets and their home villages.

The report, released on May 20, said that from April 1, 2009, to January 31, 2013, the International Labour Organisation received 802 complaints of underage recruitment into

the military, of which 770 cases were verified.

Calls to Myanmar's mission to the UN were not answered last week.

A task force monitoring child soldiers noted that the majority of boys recruited were aged 14-17, but "children as young as 10 years old have also been reported to have been recruited", the report said.

The task force continued to receive reports of recruitment and use of child soldiers by armed groups, including

the Kachin, Karen, Shan and Wa, the report said.

Mr Ban also urged the government to close a loophole that allows the recruitment of 16-year-olds who have finished 10th grade and obtained special authorisation from the Office of the Adjutant General to join the army.

In 2012, the report said, 167 boys were enlisted under this exception, which goes against the agreement that Myanmar signed with the UN banning the recruitment of child soldiers. – AP



A woman sits in front of her shelter in Mizigwazon IDP camp in Sittwe township on May 17. Photo: Aung Htay Hlaing

IDPs suffer as regional govt searches for resettlement sites



AUNG SHIN

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EFFORTS to re-house displaced families in Rakhine State ahead of the monsoon rains are floundering because of disagreement over relocation sites, state government officials said last week.

The problems have arisen as the government in Nay Pyi Taw, the United Nations and international NGOs work to build shelters for up to 130,000 displaced people, the majority of whom are Muslim.

"The main problem is locating sites for shelter construction. [The regional government] finds a site, but the UN and INGOs sometimes disagree. And local Rakhine request us to change the site we have chosen because they worry [about more violence occurring]. We also have to bear in mind the risks from natural disaster, and take into account the views of the two communities," Rakhine State Minister for Development U Hla Han told *The Myanmar Times* on May 20.

"Temporary shelters don't take much time to build. It can be done within two weeks. The problem is where to put them. We have to

negotiate with the UN, INGOs, local people, IDPs and construction companies," he said.

The regional government plans to build 1394 temporary shelters in the state capital Sittwe but only 700 have so far been completed, he said. The government also plans to build more than 900 temporary shelters for members of both communities in Rathedaung, Kyauktaw, Kyaukpyu, Pauktaw, Mrauk U, Myebon and Minbya by the end of June.

IDPs were not improving.

"We all stay here on the ground; I cannot sleep. I have no idea what to say. We have to accept it, whether it is good or not, because we have no other place to go or to sleep," he said. "I lived in Nar Si quarter before, in a two-storey cement building. Here the conditions are very hard, particularly when I have to answer the call of nature. There are no proper toilets here."

But U Myo Than, a senior telecommunications ministry official in the

face lack of cooperation from the IDP camps," he said.

Rakhine State Government spokesman U Win Myaing said the government was trying to manage IDPs in a "balanced" way but was facing problems.

"Sometimes the IDPs move from one camp to another without informing us," he said.

U Kyaw Sein, a 62-year-old Muslim from the Mizigwazon IDP camp, said there was little trust between the regional government and displaced Muslims.

"Government officials sometimes come to our camp. We told them about our need for shelter and food but only registered IDPs get provisions. You see how we are making temporary huts from canvas – the officials don't believe what we say, so why should we believe them?" he said.

Communal conflict in Rakhine State in June and October 2012 left 192 dead, 265 wounded, 8614 homes destroyed and more than 100,000 people homeless, a report by the Rakhine Investigation Commission found.

"I am not happy here at all. I want to go back to my home but it was burned in the conflict almost one year ago," said U Sein Tha Tun, a Rakhine resident of Mingan camp who previously lived in Setyounsou quarter in Sittwe. "I cannot rebuild it again. I need a home, not a shelter like this."

'We all stay here on the ground; I cannot sleep. ... [But] we have no other place to go.'

U Sultan

Muslim IDP from Thechaung camp in Sittwe township

One temporary shelter is enough for eight households, or up to 56 people.

The regional and central governments and UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) are providing the majority of funding for the shelters. U Hla Han said about 50 local construction companies are building the shelters under the guidance of the regional government.

But U Sultan, 52, from the Thechaung camp, said conditions for

state and member of the regional government's information team, said the government's efforts to build temporary shelters are also coming up against a "lack of cooperation" from IDPs.

"The construction of temporary shelters was originally supposed to be completed by the end of May, but then we were delayed by the cyclone. UNHCR will fund temporary shelters in Myebon and Pauktaw but the process there has been delayed. We also



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Prospect of education draws displaced to new camp

Administrators at Tharsigone camp in Kayin State's Thandaung township forced to turn away hundreds of displaced families over lack of funds

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VILLAGERS displaced in one of Myanmar's long internal conflicts have been telling their stories as the country moves towards democracy and, it is hoped, peace. In their view, the key to both is their children's education.

The village of Marbwedo was torched in 2005, during fighting between government troops and the Karen National Liberation Army near Thaukyaykhat stream in Kayin State.

"All the villagers fled their homes and took refuge in the forest," said resident Ma Naw Aye Wai Phaw, 31.

After hiding in the mountainous forests of Bago for five years, they moved near the town of Thandaunggyi in the northern Kayin State township of Thandaung.

"During that time, some villagers went home to grow vegetables during a lull in the fighting. But we didn't think it was safe enough to send back the whole family," said Ma Naw Aye Wai Phaw.

"We apologised to the owners of some houses who let us stay on their property. Our husbands went back to the village and grew *phala* plants which were exported to China for their traditional medicine," she said.

Another factor that kept the families in place while their husbands went back to grow crops was education.



IDPs from the Tharsigone camp in northern Kayin State, which was established with support from the Norwegian Refugee Council. Photo: Nyein Ei Ei Htwe

"I didn't go back because three of my children were attending the local primary school. We paid for our living costs and school fees with money we borrowed from merchants. We repaid them, with interest, when we sold the crops," said Ma Naw Aye Wai Phaw.

Now, 25 displaced families from 16 villages destroyed in the conflict are being supported by the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) and other donors in a new camp, Tharsigone, built along Nawbubaw mountain in Thandaung township.

The camp was established in November 2012 on land provided by the government. NRC funded the construction of 25 homes, at a cost of K2.7

million (US\$3000) each.

"We moved here in January after registering as homeless," said Ma Naw Aye Wai Phaw. "As well as selling crops, my husband catches fish from the stream and makes fish paste to sell. Sometimes he collects areca nuts. But all our spare money goes towards our children's education. We don't want them to be uneducated like us."

Tharsigone camp secretary U Nay Than said the camp had received requests from more than 200 families to stay in the camp but NRC has no more budget for housing.

He agreed that a major attraction at Tharsigone was access to education. "They understand education is very

important and now, every child in the camp attends school," he said. "They feel staying in the camp is safe. But we don't have the funds to accommodate any more."

Camp resident Daw Naw Dar E, 73, was forced to flee her home in Thayaryu village in 2003.

She said she hopes that a respite in fighting will give her grandchildren the chance to attend school.

"I have many grandchildren and I want them to be educated so that their lives will be easier than ours. My own children were not well educated, because of the war," she said. "I don't want my grandchildren to be like us when they are old, so I tell my daughter to send them to school whatever the weather."

Daw Naw Dar E said she does not know what the future holds for her and her husband, who was unable to speak for seven years because of conflict-related trauma.

"We can't go back our native village, which is two days' walking distance away, and we can't grow crops. Sometimes our daughter's family helps feed us, but they have their own troubles," she said.

When they lived in Thayaryu they would run away whenever soldiers came, as they would destroy whatever they found, she said.

"In those days, even hearing unknown voices was enough to send us fleeing into the forest, whether the soldiers were from the government or the KNU. But now they are our friends, and we are not afraid. Now, when we

meet with soldiers, they give us money and food."

The conditions in the camp, while far from perfect, are attracting more people who fled their homes because of the conflict.

Mother of five Ma Aye Aye Aung, 27, said she has written to the camp authorities asking if she can live there.

"My husband and I worked in our old village to grow *phala* plants and we placed our children in our neighbour's

25

The number of families living in Tharsigone camp, which was established in November 2012

house. Our eldest daughter is in grade two now so we worked hard for her to go to school and we want to move into the camp because it is near the school," she said.

She said camp life was better than moving about in the forest, but that she had no income and was dependent on donors for food. "Living off donors is far from ideal," Ma Aye Aye Aung said. "But for us our children's lives are the most important thing. There are no schools in the forest."

Call for applications for journalism training

With the support of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation's (UNESCO) International Programme for the Development of Communication, Myanmar Consolidated Media, publisher of *The Myanmar Times*, is seeking applications for capacity-building programs for print media journalists in Myanmar.

A four- or five-week training program will be conducted for journalists with minimal or no experience. Trainees will have the opportunity to undertake an internship at *The Myanmar Times* upon concluding the course.

The program will be conducted in July-August 2013 by expatriate and Myanmar journalism instructors outside office hours. English skills and a university degree are preferred but not essential. Successful applicants will need to provide a release form from their employer for the duration of the course. Applications should include an up-to-date CV and cover letter explaining why the applicant wants to undertake the training. Applications close on Friday, June 14.

For further information or to submit an application please email:

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KNU meets villagers over peace process

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LEADERS of the Karen National Union last week sought feedback from Kayin State residents during two days of meetings in Thandaung township on May 14 and 15.

The discussions were held in Thandaung's Myathar Khon village and attended by more than 850 people.

"We are holding two days of meeting with residents and representatives to discover how they feel about our taking part in the peace process with the government," said U Saw Thant Tun, a central executive committee member of KNU.

U Kyi Win, a negotiator between the national government and the KNU, said lasting peace would not be achieved unless it is backed by ordinary people.

"Peace cannot prevail only through the participation of leaders - the people must also take part," he said.

Phadoh Saw Hla Tun, also a KNU central executive committee member, said there are four key steps in the peace process: reaching a ceasefire, consolidating the ceasefire, conducting political dialogue and engaging in political participation.

"We are consolidating the ceasefire agreement," he said, adding that the KNU will only contest elections once all four steps have been completed. "The political [dialogue] process will include amending the constitution."

He said that if minorities



Phadoh Saw Hla Tun, a central executive committee member of the Karen National Union, speaks at a meeting with Kayin people on May 15. Photo: Win Ko Ko Latt

were not granted more autonomy, they would refuse to give up arms.

Residents who attended the meeting said they supported the dialogue between the government and KNU.

"If [the KNU] is trying to create a genuine peace then we will encourage them because we want to enjoy the taste of

peace," Ma Nan Wai, 34, told *The Myanmar Times*.

"Genuine peace cannot be enjoyed without building trust between the government and the KNU," said U Saw Thant Ngwe, a resident of Kamine village who also attended the meeting.

"Our residents want both parties to trust each other."

CONSTITUTION IN FOCUS

Ethnic groups call for more power for states

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ETHNIC political parties are calling for a review of the 2008 constitution to focus on the distribution of power between the national and regional governments.

The proposal to form a committee to analyse the 2008 constitution and recommend amendments was submitted by Pyithu Hluttaw representative and Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP) joint vice chairman Thura U Aye Myint in March.

75%

The percentage of MPs that need to support a constitutional amendment for it to be approved

It was subsequently approved by both houses, and has sparked debate over what amendments should be prioritised. While ethnic Burmese parties are focusing on sections of the constitution related to restrictions on who can be president and the voting system used in elections, ethnic parties want to give greater authority to state and region governments and ensure a more equitable sharing of resources.

“If we can amend the 2008 constitution, the only thing we want is a genuine union. A genuine union policy means that the constitution restricts the authority of the central government and the rest of the power goes to state and region governments,” Shan Nationalities Democratic Party (SNDP) vice chairman U Sai Hsaung Hsi told *The Myanmar Times* in a recent interview.

The SNDP has scheduled a meeting of senior officials in Taunggyi ahead of the next session of parliament to discuss amendments to the constitution.

A major sore point for ethnic

parties – and minorities more generally – is the process of appointing chief ministers for the states and regions. Under the constitution, the president appoints state and region chief ministers, who then form their governments. This effectively gives the Burmese ethnic majority the right to decide the make-up of the regional governments, and makes voting for the state and region parliaments less important.

“Ethnic people want to amend this point,” U Sai Hsaung Hsi said. “The chief ministers should be chosen by the state and region hluttaws as the president is chosen by the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw and then the president should approve them.”

But U Aye Maung, chairman of the Rakhine Nationalities Development Party (RNDP), said he believed it was better to write a new constitution rather than amend the present one. He said the current constitution was “written by the USDP” and because of their strong majority, “whatever we try to amend, it’s in their hands”.

“Many people want to amend the present constitution. But for that to happen, the USDP and Tatmadaw parliamentarians will have to be generous – or there will be a confrontation during the next session,” he said.

The RNDP has quietly been building support for an amendment to section 455 of the constitution, which allows the national and regional governments to form joint ventures for economic activities that the constitution only permits the national government to undertake, such as large mining and energy projects. U Aye Maung said the RNDP wants the section to specify a minimum amount of profit that should go to state governments under the joint ventures.

U Aye Maung said the RNDP had agreed to temporarily shelve the proposal while the USDP-initiated review is being conducted.

“[U]nless the committee amends the main points, we will resume our efforts,” he said.

– Translated by *Thit Lwin*

Parties ready for debate on constitution changes



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POLITICAL parties are preparing to discuss potential amendments to the constitution at the next hluttaw session, which will begin in June, party leaders and MPs said last week.

The review was initiated by the Union Solidarity and Development Party. Joint vice chairman U Htay Oo said the party would “consider amendments based on what [other parties] submit to the hluttaw”.

The committee to review the constitution will be formed at the next session by the USDP. Neither the size nor the composition of the committee is known but Thura U Shwe Mann said in March that it would be “all-inclusive”.

Speaking to *The Myanmar Times* last week, U Htay Oo said the composition

“would not be much different from what other parties want”.

U Htay Oo said his party would support amendments that were in the interest of the nation and all people, rather than a single organisation or person.

Because amendments require a 75 per cent majority, they will require support from the majority of both Tatmadaw and USDP MPs.

U Win Myint, a Pyithu Hluttaw representative from Patheingyi for the National League for Democracy, said the party held its first meeting to discuss the constitutional review earlier this month.

“We assigned lawyers to review the constitution and after they have finished we will forward [their recommendations] to Daw Aung San Suu Kyi,” he said.

He said that the NLD would review the constitution “chapter by chapter”, and confirmed that the party would seek to amend the section banning Daw Aung San Suu Kyi from being president.

Other parties are also preparing for the review. U Khin Maung Swe of the National Democratic Force said his party had al-

‘We have assigned lawyers to review the constitution.’

U Win Myint
National League for Democracy MP

ready held three meetings on the constitutional review. “We will issue an announcement later this month and will forward it to the president and the Pyithu Hluttaw and Amyotha Hluttaw speakers,” he said. “We firstly will focus on [amending the] basic principles in the constitution.”

U Ye Tun, the Pyithu Hluttaw representative for Hsipaw from the Shan Nationalities Democratic Party, said it was important that the constitutional review committee should include outside experts. “I think we will discuss the inequality of power between the central government and regional governments,” U Ye Tun said.

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LGBT activists push for equality



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HOMOSEXUALS face abuse and violations of their human rights, say activists, who are planning to launch a campaign to raise awareness of their plight. Members of the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender community are working through the Myanmar LGBT Rights Network to promote equal rights and justice.

Ko Hla Myat Tun, an LGBT rights program officer for civil society group Colour Rainbow, told *The Myanmar Times* that activists plan to work with government officials, legal advisers, ethnic minorities, community-based organisations and the media to put a stop to homophobia.

'We want to contribute and put our abilities at the service of society.'

Ko Moe Aung
Myanmar MSM Network

"Homosexuals are being abused and face discrimination in education, jobs and healthcare. It's time to raise their voice in public," he said.

"We need to educate people that [being] LGBT is not a disease or a threat to society, or something to be ashamed of. We will work until society

accepts the reality of the homosexual condition and ends discrimination," he said.

Any kind of human rights abuse or violence can be reported to the network, Ko Hla Myat Tun said.

"We will try to help the victim by providing legal advice or support," he said. "The most important thing is to change long-term traditional attitudes, and LGBT themselves should take the lead [on this]. It's useless to blame government or the police or society, but we can offer respectful examples of LGBT identity."

Ko Moe Aung of Myanmar MSM Network said the law against homosexual activity should be abolished or amended as it is an affront to human rights.

"The police use abusive language and physical violence against us because of our physical appearance or profession. If they're in a good mood it goes no further than that, but otherwise they charge us with a crime," he said.

Most MSM members are poor and struggle to make a living while trying to steer clear of the police, he said, adding: "Our status is low, but that doesn't mean we're criminals. Discrimination by society denies us job opportunities."

Members of the LGBT community want to be treated as human beings and live in society with dignity but this is hindered by old attitudes and malpractices, he said.

"We want to contribute and put our abilities at the service of society," said Ko Moe Aung.

U Aung Myo Min, executive director of Equality Myanmar, said Myanmar retains laws against homosexuality that have long since repealed by Britain, its former colonial occupier. "We should lobby government to rethink [anti-sodomy sections of the Penal Code] ... [these laws are] an abuse



A couple kisses while taking part in an event to celebrate International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia on May 17 in Yangon. Photo: AFP

of human rights and discriminatory against homosexuals," he said.

On May 17, Colour Rainbow and Myanmar LGBT Rights Network marked International Day against Homophobia (IDAHO) with events in Yangon, Mandalay, Pyay, Monywa, Patheingyi, Kyaupadaung and Kawthoung that were supported by the British Embassy, UNAIDS and other organisations.

Dr Nyan Zaw, a member of the Myanmar National Human Rights Commission, said at a ceremony in Yangon that the commission would support the LGBT community's push

for equality. "Any abuse or physical torture can be reported to the commission and we will pursue the matter," he said.

Equality Myanmar and Colour Rainbow have documented instances of discrimination against, and human rights abuse of, LGBT individuals living in Myanmar. The study also shows how section 377 of the Penal Code, which bans sodomy, contributes to harmful social discrimination, impunity for law enforcement agents and the repression of sexual orientation and gender identity.

Shan army rejects reports on deaths of two MOGE workers

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A SPOKESMAN for the political wing of the Shan State Army-South has denied allegations that its soldiers killed two government employees at a Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise in northern Shan State earlier this month.

The clash, which took place on May 13 near the Chinese border, was first reported by the state-run *New Light of Myanmar* on May 15. The report said that members of the Restoration Council of Shan State/ Shan State Army (RCSS/SSA) opened fire on the compound near Naungmata village in Namkham township.

U Yawd Murng, secretary general of the RCSS Department of Foreign Affairs, said he was "100 percent" sure it was

'It was not us. We were not responsible.'

U Yawd Murng
RCSS/SSA spokesman

not Shan State Army-South soldiers.

"It was not us. We are not responsible," he told *The Myanmar Times* on May 22.

He said that the accusations were part of an ongoing government campaign to blame the group for unrest in the region.

U Yawd Murng, who was in Yangon for meetings with officials from the Myanmar Peace Centre, said he did not know which group carried out the attack, which came at a time of increased tension in Shan State.

He said the large number of armed ethnic groups operating in the area makes it difficult to verify which one was responsible.

U Yawd Murng's talks with chief government peace negotiator U Aung Min at the Myanmar Peace Centre come following fierce fighting between the Tatmadaw and Shan State Army-South in recent months, with fresh clashes reportedly taking place between May 17 and 21.

The RCSS said the deadliest day of fighting was May 17, when two battles in the southern Shan State townships of Hopong and His Hseng claimed the lives of nine Tatmadaw soldiers and two Shan State Army-South soldiers.

Neither officials from the Tatmadaw nor presidential spokesman and Deputy Minister for Information U Ye Htut could be reached for comment.

RCSS/SSA chairman Lieutenant General Yawd Serk met U Aung Min on February 19 in Chiang Mai, Thailand for informal talks. They have not met since, but U Yawd Murng confirmed that U Aung Min had invited Lt Gen Yawd Serk to visit Nay Pyi Taw.



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Phone: 375 791, 375 801, 375 739, 375 796, 375 747, 537 387, 536 732, 537 092 Ext: 106,129

Note: Only short-listed candidates will be contacted

New carriages on circle line

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YANGON'S circle line may see special carriages added to its trains on a permanent basis, Myanma Railways says - if trials running since April 17 prove a success.

"We're just testing it at the moment," said U Thein Naing, the deputy chief stationmaster at Yangon Railway Station. "If the testing process is a success, we plan to extend [the use of]

the special carriages in circle trains."

The new carriages are located in the middle of five circle line trains. Instead of the normal wooden benches, the special carriages have 62 padded seats with fans, as well as security staff.

However, those wanting a more comfortable ride will have to pay K200 for a one-way ticket, twice as much as a return ticket in the ordinary carriages. For foreign passengers,

the fare is US\$1, the same as in other sections of the train.

One commuter, 60, who takes the train from Insein to downtown Yangon each day, said most passengers take the circle line train because it is cheaper than the bus and it is unlikely they would pay extra for more comfortable seats.

Fares for regular seats on the circle line rose from K10 to K100 on November 15, 2011. Nearly 90,000 passengers take the trains each day.

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Families to appeal Meiktila sentences

Seven receive jail terms ranging from two years to life as observers questions why no Buddhists have yet been put on trial

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FAMILY members of seven men sentenced to prison on May 21 – one of them for a life term – for the killing of a Buddhist monk in Meiktila have asked their lawyer to appeal the jail terms.

“Based on the wishes of the men’s families, we are preparing to appeal those sentences ... at the respective court very soon,” said lawyer U Thein Than Oo. “All of them have denied involvement in the incidents.”

But U Thein Than Oo, who is a member of the Lawyers’ Network (Upper Myanmar), said the trial was conducted fairly. “We expected that four people would be given life sentences, but only one was,” he said.

He said the main controversy in the trial was the judge’s decision to allow testimony from some witnesses who did not see the incident.

However, some members of the Islamic community have criticised the trial and questioned why only Muslims have so far faced court, particularly given the violence was overwhelmingly directed against Muslims.

“We believe that this trial is one-sided because the only people who were sentenced were Muslims. The law says there should no discrimination based on either race or religion. But this trial has highlighted the weakness of rule of law in Myanmar. We just want to get justice,” said U Kyaw Soe Aung, secretary of the Democracy and Human Rights Party, a

predominantly Muslim political party. At least 44 people were killed and 12,000 displaced, most of them Muslim, following violence that began in Meiktila on March 20.

U Thein Than Oo said one of his clients, U Myat Ko Ko, was given life in prison for murder. U Myat Ko Ko was also sentenced to an additional

‘There is no discrimination ... 11 cases involving Buddhists will be dealt with very soon.’

U Ye Aung Myint
Mandalay Region Attorney General

two years for unlawful assembly and two for religious disrespect.

Of the remaining defendants, one received a two-year sentence while the others received terms ranging from six to 28 years. Four of them, including a minor tried in a separate court, were convicted of charges including abetting murder. Two were convicted only on lesser counts. Mandalay Region Attorney General U Ye Aung Myint confirmed the sentences.

“It’s not fair!” shouted one of the convicted men shouted from inside a

prison van as they were being driven away after the trial.

But members of a crowd of about 30 people outside the court house expressed unhappiness over the verdict for a different reason: They said they wished the death penalty had been applied against those who were convicted of killing the monk.

Myanmar has the death penalty for premeditated murder, but the defendants were charged under a different murder category.

The lynching of the Buddhist monk enflamed passions in Meiktila, especially after photos circulated widely on social media of what was purported to be his body after he was pulled off a motorbike, attacked and burned.

Entire Muslim neighborhoods were engulfed in flames, and charred bodies piled in the roads. The government declared a state of emergency and deployed the army to restore order, but the unrest later spread to other parts of central Myanmar.

While the violence is now contained, questions are arising over whether minority Muslims can find justice in overwhelmingly Buddhist Myanmar.

A gold shop owner and two employees, all Muslims, were sentenced in April to 14 years in prison each on charges of theft and causing grievous bodily harm over the incident that sparked the riots.

Asked why only Muslims have faced trial in Meiktila, U Ye Aung Myint said the courts were starting with the initial incidents that triggered the violence, and those involved in later



Residents walk past buildings burning in riot-hit Meiktila on March 21. Photo: AFP

incidents would be tried subsequently.

“There is no discrimination in bringing justice. We dealt with the first two cases and 11 more cases involving Buddhists will be dealt with very soon,” he said, adding that about 70 people will face charges for murder, arson and looting.

At a press conference on May 21 in Nay Pyi Taw, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi did not directly address the plight of the Muslim minority. Instead, she spoke in familiar terms about the rule of law when asked about the verdict.

“There is no transparency in Myanmar’s justice system and there is too much influence from the administrative branch,” she said, echoing the opinions of many human rights groups. “The judicial system has to be independent to be credible.”

When asked whether she was concerned about her reputation over the issue, she said she wasn’t worried. “If I had to be concerned about my image, I should not have become a politician right from the beginning,” she said.

– With AP

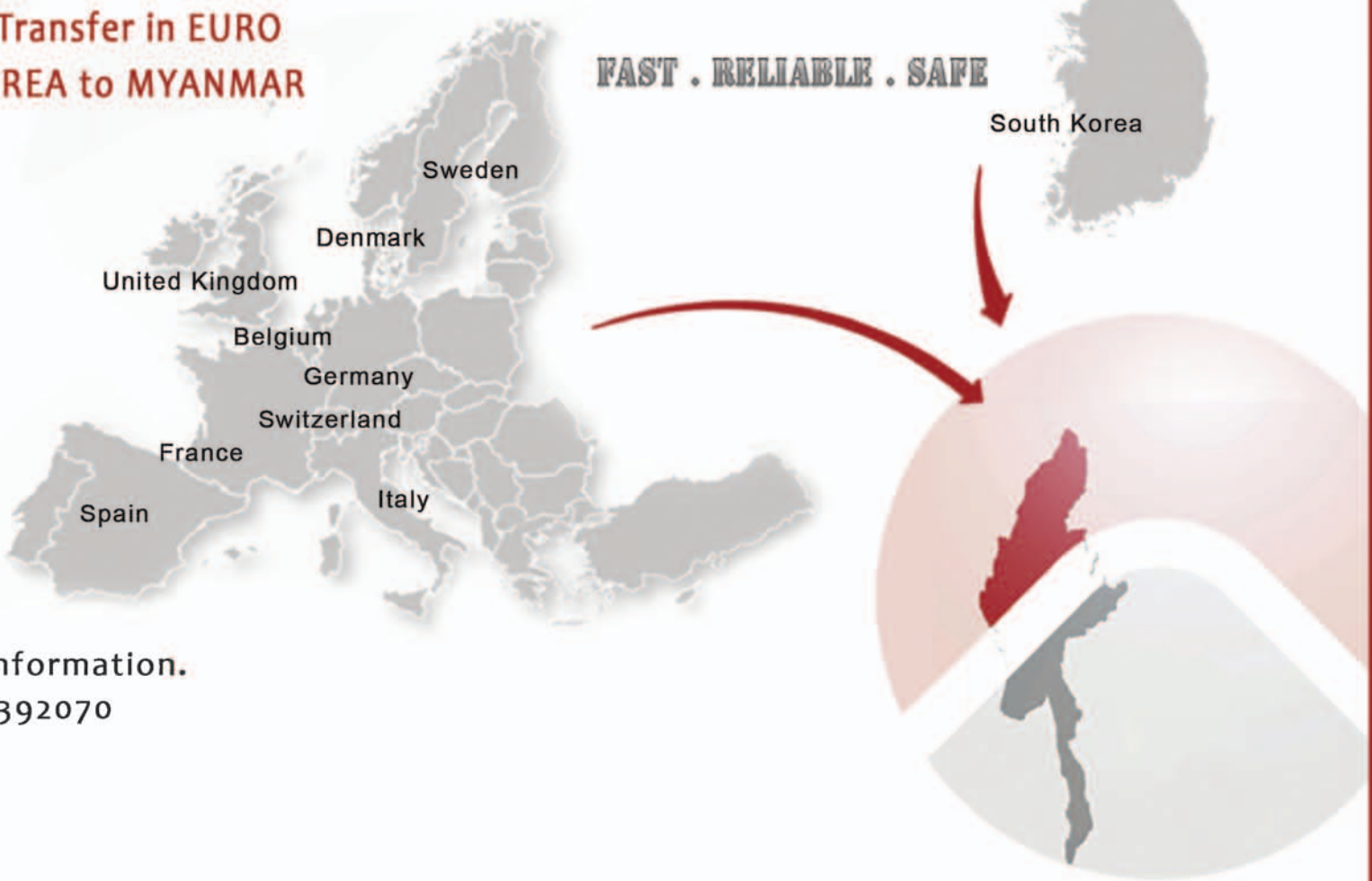


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WHITE HOUSE VISIT SPECIAL

New, more inclusive national identity needed: president

DANIEL GREENLAND

PRESIDENT U Thein Sein outlined his vision for “a new and more inclusive national identity” at Johns Hopkins University in Washington on May 20, and urged international observers to be both optimistic about and patient with Myanmar’s reform process.

Speaking at the university’s School of Advanced International Studies, U Thein Sein said people of all ethnic backgrounds and faiths in Myanmar “must feel part of this new national identity”.

“We must end all forms of discrimination. And we must ensure not only that inter-communal violence is brought to a halt, but that all perpetrators are brought to justice,” he said.

The president outlined the peace process with armed ethnic groups to date and pledged to devolve more power to regional governments and share resources more fairly.

He said these processes were part of the compromises necessary “sustainable peace”.

“Peace must be rooted in the broadest possible participation,” he said. “We want to include not only the armed groups but also political parties and civil society from all ethnic communities in the political dialogue to come.”

‘Peace must be rooted in the broadest possible participation.’

President U Thein Sein

U Thein Sein said Myanmar’s political environment was “complex” and “the challenge is to manage what is and should be an increasingly competitive political space in a way that strengthens democratic change and does not undermine its future”.

“Though democracy means rivalry and competition, we must try to find ways to work together. We must nurture policy-based political parties. But at this critical juncture, we must also rise above partisan politics,” he said.

At the same time, the government is trying to “move towards a state that sees itself first and foremost as a servant of the people”.

“After decades of authoritarian rule this is no easy task. ... Many of our institutions must be adjusted, others entirely reformed. New ones must be created. Mentalities must change.”

Noting that Myanmar sits at the “new crossroads of Asia”, bordering more than two billion people and the fastest-growing economies in the world, U Thein Sein said the reform process would enable the country to “join this historic evolution in Asia”.

While Myanmar was once isolated by physical and political barriers, it is “now poised to break those barriers,” he said.

He urged full US support “in making our transformation



President U Thein Sein speaks at Johns Hopkins University’s School of Advanced International Studies on May 20. Photo: AFP

a success”, including training from its universities and investment from its companies.

“To achieve all this we need maximum international support, including from the United States, to train and educate, share knowledge, trade and invest and encourage others to do the same.”

The president was speaking shortly after his historic visit to the White House. He is the first Myanmar head of state to visit the United States since General Ne Win in 1966.

Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies has been at the forefront of US academic institutions’ attempts to re-engage with Myanmar. The institution has a long history in Myanmar, with the Johns Hopkins Rangoon Centre opening in 1954. It was shuttered eight years later, after the military coup, but as U Thein Sein noted in his address dozens of Myanmar have studied at the school, including a member of the president’s advisory council.

Karl Jackson, director of Asian Studies and the Southeast Asia Studies Program at the school and a former national security adviser to the US vice president, has been instrumental in restoring the relationship, pushing for more funding for Myanmar language studies at the graduate school, more scholarships for Myanmar citizens and increased partnerships with Myanmar tertiary institutions.

Among the students from the School of Advanced International Studies who attended the president’s speech was Pajaree Varathorn, a second-year graduate school student who studies Myanmar language. She said Myanmar is now the most popular Southeast Asian language at the school.

“Given our history, there is some uniqueness of cooperation between our school and Myanmar. It’s great that the efforts of Professor Jackson have been recognised at the highest level of the Burmese government,” she said.

Dean Vali Nasr said he was optimistic that U Thein Sein’s visit to the school demonstrated the Myanmar government’s commitment to boosting higher education, and hoped for continued engagement in the future.

This was echoed by U Thein Sein in his speech. “I hope very much that we will be able to re-establish the strong connections that once existed,” he said.



US President Barack Obama shakes hands with President U Thein Sein during their meeting in the Oval Office of the White House in Washington

Obama praises president

U Thein Sein draws plaudits but President Obama also expresses concern over violence

SHAUN TANDON AND STEPHEN COLLINSON

US President Barack Obama on May 20 saluted President U Thein Sein for his leadership in pushing through startling political reforms but warned that ethnic violence against Muslims must stop.

President Obama praised Myanmar’s journey away from

military rule and promised Washington would offer more political and economic support.

Seated with U Thein Sein in the Oval Office, President Obama said previously tortured US-Myanmar relations had eased because of “the leadership that President [U Thein] Sein has shown in moving Myanmar down a path of both political and economic

reform.”

President Obama repeatedly used the word “Myanmar” rather than Burma. The former is slowly being used more frequently by US officials as a courtesy to the government.

The US president said that U Thein Sein, the first Myanmar head of state to visit the US since 1966, had made “genuine efforts” to solve the intricate

ethnic wars that have long torn at Myanmar’s unity, but spoke out on the plight of Rohingya Muslims.

He expressed “deep concern about communal violence that has been directed against Muslim communities inside Myanmar.”

“The displacement of people, the violence directed towards them needs to stop,”

US moves to end sanctions after visit

SHAUN TANDON

A KEY US senator has backed an end to US sanctions on Myanmar after a landmark visit by U Thein Sein, signalling a new normalisation in relations despite rights concerns.

President U Thein Sein met lawmakers at the US capitol on May 21, a day after he became the first Myanmar head of state in almost 50 years to visit the White House.

Senator Mitch McConnell, who has spearheaded the sanctions campaign for the past decade over human rights concerns, said after his meeting that he would not support a renewal of a ban on imports from Myanmar.

“I believe renewing sanctions would be a slap in the face to Burmese reformers and embolden those within

Burma who want to slow or reverse reform,” said Mr McConnell, who serves as the Republican Party’s Senate leader.

“Many of us who have followed Burma for years never thought reform would come to this troubled country. This is an important moment and I believe it is time for Congress to take responsible action,” he said.

President Barack Obama has already waived most sanctions on Myanmar but Congress has kept the laws on the books each year, hoping that the threat of re-imposing restrictions would motivate the government to address problems.

McConnell, who said he gave the issue “a great deal of thought”, dismissed suggestions that the United States

would lose leverage and said that a ban on gems would remain.

The senator said the move would give US companies an even playing field with competitors from the European Union and Australia, which are not subject to sanctions.

But U Thein Sein also met separately with four House of Representatives members from President Obama’s Democratic Party, who handed him a list of nearly 250 inmates allegedly jailed for political reasons and urged an end to ethnic violence.

The prisoners “deserve the opportunity to participate in the future of the country, and we believe they should be released immediately and unconditionally”, the lawmakers said in a letter handed to the president.

The legislators included former speaker Nancy Pelosi and Joe Crowley, who has moved in the House of Representatives to extend Myanmar sanctions.

The US and Myanmar on May 21 also signed an accord to formalise dialogue on trade, a day after U Thein Sein made a pitch to US business leaders for investment.

Derek Mitchell, the US ambassador to Myanmar, hailed U Thein Sein’s reforms as having “captured the imagination of Americans” but warned that “hard work” remained.

“I know of no one in your government – or mine – who is declaring victory as if the future course of your country is clear and inevitable,” Mr Mitchell told a dinner in U Thein Sein’s honour at the US Chamber of Commerce. – AFP



on May 20. Photo: AFP

ent's leadership

e targeting Muslims in Rakhine State and central Myanmar

President Obama said.

U Thein Sein told reporters through a translator that his country had “many challenges”, and was grateful for President Obama’s policy of engagement towards Myanmar, which he said had helped the reform process.

“For democracy to flourish in our country, we will have to move forward, and we will have to undertake political reforms and economic reforms,” he said.

The visit went ahead even though critics say President Obama’s invitation was premature and takes pressure off Myanmar to address abuses such as recent anti-Muslim violence to which security forces allegedly turned a blind eye.

U Thein Sein has surprised even cynics by freeing hundreds of political prisoners, easing censorship and enabling Daw Aung San Suu Kyi to enter parliament.

The most critical test of reform will come in 2015, when Myanmar is scheduled to hold elections – testing whether the military and its allies would be willing to cede power, potentially to Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.

In an interview with the *Washington Post* published on May 20, U Thein Sein would not take a position on whether the Nobel laureate would be allowed to stand, saying the future direction of reform was up to parliament.



President Barack Obama and President U Thein Sein. Photo: AFP

But he is also not budging on the constitution’s allocation of 25 percent of seats in parliament to the armed forces, saying that the military had preserved Myanmar’s independence.

U Thein Sein told the newspaper that the armed forces would “always have a special place” in government in Myanmar.

Obama has made Myanmar a key priority and visited in November 2012. To some, Myanmar represents the biggest suc-

cess from his pledge in his 2009 inaugural address to reach out to US foes if they “unclench” their fists.

In recent weeks, the United States ended sweeping restrictions on visas, and top trade official Demetrios Marantis visited Myanmar to start discussions on economic measures such as offering duty-free access for certain products.

But in a signal ahead of U Thein Sein’s visit, Representative Joe Crowley, who has long been active on Myanmar, introduced legislation to extend for one year a ban on trade in the country’s gems – a key money-maker for the military.

Mr Crowley, a member of Obama’s Democratic Party from New York, said he was “very concerned” about human rights violations in Myanmar, including “brutal attacks” in recent months against the Muslim minority. – *AFP*

‘The violence directed towards [Muslims] needs to stop.’

President Barack Obama

Risk reduction the foundation for development, says UN

AYE SAPAY PHYU



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THE world has paid a heavy economic price for natural disasters – US\$2.5 trillion so far this century – and risk reduction measures need to feature more heavily in the “development agenda”, a senior United Nations official said last week.

Speaking at the fourth session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in Geneva, Switzerland on May 21, deputy secretary general Jan Eliasson said that disasters were being made worse by climate change and other man-made factors.

In response, the UN is developing systems to mitigate and manage disaster around the world.

“Unfortunately, there are man-made components that make disaster even worse,” Mr Eliasson said. “That’s why we have accepted responsibility. We have accepted responsibility on two perspectives – that is, the people and world. People are paying a very heavy price.”

Mr Eliasson said a new global risk model developed

by the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) estimates that \$2.5 trillion has been lost to disasters so far this century. The average annual loss from earthquakes and cyclones could be in the region of \$180 billion.

Mr Eliasson highlighted

US\$ TRILLION

2.5

The cost of natural disasters since the turn of the century, as estimated by the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction

the 1991 cyclone in Bangladesh that killed 190,000. Following that tragedy, prevention measures were introduced to warn the population of approaching cyclones. Meteorological early warning systems and shelters were also upgraded and as a result disaster-related casualties have been minimised since.

“We need to really invest in disaster risk reduction,” he said. “It does pay off.”

“By investing in disaster risk reduction, we are actually laying the groundwork for development.”

At the May 21 event, speakers from various countries stressed the global consequences of such disasters and the need to strengthen preparedness and become more resilient through partnerships and investment.

Cape Verde’s Minister for Home Affairs Marisa Helena Nascimento Morais said developing countries are particularly vulnerable to natural disasters, which can contribute to impoverishment and harm economic growth.

This fourth session of the Global Platform is a milestone event on the road toward developing a second global agreement on disaster risk reduction called the Hyogo Framework for Action II.

The new framework will include and expand on existing priorities in the Hyogo Framework for Action, an agreement on disaster risk reduction adopted by all UN member states in 2005 for a period of 10 years.

The five priorities of the framework are to make disaster risk reduction a priority, know the risks and take action, build understanding and awareness, reduce risk and be prepared and ready to act.



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Tensions high over Madaya power line proposal

SI THU LWIN

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PLANS to run power lines through the heart of Madaya will go ahead, Mandalay Region's electricity minister said last week, despite a local protest that saw work eventually halted after a lucky draw.

"If the line is installed at another place [outside of town], the cost is likely to be much higher. [Running the lines through the centre of town] is the union government's plan and we will proceed with it," U Myint Kyu told *The Myanmar Times*.

The 33kV high-tension cable line is part of the Union Government's plan to improve electricity supply to Madaya. But locals objected to the chosen route - down the town's main road - and even formed a group, called Madaya Lovers, to protest.

One member of the group said 166 shady trees - the town's "treasure" - would have to be cut down to make way for the cables and the town would "become lacklustre" without them.

Another resident, writer U Lu Hnin Cho, said the plans had prioritised cost-saving over safety.

"There are many less dangerous places outside the town to install the cable. They chose [this route] to use less money than what has been allocated for the project. Their intention is clear," he said.

The deadlock between officials and residents led to an electrical engineer from Mandalay Region being called in to negotiate on May 19.

"When the negotiation was made the police and other civil servants were called to the meeting," U Lu Hnin Cho said, adding that officials were trying to "show off their might" to residents.

After no agreement could be reached, the township administrator arranged to decide the route of the cable line through a lucky draw and those objecting to installation on the main road won.

A member of Madaya Lovers told *The Myanmar Times* that the electrical engineer agreed to honour the results of the lucky draw - but not without expressing her frustrations first.

"When he failed [to convince us the route was acceptable], the regional engineer uttered a word that is inappropriate to his designation before saying that the project should then stop. He also said repeatedly that the local people should not inform his superiors about what had happened," the resident said.

U Myint Kyu denied any wrongdoing on the part of the regional government and said the trees would not be felled. "If trees are cut, we will cut the top of the branches that block the cables, not the whole tree," he said. "Local people are too anxious."

The minister said transformers will be installed once the cable line has been put in place.

- Translated by Thit Lwin



Workers from the Taw Win timber factory protest in Yangon in October. Photo: Yadanar

Taw Win workers arrested: activists



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TWELVE workers at the Taw Win timber factory in Shwe Pyi Thar Industrial Zone have been arrested and detained, reportedly under laws relating to trespass, peaceful protest and assembly, in a long-running dispute with the management.

A lawyer for the workers and other activists say they will petition the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw on the case. After initially going on hunger strike, the detained workers are said to be eating normally, but are in poor health.

The dispute arose because factory workers complained that the management was forcing them to work on construction sites, and making female workers carry iron rods. After a series of negotiations, the matter was settled in their favour through a government arbitration body, said Daw Thet Thet Aung of the 88 Generation group.

"Though the workers won, the owner didn't accept the [arbitration body's] decision and he has taken the case to the Supreme Court and had the workers arrested. We are going to help workers take this matter to hluttaw," said Daw Thet Thet Aung.

"According to the 2012 Settlement of Labour Disputes Law, the decision

of the dispute settlement arbitration council is final. The dispute between the Taw Win timber factory workers and the owner, U Ko Ko Htwe, was negotiated at four different levels - first between the workers and the management, then at township level, township arbitration group and finally at the dispute settlement arbitration council. The workers won according to the decision of the council," she added.

Workers say the management has failed to abide by the agreements.

'The owner kept breaking his promises and the contracts he signed.'

Ma Lei Lei Win

Taw Win factory worker

"Government officials from Ministry of Labour negotiated with us. But the owner kept breaking his promises and the contracts we signed. So we protested for 15 days last December in front of the Department of Labour. Department officials negotiated again and told us to go back to work," said Ma Lei Lei Win on May 20.

She said that 12 workers had been arrested under laws against trespass

on April 24.

"When we went to the factory, they wouldn't let us in. We sat outside for hours and then some workers broke down the gates and went in. We followed them," she said.

U Than Naing, father of an arrested worker, Nay Lin Aung, said his son was arrested under the law on peaceful assembly and peaceful protest.

"Nay Lin Aung was one of the leaders of 200 workers who marched from Shwe Pyi Thar to the company offices. The police came in force to arrest him early in the morning. But when I asked for their warrant, they couldn't produce it," said U Than Naing.

"The police have not let us see our son yet," he added.

U Aung Thurein Tun, the workers' lawyer, said that the arrested workers had at first refused to eat in prison, but were now eating normally, though their health was not good.

The Myanmar Times was unable to reach Taw Win company for comment last week. However, after the timber factory's workers staged a protest in October 2012, Taw Win owner U Ko Ko Htwe denied accusations that managers at the factory had treated some workers unfairly.

"In my company, the workers who try harder and are better qualified will get better chances. I like workers who really try hard to do their job well and who have ability. So I think the managers in the factory favour those kinds of people," he said.

BRIEFS

Geneva

Applications invited for risk awards

The United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) has started accepting applications for the 2014 Risk Award, a partnership between the agency, Global Risk Forum Davos and German non-profit Munich Re Foundation.

The award, titled "Disaster Emergency - Resilience for the Most Vulnerable", is dedicated to operational projects that improve disaster risk management and prevention and features 100,000 euros in prizemoney.

Disaster emergency planning projects that focus on vulnerable communities are invited to take part, with applications closing on December 31.

"The most vulnerable people are the first hit, yet the last who get support. It is urgent to empower them to better protect themselves," Walter J Amman, president of the Global Risk Forum Davos, said in a May 23 statement.

- Aye Sapay Phyu



Mandalay MCDC issues tender on traffic lights

Traffic lights at the junction of 80th and 26th streets in Mandalay will be upgraded to better manage "heavy" congestion during peak hour, a Mandalay City Development Committee official says.

Official U Ohn Kyaw said 12 companies have responded to a tender for the new "traffic guidance system".

"Although there are traffic lights, it can't solve the traffic congestion. Road users jostle against each other. It makes the traffic worse. If a traffic guidance system is set up, it will solve the congestion," he said.

"The tender will be chosen by five members - different heads of department at MCDC."

In 2012-13, MCDC set up two traffic guidance systems - at the junction of 66th and 26th streets and where the Mandalay-Yangon Road meets the Sagaing road - at a total cost of K63 million.

- Than Naing Soe

Transport body outlines two priority projects

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YANGON transport chiefs have pledged to take action within six months to reduce traffic jams and speed the city's 2.5 million commuters on their way. U Kyi Thein, chairman of the Yangon City Public Transport Authority told *The Myanmar Times* on May 21 that his authority was considering 10 upgrading projects.

Two of these, Bus Rapid Transit and Intelligent Transport System, would be launched within six months, he said.

"We are planning to upgrade the Yangon transportation system with 10

short- and long-term projects," he said, adding that some of the long-term projects could take decades to complete.

The Bus Rapid Transit system is designed to get people to and from their destinations in good time without the current problems caused by nose-to-tail buses racing each other down congested streets. It will be introduced initially along Pyay Road, with the intention to extend it to Kabaraye Pagoda and Insein Roads, he said.

At the same time, the transport authority is talking to South Korean and Thai companies about setting up a traffic command and control centre that would coordinate the 42 sets of CCTV cameras to improve adherence to traffic rules while keeping vehicles moving.

"The cameras can only record violations of the law, they can't stop drivers breaking the law," said U Kyi Thein.

Longer-term plans to upgrade Yangon's railways are aimed at reducing road congestion. "There are 2.5 million passengers who commute daily in Yangon. But only 100,000 people use the circular railway lines. Upgrading the lines could increase passenger numbers to 200,000 or 300,000, and so ease the pressure on buses. We are also planning an interchange and a park-and-ride system providing links with buses and taxis, as well as looking at water transportation," said U Kyi Thein.

Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) is conducting a survey of various types of transportation sys-

tems with features Yangon could copy. The survey is expected to be completed next April.

A technical survey is also being proposed that would pave the way for building inner and outer circular elevated roads around Yangon. Funding is expected to come from government loans, subject to hluttaw approval, plus foreign aid and investment.

Commuter U Bo Gyi said he welcomed plans to improve train services in the city. "I have been taking the circle train for about seven or eight years and I think it's more convenient than the bus," he said. "But the trains need to be regular - at the moment they are often late. People will use the train more if the service is reliable."

Minister pledges more reforms in the media sector



SANDAR LWIN

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MINISTER for Information U Aung Kyi has pledged further reforms in the media sector, saying he hopes Myanmar can be a “model” for other Asian countries.

The minister made the comments at a media development conference held at Kandawgyi Palace Hotel in Yangon from May 20 to 21.

“I hope our country is one of the success stories of the media reform model in Asia. It has moved far within a very short period when compared with other media environments,” U Aung Kyi said at the opening of the conference, which was organised jointly by the government, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), International Media Support (IMS) and other international and local partners.

“This one-year journey of media development has shown the development of concrete ties between UNESCO, the government in partnership with IMS, the interim press council, local and international media institutions and civil societies. ... I look forward to continuing the firm relationship with you all throughout our journey of media reform.”

The conference, which drew about 300 participants, focused on media development as a means of improving governance. The emergence of community media organisations in ethnic areas, the professionalism of Myanmar journalists, the need for training programs and disputes on media regulation generated the most heated discussion.

U Khin Maung Shwe from Burma News International, a network of mostly ethnic minority-based media outlets, said his organisation was working “to give more of a voice to ethnic people and promote transparency”.

“We have done lots of reports on the peace process and suffering associated with natural resource extraction in ethnic areas, armed clashes [between the Tatmadaw and armed ethnic groups], human right violations, elections, opium growing, migrant workers and gender affairs,” he said.

U Tint Swe, the former head of the Press Scrutiny and Registration Division and now a director general of Myanmar Radio and Television, said the participation of ethnic media organisations is an import facet of media reform.

“While in Indonesia [during a study tour to four Asian countries in July 2012] ... I noticed in meetings there were some media representatives from remote small islands of Indonesia with different ethnic and social backgrounds. I was thinking then that it would be really great if

we in Myanmar also practised that kind of diverse participation of various stakeholders in media reform,” he said.

“Today we saw such diversification in representatives in this conference hall, with participants from various parts of Myanmar, including Mandalay, Myitkyina, Sittwe, Mawlamyine, Natmauk, Taunggyi, Lashio and Nay Pyi Taw.”

U Thiha Saw, a vice chairman of the Myanmar Journalists Association and member of

the interim press council, said ethnic media was “in the spotlight” but journalists need more access to training.

“I also want to see the ethnic media publishing in their mother tongue,” he said.

Media legislation and regulation was also a hot topic, reflecting the recent dispute between the ministry and the press council on the drafting of a new publishing law.

But press council member U Myo Thant Tin said a recent compromise between the government and the industry represented a remarkable step forward.

Journalists who took part in the conference emphasised the need to build institutions capable of generating responsible media professionals.

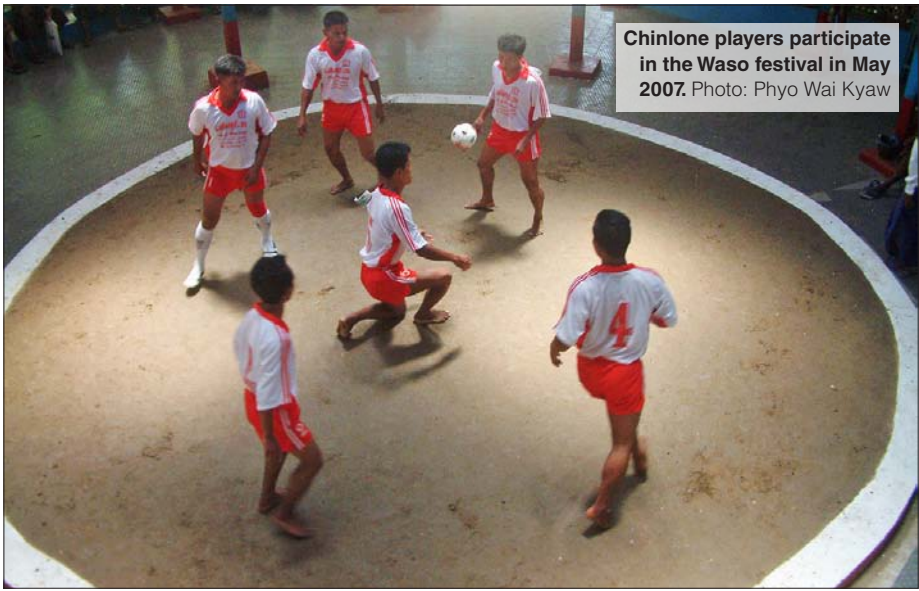
U Tint Swe said recommendations from the conference could shape future reforms.

“We will shape the way forward with some specific recommendations,” he said.

‘I want to see the ethnic media publishing in their mother tongue.’

U Thiha Saw

Interim press council member



Chinlone players participate in the Waso festival in May 2007. Photo: Phyo Wai Kyaw

Chinlone festival to start May 30

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THE Waso chinlone festival will get underway this week in Mandalay, with competitors from the United States and Germany expected to take part, the secretary of the event’s organising committee said.

The annual festival, which is being held for the 85th time, begins on May 30. About 1650 teams will travel to Mandalay for the event, which takes place in a small stadium in the compound of Mahamuni Pagoda.

“More than 3000 teams applied to participate but we couldn’t accept them all so we decided who could take part through a lucky draw,” U Kyaw Thein said.

“Teams from Japan, the US, Thailand and Germany will come this year, while a group

from Brazil is visiting to make a film about the festival,” he said.

This year’s festival will run for 55 days, five days longer than in 2012. Organisers have also increased the number of teams by 150, from 1500. Each day, 30 teams will perform between 9am to midnight.

“Solo players and female players are also included this year. I think fans will be pleased with the festival,” he said.

Each team pays an entrance fee of K2500, which is then donated to Mahamuni Pagoda and respected chinlon players.

Chinlone is a traditional sport in which teams of around five players keep a cane ball, known as a chinlone, from hitting the ground by using parts of their body other than their hands.

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Anger in Mandalay over SIM sale

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MANDALAY residents have criticised the government's handling of the distribution of SIM cards last week, after the release was postponed a day because ward offices were unable to cope with the huge demand.

The second batch of K1500 CDMA 800MHz cards were supposed to go on sale nationally on May 20, after the first release of 350,000 cards on April 24. Distribution was managed by state and region governments, with cards sold through ward and village tract administration offices.

'It definitely wasn't a transparent process.'

Aung Myay Tharsan township resident

Demand was significantly higher than for the release of the first batch in April because the SIM cards, which have a K1500 face value, are trading for K70,000 on the black market.

U Win Ko Ko, the administrator for Pearl Ngweyi ward in Mandalay's Aung Myay Tharsan township, said the release was pushed back to May 21 because of safety concerns.

He said the regional government had allocated fewer cards to ward offices this month but demand from residents was higher than on April 24.

"This month we were only allocated 95 SIM cards for Pearl Ngweyi ward compared with 110 last month. Last month we sold them on a first-come, first-served basis and we planned to do the same this month.

"But many more people showed up, along with a lot of black marketers, so we postponed the release by one day on the instructions of the district administrator," he said.

However, it was unclear why fewer SIM cards were available to consumers on May 20, as the overall allocation for Mandalay Region increased by more than 4000, to 69,395.

Some residents said ward administrators had not conducted the sale transparently, and questioned why so few cards had ended up in the hands of the public.

"People are started queuing at 2pm on May 19 after they heard the government announcement that the cards would be released on May 20. In our quarter the SIMs were sold from 2pm on May 20 but the ward administrator said there were none left after only 12 cards were sold," said a resident from Aung Myay Tharsan township, who asked not to be named.

"We don't know how many SIM cards were meant to be sold in the ward but it definitely wasn't a transparent process," he said.

U Hla Myint from Aung Myay Thar



Residents queue outside the administrative office in Min Tae Ekin ward in Mandalay's Aung Myay Tharsan township to buy SIM cards on May 20. Photo: Si Thu Lwin

San township said there were rumours that administrators had withheld supply and instead sold the cards to brokers for a higher fee.

"We heard the administrator in our ward sold the SIM cards for K5000 each," he said.

Some journals reported clashes between people waiting in long queues, and that people had been hospitalised

after standing too long in the hot sun.

The long queues prompted some Mandalay administrators to start using a lucky draw system, which has been employed widely in Yangon to sell the SIM cards.

"Our ward was allocated 140 SIM cards last month but we just received 120 this time. After more than 800 people turned up to buy them, the town-

ship administrator instructed us to sell them with a lucky draw," said U Aung San Lin, administrator for West Thiramarlar ward in Aung Myay Tharsan township.

"Another problem was we were only told about the details of the SIM card sale at 6pm on May 19 so it was too late to announce anything in the ward."

- Translated by Zar Zar Soe



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Interviews will take place the week commencing 1 July 2013 for those invited to attend.

Murder, rape on rise in 2013

SI THU LWIN

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POLICE are blaming a number of factors, including pornography, for a rise in rape cases in Mandalay Region in the first quarter of this year.

Police Major Soe Nyein from the Mandalay regional police office told *The Myanmar Times* that the number of cases had risen from 14 in the first three months of 2012 to 20 over the same period this year.

He said this was because of a number of reasons, including the watching of pornographic movies, and women going outside alone late at night or being "too trusting".

He made the comments as

police revealed that the number of major crimes committed in the region in the first quarter of 2013 was almost double the same period last year.

However, Pol Maj Soe Nyein said this was largely because of the rioting in Meiktila in which at least 44 people were killed, with the number of murders rising from 27 to 56.

"The rise in murders in the first quarter may be attributable to the Meiktila conflict. Rape cases have also risen but other types of major crimes have not increased much on last year," Pol Maj Soe Nyein said.

Drunkenness was a factor in many of the murders reported to police, he said, adding that only a few cases were premeditated.

From January 1 to the end of March there were 83 cases of major crime, up from 42 in the same period last year. However, Pol Maj Soe Nyein said the increase was not as large when compared with the third quarter of 2012, when 69 major crimes were committed.

The category covers cases of murder, armed robbery, robbery, kidnap, rape, burglary, animal theft, high treason, illegally carrying weapons and unlawful association.

He said police were taking steps to try and cut the number of murders, including taking action against those found carrying knives and selling illegal liquor in areas with high murder rates. - Translated by Thit Lwin



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Mon State workshop planned

SCHOLARS have until the end of this week to submit a presentation to take part in a workshop on the Suvannabhumi kingdom in Mon State.

A Department of Archaeology, National Museum and Library official said applications close on May 31 for the workshop, which will be held in Mawlamyine in early June. The department is hosting the two-day workshop and has invited archaeologists, historians and other scholars from Myanmar and abroad to take part.

"The [region's] history, culture and customs, and religion are not only important for Myanmar but also for Southeast Asia. We need to find out more specific information [about Suvannabhumi]," he said. - Cherry Thein



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In 2012, The Myanmar Times became the first newspaper in Myanmar to receive international recognition for editorial excellence. The Society of Publishers in Asia (SOPA) described a November 2011 editorial by Tom Kean on controversial farmland bills as “brave” and awarded it the prize for Excellence in Opinion Writing. The awards were selected by a team of more than 100 judges representing SOPA, which is a non-profit organisation based in Hong Kong. The Awards are

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IN PICTURES

Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and his wife Akie wave before boarding a plane at Tokyo's Haneda Airport on May 24. Mr Abe arrived in Yangon later the same day for a three-day visit, the first by a Japanese leader to Myanmar in 36 years. *Photo: AP/Kyodo News*

Activist jailed after refusing to put up bail

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ACTIVIST Ko Htin Kyaw has been jailed for “proudly” refusing to put up bail a day after staging a protest calling for charges to be laid against former Senior General Than Shwe’s grandson. However, the two incidents do not appear to be linked.

Ko Htin Kyaw, the leader of Movement of Democracy Current Forces (MDCF), held a solo protest on May 22 after receiving permission from police in North Okkalapa township.

He staged the protest because police at 22 township stations had refused to accept his application to file charges against U Nay Shwe Thway Aung for allegedly assaulting a traffic policeman in Yangon on March 14.

“All of them said they have to inform their superiors first. Not only civilians but also civil servants feel they are not protected by the law. There is no rule of law for Myanmar people. That’s why I protested yesterday,” he told *The Myanmar Times* on May 23.

Ko Htin Kyaw was jailed the following day after appearing in court

for an unrelated matter and refusing to pay bail.

He has been charged with defamation after accusing a businessman, U Aik Linn, the owner of Nan Htike Taw Win restaurant, of being a crony at a press conference in early February.

The judge at North Okkalapa Township Court asked him to post a K500,000 surety for bail.

“I’m standing for the people and for the truth. I don’t need to post bail. The judge said that if I didn’t do it, he would send me to jail. So I told them that I would go proudly.”

Ko Htin Kyaw and two friends were taken to Insein Prison on the evening of May 23.

The dispute relates to U Aik Linn’s purchase of a plot of land in Mayangone township’s No 6 ward from the government.

Ko Htin Kyaw said the people living on the plot were evicted without receiving any compensation.

“I protested for the people who used to live there – now they are living on the streets like animals because their places were sold through a tender. More than 1000 people are now on the streets,” he said.

Mon State capital to get Mae Sot flights

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MAWLAMYINE is joining the international jet set. Thai-based Nok Air has proposed linking the port city, in Mon State, to Mae Sot, across the border in Thailand, the Department of Civil Aviation has confirmed.


Nok says it will open the Mae Sot-Mawlamyine route in September and extend it to Yangon the following month. In November the airline says it will launch a Bangkok-Yangon route, flying to and from Don Muang airport.

“We suggested they should start on the basis of charter flights initially,” U Win Swe Tun, the department’s deputy director general, told *The Myanmar Times* last week. He said Nok Air had conducted a test flight to Mawlamyine airport last year and found it suitable for small aircraft.

“Before the airline opens the new service from Mae Sot, we will establish customs and immigration sections at Mawlamyine airport. The plan is almost confirmed,” said U Win Swe Tun. Nok will be the first foreign carrier to connect Mawlamyine by air with the outside world, and it is the second airline, after Myanma Airways, to serve Mawlamyine. Myanma Airways operates flights from Mawlamyine to Yangon, as well as Dawei and Myeik in Tanintharyi Region.

“I think this route will draw business visitors from Thailand,” said U Win Swe Tun.

Nok is also studying possible routes connecting Thailand’s Chiang Mai with both Bagan and Yangon.



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BRIEFS

Correction

The caption on the photo accompanying the article "After two decades, China begins to reach out to NLD", published in the May 20-26 edition (No 678) of *The Myanmar Times*, was incorrect. The photo shows China's ambassador to Myanmar Yang Houlun meeting Daw Aung San Suu Kyi on April 22, not former ambassador Li Junhua. We regret the error.



Soldiers clean drains in Pyin Oo Lwin

The headmaster of the Defence Services Academy in Pyin Oo Lwin and 300 soldiers got their hands dirty cleaning drains in the former colonial hill station.

The soldiers cleared trash and debris from Gal Laung Creek, which flows through the town, on May 18 as part of efforts to prevent flooding during the rainy season.

Surprised residents welcomed the soldiers with cold drinks and food, said resident U Ko Lay.

Residents said the creek had not properly been cleared for several years. The creek flows through the town on its way from Kan Taw Lay to BE Waterfall and regularly overflows during rainy season, flooding many wards in Pyin Oo Lwin.

"A military officer told me that he was glad at the reception they got from the public," said Ko Zin Min Htut. - *Si Thu Lwin, translated by Zar Zar Soe*

YCDC invites tenders to turn trash into power, fuel

Ten companies invited to submit final proposals by August 7, with construction getting underway in November

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TWO new waste disposal plants will use Yangon's trash to generate electricity and natural gas for vehicles, with construction starting as early as November, Yangon City Development Committee says.

The plants are also needed to reduce the strain on the city's waste dumps, which are almost at bursting point and are causing environmental damage, said U Khin Win, deputy head of YCDC's pollution and cleaning department.

"Our department is planning to change [the city's] waste disposal system and has invited tenders for building plants. We have chosen 10 domestic and foreign companies [of which] two will be chosen [to build the plants]," he said.

The 10 companies have been told to submit their final proposals to YCDC by August 7.

Companies from South Korea, Japan and Malaysia are looking to invest in the business of turning Yangon's waste into energy, U Khin Win said.

"Forty-three [local and international] companies ... offered 77 [possible ways] of transforming waste to energy. We've been trying to find new systems for waste disposal for a long time. But the plans to produce electricity or natural gas can be implemented this November," he said.

U Khin Win said Yangon's population is growing and so is the amount of trash that needs to be disposed of. While YCDC workers gathered around 1400 tonnes a day in 2011, the figure averaged about 1500 tonnes in 2012, a survey by his department found.

This is having a worrying impact on the environment in areas near the city's dumping spots.

"The condition of the soil in the places we use to dump waste from all over the city is now bad. The



Children collect rubbish at a dump on the outskirts of Yangon. Photo: Kaung Htet

TONNES

1500

The amount of trash sent to landfill sites in Yangon each day

earth can't be reused and the underground water resources nearby are also being damaged ... [by] the liquid from the waste," he said.

"We need a new system for the waste - the open dumping system

is not really enough for a big city like Yangon."

Yangon's waste is divided between two locations, both of which are becoming overloaded. Garbage from the city's northern and western townships - about 800 tonnes a day - sent to a 200-acre site in Hlaing Thar Yar township, while garbage from eastern and southern townships goes to a 50-acre site - formerly a cemetery - in North Dagon township.

An electricity-generating incineration plant will be built at the North Dagon site, while a plant for turning trash into natural gas will be built in Hlaing Thar Yar, said department official U Aung Myint Maw.

By pressing and purifying the

methane gas generated by the waste, YCDC expects the Hlaing Thar Yar site will be able to generate 92 percent pure bio-gas, which can then be used instead of compressed natural gas in vehicles.

U Aung Myint Maw said the North Dagon plant had to come online before factories open at the Thilawa Special Economic Zone, southeast of Yangon.

"We've got an agreement [to handle Thilawa's waste] with the management office of the Thilawa zone. Authorities have told us 100 tonnes of hazardous waste will come from Thilawa [after factories are operating]. That's why the incineration plant must be ready before the Thilawa zone is ready to run," U Aung Myint Maw said.

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Dated: 27 May 2013

Australia announces 30 percent aid boost

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AUSTRALIA will increase its assistance to Myanmar by almost 30 percent this year, its embassy in Yangon announced last week.

Official development assistance will rise from A\$64.2 million (US\$62.13 million) to A\$82.8 million (\$80.13 million) in 2013-14, Michael Hassett, head of development assistance at the embassy, said in a statement on May 23.

"Australia remains committed to assisting Myanmar to implement reforms and overcome poverty. This is demonstrated by the increase in our funding of A\$18.6 million (\$18 million) compared with last year," Mr Hassett said.

The statement said Australian assistance to Myanmar, which is managed by the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID), will focus on improving education and health services, while also helping to strengthen governance and institutions.

Over the next three years, Australia's funding will help avert more than 25,000 deaths of children under five and more than 3000 maternal deaths, the statement said. It will also see learning kits provided to 1.3 million primary students and 31,000 teachers trained.

A\$ MILLION

82.8

Australia's aid budget for Myanmar in 2013-14

It will also support increased agricultural productivity, food availability and household income for up to two million people. Australia will also continue to provide humanitarian assistance to those affected by disasters and conflict, the statement said.



IN PICTURES

Pedestrians and vehicles negotiate flooded streets in downtown Yangon on May 22. The Department of Meteorology's Kabar Aye weather station recorded 0.47 inches of rain in the 24 hours to 9:30am on May 23, taking total rainfall for the year to date to 2.79 inches. *Photo: Ko Taik*

Letpadaung mine communities form compensation body



EI EI
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LETPADAUING residents have founded a new committee to oversee their campaign for compensation for land taken by the copper mill project. As of mid-May, the Farmland Protection Committee will coordinate all their activities, including acceptance of compensation.

"Residents of 13 villages who have not yet accepted compensation have formed the committee. We think that it is better to act in cooperation," said U Aung Myint Thein of Moegyopyin village.

The villages include Wettmay, Tone, Moegyopyin, Kantaw, Phaungtakar, Laeti, Toneywa Thit and others.

"Our aim is to protect our lands and to run the protest campaign," said U Aung Myint

Thein, adding that most villagers wanted to participate.

"We are still drawing up a list of members but there are at least 170. Other groups, such as the Service Network for Political Prisoners and Yangon Public Service Network, are also supporting our committee," said U Aung Than Myo of Toneywa village.

A report released by the Letpadaung Investigation Commission in March found that the companies behind the project - Wanbao of China and military-run Union of Myanmar Economic Holdings Limited - took 7867.78 acres for the project, including 5057 acres of cultivated land.

The report stated that the companies had taken too much land and recommended that appropriate compensation be provided for 6784 acres.

The investigation commission found out that appropriate compensation was not given to those whose farms were confiscated and homes were

relocated under the 1984 Land Confiscation Act.

The investigation commission formed a subgroup on land compensation on March 11 to implement the report's recommendations. Since March 16, households that lost land to the project have received amounts ranging from K500,000 to K1.5 million. Between March 16 and May 15, 764 villagers received K2.267 billion in additional compensation.

However, members of the new committee say that only around one-third of residents have accepted the increased compensation.

"We don't want compensation. We want to get back our lands," said Ko Nyi of Tone village.

Villagers said they will continue to lobby for their land to be returned, as well as for a section 144 curfew order in the Letpadaung area to be lifted and for the project to be cancelled "within the framework of the law".

Embassy bombing accused nabbed

INDONESIAN police have arrested the alleged mastermind of a failed plot to bomb the Myanmar embassy and another man suspected of being the bombmaker, an official said on May 23.

Sigit Indrajit was detained late on May 22 in Jakarta as he got off a boat that had arrived from Sumatra, national police spokesman Boy Rafli Amar said, adding that he was allegedly "the planner of the attack".

The second suspect, identified only as Rohadi, was detained early on May 23 at a house on the outskirts of Jakarta where officers found bomb-making materials including fertiliser, Mr Amar said.

"We believe Rohadi played the role of bombmaker," the spokesman said.

The police's elite anti-terror unit had been searching for Mr Indrajit since the plot was foiled on May 2 when two men were arrested with five pipe bombs in a backpack in a busy south Jakarta neighbourhood.

Police said they had been planning to attack the embassy in Jakarta the following day.

After the plot was uncovered, police launched a major counter-terrorism operation focused mainly on the main island of Java, killing eight terror suspects and arresting more than 20 others.

There is growing anger in Muslim-majority Indonesia over religious clashes in largely-Buddhist Myanmar that have left many minority Muslims dead and tens of thousands displaced. - AFP



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FEATURE

Through Facebook, China reaches out

Although it is banned in China, Facebook has become an essential part of the country's efforts to combat anti-Chinese sentiment in Myanmar. As protests threaten to derail major Chinese projects in Myanmar, the embassy has embarked on a new strategy to reach out to not only journalists but also to ordinary internet users – with some surprising results

TIM MCLAUGHLIN

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ON March 27, China's Ministry of Industry and Information Technology published an article titled "Myanmar lifts ban of Facebook, blocked now by only four countries in the world".

The article was mystifying given Myanmar has never banned Facebook. But there was also the issue of the four countries; it listed North Korea, Cuba and Iran, along with "an unnamed country", which was, of course, a reference to China.

Gao Mingbo cannot access Facebook in his home country but behind the imposing red walls of the Chinese embassy in Yangon's Dagon township he has quickly become one of his government's most prolific Facebook users.

Mr Gao, the head of the embassy's political section, launched the embassy's Facebook page about a year ago after reading an article on the social networking site's increasing popularity in Myanmar. He was already familiar with the site from his time as a student in London. The page has become an outlet for the embassy, giving it the opportunity to both post news and respond to it, and as of last week it had more than 1200 "likes".

Despite Myanmar's low internet penetration rates, Amara Digital Agency in Yangon estimates that there are around 800,000 Facebook users in the country.

Mr Gao posts almost daily, and up to five times on a busy day. The posts provide an update on the interactions between Chinese and Myanmar diplomats, civil society groups and political parties. As *The Myanmar Times* reported recently, this engagement has grown to include opposition parties, most notably Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy.

Some of the posts generating the most activity are those of former Chinese leaders making visits to Myanmar. One post of Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai celebrating water festival in 1960 has proven particularly popular.

He is also in charge of the embassy's Sina Weibo account, a Chinese micro-blogging site, and last week launched a Twitter account, though Mr Gao admits he is still trying to get the hang of writing in 140 characters or less. All are part of the embassy's new tri-lin-



Gao Mingbo, the head of the political section at the Chinese embassy in Yangon. Photo: Aung Htay Hlaing

gual approach to public engagement.

But China is not alone in Myanmar or abroad in adopting social media to further its diplomatic outreach efforts.

"Diplomats have gradually increased their reliance on social media," said Philip Seib, a professor and director at the Centre on Public Diplomacy at the University of Southern California in Los Angeles. "It has become more pervasive and foreign ministries have figured out the opportunities and hazards of such use. Today's dominant social media ... did not exist a decade ago, so the pace has been quick."

Mr Seib said he believed that social and new media would become a common feature of what he called the "diplomatic toolbox" in coming years.

But the ban on most social media sites presents a contradiction for Chinese diplomats. Facebook, which says it has more than one billion members globally, began to face restriction in China in 2008 and was blocked in 2009. Twitter was also blocked in 2009, along with popular video sharing site

YouTube.

Mr Gao offered no apologies for taking to the social networking sites.

"I don't care," he said of the embassy's Facebook use. "When in Rome do the Roman way. If it is popular here we will use it here. We try whatever means are available."

Other Chinese embassies have been far less active on Facebook, and appear to have had little success in engaging local communities through the site. The cultural office of the Chinese embassy in Dhaka, Bangladesh is moderately popular. The Chinese embassy in India has only around 60 "likes" and is little more than a forum for spam.

None are nearly as active as the Chinese embassy in Myanmar's page, which perhaps reflects the continued challenges the country is facing in counteracting widespread anti-Chinese sentiment.

These feelings were most recently on full display in late April, when angry confrontations between protesters and police broke out near the site of

the China-backed Letpadaung copper mine. Just days earlier, residents on Madaya Island in Rakhine State protested outside a China National Petroleum Company site linked to the oil gas pipeline between Rakhine and Yunnan Province.

While Mr Gao says the primary goal of the Facebook page is to inform the public, it complements the embassy's efforts to better reach out to the media through press releases, briefings and access to Chinese officials.

Used to being stonewalled by the embassy and its officials, journalists now find themselves invited to meet-and-greets with the Chinese ambassador. Emails and phone calls are promptly returned.

"They are active; before it was very difficult to interview the ambassador or any Chinese officials," said U Kyaw Zwa Moe, editor of the English edition of news magazine *The Irrawaddy*.

"They [China] really lost their relationship with the people," U Kyaw Zwa Moe said. "And now they are trying to rebuild it."

U Toe Zaw Latt, Myanmar bureau chief at *Democratic Voice of Burma*, agreed.

"We have direct contact with the embassy in Yangon," he said. "There has been lots of negative press for Chinese businesses and they are trying to reach the media. They are taking an aggressive approach to getting to know the local media and Burmese media."

Eleven Media Group, which the Chinese embassy has singled out for allegedly misreporting China-related news, did not respond to repeated requests for comment.

Mr Gao said he is not attempting to control the media but instead trying to provide journalists with a resource where they can obtain accurate facts about China's activities in Myanmar.

"There is increased interest, domestic and international, in what is going on in Myanmar and what the Chinese are doing here," he said. "We can get the facts right, get the correct information to the media and the general public."

But as many institutions attempting to engage people over Facebook have found, using the social networking site also opens them up to the unpredictable and often ruthless world of anonymous and faceless internet commentators.

Comments on the embassy page's posts range the spectrum from supportive to hateful to the slightly absurd. Recently, one user took issue with a cartoon of two people rowing a boat together. One was supposed to represent Myanmar, the other China,

1196

The number of Facebook users who had 'liked' the page of the Chinese embassy in Yangon as of May 25

and the message was that the countries were working together to further their mutual interests. The commenter's complaint was that the Chinese rower was drawn at the front of the boat.

Mr Gao responded personally, suggesting that the Chinese rower was drawn at the front of the boat because the character was female and therefore lighter.

"There will sometimes be radical comments," Mr Gao said. "Personally I don't care too much about the response. It is just to make sure our correct information gets across."

Though he welcomed the liberalisation of Myanmar's media landscape, including the relaxing of restrictions on censorship and the return of exile media outlets, Mr Gao said that the same might not be possible in China and it is impossible to draw comparisons between the two media environments.

"We have our own ways, own background and our own system."



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OPINION

Paying for an ‘international’ education

AUNG ZIN PHYO THEIN newsroom@myanmartimes.com.mm

I RECENTLY came across a ludicrous article. I won't reveal the title and author, but it was a scathing attack on the rapidly increasing number of international schools in Myanmar. Despite being well written, it focused mainly on criticising the lack of foreign teachers.

The article stated emphatically that owing to a lack of “qualified foreign teachers, our children are exposed to bad education”.

I read it again, made a cutting, and placed it in a personal album titled “Published Nonsense”.

I did agree with one thing: most international schools in Myanmar are not up to an international standard. In liberalising different aspects of our society we have enjoyed some gains, yet incurred losses as well.

The private education sector is one of these losses. “International” schools are sprouting like mushrooms. They are massive investments, trying to outdo one another with glossy advertisements. Billboards all over Yangon are full of summer courses, special “discounts” and other promotional campaigns. The word “international”, in my opinion, is too easily and loosely employed.

The beaming faces of smartly uniformed pupils in advertisements on billboards, newspapers and television are hiding a sinister truth. As businesses, these schools are striving for one golden goal: profit.

This is not a bad thing provided that the schools fulfill their promise of a sound education with an internationally recognised and accredited curriculum and, most importantly, qualified, dedicated teaching specialists. But many have not been able to do so. A school stocked with an eclectic mix of Caucasian teachers isn't the answer. A white face doesn't always translate into proper teaching. In truth, as many Myanmar parents are beginning to discover, it is very much the opposite.

These “teachers” can be classified into two groups: those with proper qualifications and experience, and those whom I call “carpetbaggers”. Backpacking foreigners with little or no prior experience or dubious backgrounds have come barging into Myanmar and declared themselves teachers, usually of English, mathematics or art. Why are they hired? Because they are cheap relative to the cost of an experienced, qualified professional, who can seek a teaching post anywhere in the world. Some of these teachers are more at home in a bar in downtown Yangon than a classroom.

Unfortunately, high school fees do not equal high-quality instruction. It is a case of “buyer beware”: Parents are buying an education and as consumers should not be afraid to demand quality in return. Based on my

experience and the experiences of many of my friends, there is also a frequent absence of properly trained auxiliary staff and administrators who know how to run an international school. In short, many of the staff at these schools are “learning on the job” at the expense of our students.

There is also the question of proper accreditation. If a school decides to follow, for example, the American Advanced Placement system, has the school achieved full accreditation? Is it subject to check-ups from the governing “international” education bodies such as the Western Association of Schools and Colleges or the European Council for International Schools, which both demand high standards from members and carry out regular inspections?

Unfortunately, high school fees do not equal high-quality instruction.

Unless proper background checks and changes to industry practices are implemented by both the government and the schools, standards in the sector are likely to plummet. In my opinion, the government should issue licences to foreign teachers only after conducting background checks on their identity, qualifications, teaching experience, and health and criminal records. Other countries, such as China and some in the Middle East, enforce similar standards. Schools should conduct surveys of students to gauge the performance of their teachers, and publish final examination results along with a list of teachers and their credentials. Our Myanmar students deserve the best – not merely token Caucasians who can't find work elsewhere.

Parents are spending a great deal of money and putting a lot of trust in these schools for the sake of their children. Many are not wealthy and are working in the maritime industry, for example, or sending money home from abroad to support their children's schooling. Every parent wants his or her child to lead a better, more educated life than they had. This is a goal that should be honoured by the institutions concerned. On their shoulders rest the well-being of not only families and individuals but also the nation.

Aung Zin Phyo Thein, 17, studied at the Diplomatic School Yangon from kindergarten to grade 10 and is now in the second year of an international baccalaureate program at Horizon International School.



A man smokes in his house in the Mon State capital, Mawlamyine. Photo: AFP

Mon State seeks new lease of life

KELLY MACNAMARA

THEY call it “Old Man's Land” – ravaged by conflict and economic deprivation, Mon State is a place bereft of its young, who have flooded overseas in search of work.

But with a reformist government promoting peace and economic development in impoverished border areas, the region is now looking to its future – and its lost youth.

The rural Mon community of Ywarthit is a place for the old and the very young. Locals say around 70 percent of households are missing the generation in between.

Many teenagers leave once they have finished school, crossing the border into Thailand to seek work in factories or as domestic helpers.

“There are not many people left in the village now. Only mothers and grandparents taking care of the grandchildren,” said Daw Nyein Tin, whose five children all went to Thailand to look for jobs.

She said she relies on their remittances, having given up work to look after five grandchildren.

“How would I live if they didn't send money?” the 60-year-old said.

A recent study by HelpAge International found about a quarter of households in Mon state contained only grandparents and grandchildren – markedly higher than the 10pc for the country as a whole.

Myanmar's remote borderlands – home to various ethnic minority groups – have been battered by civil wars since the country won independence from British colonial rule in 1948.

Under the military government, grave human rights abuses as well as policies aimed at choking supply links to armed groups severely affected local communities and their economies.

While the quasi-civilian government that took power in early 2011 inked cease-fires last year with rebels from Mon and

neighbouring Karen state, migrant workers have yet to begin flocking home.

Financial incentive alone is enough for many young people to work outside Myanmar.

Neighbouring Thailand has almost 1.7 million registered Myanmar workers, with an estimated one million more unregistered, according to migrant rights activist Andy Hall.

Thailand needs this cheap labour to bolster sectors like construction, food processing and its fishing industry, but Mr Hall said migrants are often subject to abuse and discrimination.

“They want to go home but the wage differentiation is so big they just can't do it,” Mr Hall said.

U Kyaw Thu Ya and his wife Daw Hay Mar, from Mon State's capital, Mawlamyine, met at a shrimp processing factory in Thailand's Mahachai industrial area, where thousands of Myanmar migrants live and work.

“My heart aches that our country is not the same as other countries. ... I miss my parents very much,” lamented U Kyaw Thu Ya, who said his family of rice farmers have a “hard life” back in Myanmar.

The couple live in a small, barely-furnished room in a block crowded with young people from their homeland. They do not have much, but even their scant possessions would be impossible luxuries at home.

MILLION

1.7

The number of registered Myanmar migrant workers in Thailand

“Here we have jobs. The condition of the roads and electricity and everything is good. In Myanmar, we would not be able to afford a television or computer. This is the big difference,” said U Kyaw Thu Ya.

When Daw Aung San Suu Kyi visited Thailand last year, she told throngs of migrants in Mahachai that she hoped they would soon return to their homeland.

It is a sentiment echoed in Myanmar's corridors of power.

Grand plans to build special economic zones across the country hinge on a level of skilled labour that is currently lacking in the long-isolated nation, and many officials hope luring back migrants will help make up the shortfall.

Some things are changing in the region. Work is underway to repave the road running to the border with Thailand. There are plans for a deep sea port further south in Dawei, and local people have seen a flurry of visits from international firms.

The interest has raised concerns about some development projects – particularly mining – leading to land confiscations and environmental damage, said Ashley South, consultant with the Myanmar Peace Support Initiative.

Mon State, which relies heavily on rubber and other agriculture, needs to diversify into other areas such as industry, said U Tint San, who is state manager of Myanmar Agricultural Produce Trading, a part of the Ministry of Commerce.

But electricity shortages are a major challenge, with authorities anticipating it will take two or three years to meet the needs of the region.

“We still have not got real opportunities,” U Tint San said.

On the outskirts of Mawlamyine, farmer U Htwe Yi said he doubted a rural existence would appeal to young people after the faster pace of life abroad.

“Those who have been there cannot live back here. If I was still young, I would want to go,” the 58-year-old said. – AFP

Advertisement for TOKI water featuring two women holding bottles and the TOKI logo with Burmese text.

Have you got something you want to say about this article? Email us at your.myanmar.times@gmail.com

My water comes from biodiversity

Understanding the links between human activity and the environment offers a new perspective on our water resources

AYE MYAT THANDAR
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AT my home in Yangon, we draw water from a tube well. I often wondered how the groundwater got recharged and the well never went dry. This mystery was solved when I began to understand the complexities of biodiversity. I realised that every glass of water we drink has travelled through a number of ecosystems and living creatures, being used and processed by different parts of the ecosystem, including plants and animals, until it is clean and able to sustain human life. The supplying of this water is an amazing “service” that nature provides and the process connects us with many creatures – more than most of us realise.

Although I studied information technology when I was an undergraduate, my interest in biodiversity grew as I read wildlife books, watched documentaries, and listened to stories my father, a forester, told me. As I worked through vocabulary in my courses – words such as network, programming, functions, and systems – the vast network of biodiversity also became clear.

Our actions have concentrated more towards disturbing the linkages between elements of biodiversity than on harmonising with them.

er. It is an amazing natural system created by interactions between different kinds of plants and animals and their physical environment.

The essence of biodiversity is not just the diversity within genes, species and ecosystems, but also their functional interconnectedness and structural coexistence. Within an ecosystem, all life forms interact and depend on one another to survive. The importance of biodiversity to human wellbeing can be seen in things derived directly from biological resources, such as food, clothes, shelter, medicine, and water, as well as in under-recognised services such as climate regulation, water purification, and waste decomposition. However, in today's busy world, we seem to forget about our interdependence with the web of biodiversity.

We are the world's most powerful species, with the potential to have a devastating impact on our environments.

We should be aware of this power but our actions have concentrated more towards disturbing the linkages between the elements of biodiversity than on harmonising with them. We have contributed to species extinction, water



pollution, forest degradation and deforestation. Many of us have yet to realise that we are a part of the global biodiversity, and that when our actions alter the environment for other species they will eventually modify our own too.

This year on May 22 the International Day for Biological Diversity focused on the theme of water and biodiversity, highlighting the important connection between the two.

This theme reminds me of a rivulet that flows near my home in Yangon and ultimately merges into the Yangon River. My parents have told me that you could once see many fish in this rivulet. Now I cannot see past the garbage that forms a surface over the creek. Whether it is the pollution that has overtaken the rivulet or the extension of our homes and expansion of our roads that has blocked it, we have lost those once-abundant fish. Myanmar has more than 350 freshwater fish species living within its varied riverine ecosystems and we cannot afford to have this diversity of fish meet the same fate.

Biodiversity is resilient, with an innate ability to regenerate provided we give it time and space. Even when one species disappears, in time another fills the void and ensures ecosystems continue functioning. But if we continue to rapidly alter our habitat, there may come a time when entire ecosystems begin to collapse. We may reach a tipping point at which ecosystems critical to our own survival can no longer recuperate.

Around the world, climate change is a growing concern. In Myanmar, we hear stories of diminishing water sources, a scarcity of drinking water, receding water volume in rivers and lakes and declining fish harvests. Irregular rainfall patterns and a frequently delayed monsoon affect crop productivity. All of these have had a direct impact on Myanmar's agriculture- and forestry-dependent economy.

Our forests are another important biodiversity resource. For anyone who has wondered where the water in the creeks

in Yangon comes from, you may be surprised to learn that the forests in the northern part of the country play a key role in the flow of freshwater

to the cities of the south. Our forests influence the water cycle by affecting the rates of transpiration and evaporation, and by influencing how

water is stored and how it is eventually routed to our tube well. The better protected and healthier our forests, the better the supply of water avail-

able in Yangon, both in terms of quality and quantity.

The government has taken several positive steps to rehabilitate forests in degraded watersheds, including placing restrictions on freshwater fishing during spawning and nursing periods. The Protection of Wildlife and Wild Plants and Conservation of Natural Areas Law has led to the establishment of scientific reserves, national parks, marine parks, nature reserves, wildlife sanctuaries, national heritage, and areas of geophysical or cultural significance. The Ministry of Environmental Conservation and Forestry is cooperating with other ministries and departments to conserve and manage Myanmar's biodiversity.

It is now time for the rest of us to acknowledge the importance of the biodiversity that surrounds us and recognise that when we conserve biodiversity, we conserve water and preserve our own existence.

Aye Myat Thandar is a young professional officer at the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development.



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Business

Central bank urged to balance curr

Economists say the agency should use its monetary policy tools to set an exchange rate that boosts exports without sparking inflation

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MONETARY experts urged Myanmar's central bank to set an exchange rate that balances the need to generate exports and maintain affordable imports, as the national currency continued its month-long slide against the US dollar.

The Central Bank of Myanmar's daily exchange rate, which is determined through foreign currency auctions with domestic banks, was K946 to the dollar on May 23, while official money changers were buying dollars for K945 and informal changers were offering K953-955.

On May 25, however, the kyat fell to 1000 for one dollar on the black market.

In official trade the kyat fell 2.3 percent against the dollar in the week to May 23, from 925 on May 17.

Matt Davies, deputy division chief for the International Monetary Fund's Asia and Pacific department, told *The Myanmar Times* that exchange rate fluctuations have the potential to greatly impact on the nation's trade sector.

He said on the sidelines of an IMF press conference that Myanmar needs to find a balance between allowing the US dollar to appreciate and making the nation's exports cheaper abroad, while keeping the price of imports affordable as the country grows.

Myanmar has made great strides in liberalising its for-

eign exchange regime since President U Thein Sein took office, including allowing new private banks to open, giving permission for banks to open official money exchange counters, installing automatic teller machines and legalising remittances from abroad, Mr Davies said.

In April 2012, the central bank began a managed float of the kyat by holding daily currency auctions. The rate set by the bank is then used as a benchmark for private banks and private exchange counters, which are allowed to change money within 0.8pc of the central bank's rate.

Mr Davies said the central bank is working to minimise exchange rate fluctuations without targeting a specific rate. However, it has also supplemented its foreign currency reserves by buying dollars and other foreign currencies, which is weakening the kyat.

He advised the central bank to build up its reserves so it has a buffer against external shocks.

Equipping the central bank with the tools to conduct domestic monetary policy is important for delivering the stability necessary for sustained economic growth, he added.

Mr Davies said inflation remains moderate at present but there are pressures, including from money growth, real estate prices and wage increases.

An official from the central bank's foreign exchange management department said the dollar is appreciating against the kyat because private banks are bidding higher at the daily currency auctions.

"We can't say the appreciation is too great ... there are many factors that are coinciding to form a trend," he said.

When the central bank started the managed float of the kyat, the dollar bought K818 but in the past 13 months it has appreciated by more than 15pc.

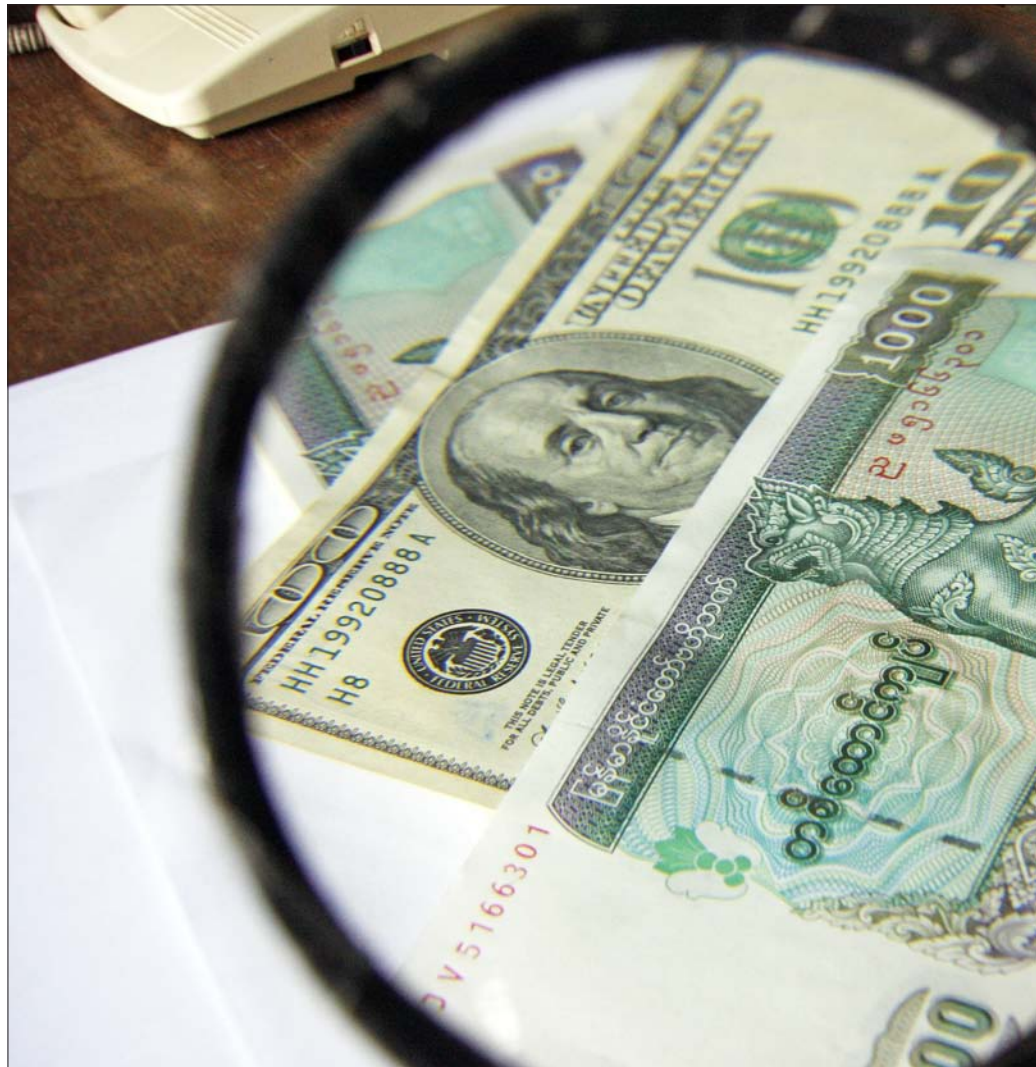
The official said the daily rate has seen changes up to a maximum of 1pc, adding that fluctuations would be larger if the central bank did not hold the auctions.

"This is not just a problem in Myanmar; we also have to deal with changes in the international economy. But we have to avoid fuelling an inflationary situation," he said.

Even though the central bank has not been made independent from the Ministry of Finance and Revenue - and will not be until after the Central Bank Law is passed by parliament and signed into law by the president - it can act to change monetary policy, he said.

A finance officer at a joint-venture between foreign and local partners said the swift fluctuations created occasional problems with customers.

"We have to negotiate with



Exporters and importers are closely monitoring the fluctuating rate between the kyat and the US dollar, while provide a buffer against external shocks. Photo: Aye Zaw Myo . Photo: Staff

1000

Black market rate at which the kyat was trading against the US dollar on May 25

the Internal Revenue Department and customers when the exchange rate changes too much in a month," she said.

She added that the variance between the rates offered at official money exchange counters and in the informal market - as much as K10 to the dollar on May 22 - also drew complaints from customers.

Economist U Khine Htun said the dollar is strengthening against the Japanese yen, the British pound, the Australian dollar and the kyat.

He added that another factor causing the dollar to appreciate is the start, in March, of the withdrawal of Foreign Exchange Certificates (FEC) from the market.

He said businesspeople only want dollars now, adding that traders say they hope to see a stable exchange rate of about K1000.

Myanmar must not allow imports to become too expensive because there is a huge need to import materials to build infrastructure projects such as special eco-

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Protest over
flower eviction

PROPERTY 27



Mobile banking
just months away

BUSINESS 25

Exchange Rates (May 24 close)		
Currency	Buying	Selling
Euro	K1204	K1222
Malay Ringitt	K315	K320
SG Dollar	K740	K752
Thai Baht	K32	K33
US Dollar	K958	K959

ency moves



the IMF is urging the Central Bank of Myanmar to build up its reserves to

conomic zones in Yangon, Dawei and Kyaukpyu, U Khine Htun stressed.

The appreciation of the dollar benefits exporters – chiefly those selling natural gas, agricultural goods and fisheries products – but hurts importers of fertiliser, cement, diesel and the cheapest cooking oils.

“It encourages the export first-policy, but the immediate fluctuations are harming the whole economy and destabilising the market,” U Khine Htun warned.

“The central bank has not intervened effectively in the monetary market yet. It is acting more like a referee as currencies are traded by banks.”

Govt cracks down on traders importing wrecked vehicles

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FIVE car importers have had their businesses shut down by the government after they were found to be selling cosmetically-enhanced wrecks, officials said on May 22.

U Min Min, director of One-Stop-Services, the agency that oversees imports, said 27 vehicles have been seized from four companies and one individual importer. They had imported wrecks, patched them up and resold them to unsuspecting buyers. The four companies cited are Aye Family, UT Family, Nagawaddi and G-Five. The individual importer is Zayan Htoo.

OSS was tipped off by port and customs authorities and it took immediate action, U Min Min said, adding that its investigation of car importers is widening.

Anyone who suspects they were duped into buying a cosmetically enhanced wreck can report the crime to OSS. “We don’t allow people to import badly damaged cars. We stop them [when detected],” U Min Min said.

OSS was set up September 2011 when the government eased restrictions on car imports by allowing companies, agents and individuals to enter a market that had been controlled by a handful of importers with ties to the military. One reason for the policy shift was to speed up the replacement of ageing cars in Myanmar with newer models, starting with those that were made 40 years ago or longer. OSS has given more than 155,000 import permits since it was set up, according to official data.

Commerce Minister U Win Myint said in mid-May that some traders importing used vehicles from Japan are bringing in vehicles that are so structurally damaged they are beyond repair. Some had been in car crashes and their engines were crushed, he



Imported vehicles arrive in Yangon by ship like the one shown above. Corruption in the Customs Department is allowing wrecks to slip through, dealers say. Photo: Thet Htoo

said.

Officials are taking this very seriously, the minister said. Such vehicles will be sent straight to the scrap yard and their importers will face criminal charges. Sales centres selling such cars will have their licences revoked for one year.

Farmer Auto president Dr Soe Htun said national pride is at stake because some exporters consider Myanmar an attractive for wrecked vehicles.

A spokesperson for OAC Sales Centre said only a few importers strictly

adhere to the regulations. “Some imported cars should really have been scrapped,” he said.

U Aung Than Win, a car dealer at the Min Ye Kyaw Swar Street car market, said plenty of badly damaged cars are being repainted and sold. “Most people don’t know how to inspect a car. They have no idea if the engine needs to be replaced or if the vehicle has been in a major accident. Only mechanics can tell.”

OSS has strict rules on the sale of reconditioned cars. Engines, brakes and all major components must be tested. Damaged parts must be replaced and any malfunctions must be repaired before the vehicle can be sold.

Dealers say, however, that enforcing the rules is difficult due to a shortage of inspectors and a lack of transparency at the Customs Department, which two months ago saw a major shakeup following allegations of widespread corruption.

‘Some imported cars should really have been scrapped.’

Spokesperson
OAC Sales Centre

Pipeline to China not facing delays, CNPC says



CLASHES between rebel and government troops in northern Shan State have not delayed the Shwe gas pipeline’s construction, which will be completed by the end of May, a representative of the pipeline’s major shareholder told *The Myanmar Times* on May 22.

China National Petroleum Corporation representative Alice Pyr said the project is on schedule and clashes in northern Myanmar do not affect it because the pipeline is at “a certain distance” from them. She also said the consortium behind the pipeline had a “department to maintain and secure” it.

CNPC’s unit South-East Asia Pipeline, one of the pipeline’s six shareholders, said they are currently dis-

cussing the date it will start operating, she added. Websites in South Korea, however, have already quoted officials from Daewoo, another shareholder, as saying gas will begin flowing from Rakhine State to China at the in June. A spokesperson for shareholder Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise said exports are likely to begin in July.

Ms Pyr’s comments follow speculation that fighting in northern Shan State has delayed the pipeline’s construction, as well as a renewed push by activists to postpone its operation until issues raised by communities affected by it are addressed. Others have called for the pipeline’s contract which was signed when Myanmar was under military rule, to be revisited.

“Most of the export-oriented projects like the Shwe gas project and hydropower projects are already underway, but the contracts were made before democratisation.

The government should review or renegotiate the former agreements to meet the needs of the people,” said Ko Wong Aung, international coordinator

of the Shwe Gas Movement. Myanmar needs an energy policy that can fulfill the needs of people who still live in the dark, he said, adding that nearly 80pc of the population lacks electricity.

Ms Pyr said 20pc of the gas will be uploaded from the pipeline in Myanmar for local use and reiterated that the crude oil that will flow through a parallel pipeline is being imported from the Middle East.

“We are not familiar with the government’s plan [for developing the] electricity industry. It is inappropriate for us ... to comment on [it],” she added.

However, the CNPC representative did note that the gas that will flow along the 500-mile pipeline from Rakhine to Northern Shan State before entering China was a small fraction of Myanmar’s untapped reserves.

She said she was confident Myanmar’s government would be able to solve the country’s energy crisis because it was pursuing economic development, and this requires expanding electricity supplies.



An engineer inspects a section of the controversial dual pipeline that will transport gas and crude oil to China. Photo: Staff

Heineken's arrival could be a double-edged sword

SU PHYU WIN

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WHEN it starts selling locally produced beer late next year, Heineken could help curb the massive flow of illegally imported brands - including its own - from Thailand and China, but the Dutch giant's marketing expertise and deep pockets threaten small domestic breweries, local experts said.

Industry analyst U Myint Zaw pointed to the effect Coca Cola and Pepsi had on the domestic soft-drink market, saying sales of popular local brands declined significantly after the American brands arrived.

"Consumers always want to try something new, and international brands have an advantage now because they are new to Myanmar," he said.

An executive with a leading brewery agreed, saying the arrival of foreign investment in the beer and liquor market

could drive small breweries and distilleries out of business. There are more than 10 breweries in Myanmar, but one - Myanmar Beer - controls 80 percent of the market.

"The foreign companies have more money. Although there is a ban on advertising, they can promote their products at bars and they can cut prices to drive others out of business," said the executive who asked not to be named.

Others disagree with this assessment. Myanmar Investment Commission deputy

director Daw San San Myint described Heineken's arrival as "good for the country", saying its new brewery will create jobs and reduce illegal imports.

Heineken and Alliance Brewery Company, its joint-venture partner, will spend US\$60 million to build their brewery near Yangon, and they expect it to begin operating by the end of next year.

Heineken's global external communications chief, John Clarke, said per capita beer consumption in Myanmar is about 3 litres a year, compared with 36 in China, 30 in Vietnam, 26 in Thailand and 15 in Cambodia. "There is significant room for growth in the market," he added.

Jeremy Cunningham, a senior alcoholic-drinks analyst at Euromonitor, said Myanmar's beer market is prized because it is "one of the last remaining virgin markets for growth".

"Beer is a highly consolidated category globally and there are very few opportu-

nities to expand and grow. Myanmar is one of those opportunities, both in terms of volume growth, but also eventually in value growth, as consumers will hopefully be able to afford to trade up to more premium products," he said.

Mr Cunningham was unsurprised that both Carlsberg and Heineken are entering Myanmar's market because both are "relatively weak in Asia" and "new sources of growth are vital for their own health".

Both are seeking what he called "the first move advantage". "In many markets in Asia, but also around the world, there [are] usually only one or possibly two players who dominate the market, giving great opportunities to the winners, but little to those left out," he added.

U Aung Moe Kyaw's deal with Heineken marks his first foray into the beer market, where the dominant player is Myanmar Beer, which is 45pc



Illegally imported Heineken is on sale at shops, like the one above, throughout the city. Photo: Boothee

3

Number of litres of beer Heineken estimates are consumed per capita in Myanmar each year

owned by the military-linked Union of Myanmar Economic Holdings, a conglomerate that also owns Myanmar's third-largest brewing company, Mandalay Beer.

Heineken will own 57pc of the newly formed APB Alliance Brewery Company,

through its subsidiary, Asia Pacific Breweries Limited. Carlsberg, the world's fourth-largest brewer, announced on February 1 that it will build a brewery in Bago Region with Myanmar Golden Star Breweries. - Additional reporting by Tim McLaughlin

GE aims to double business in Myanmar this year

TIM MCLAUGHLIN timothy.mclaughlin3@gmail.com

AMERICAN conglomerate General Electric expects its business in Myanmar to double this year, a senior executive told *The Myanmar Times* last week.

Stuart Dean, the company's chief executive officer for Southeast Asia, said GE earned US\$50

million in 2012, its first year of operations in Myanmar, and he expects this to double this year.

"We see huge potential and are currently in discussions to deepen our local partnerships," Mr Dean said on May 23.

The comments followed the

establishment of a regional office and the signing of two potential distribution deals with local partners.

GE opened its Yangon office on May 23. At a ceremony in Nay Pyi Taw the day before, it announced that it had signed a memorandum of understanding with Lighting Co Specialists

and a letter of intention with technology company Partners Associates. The announcements came just days after GE Energy's president of global sales and marketing, James Suci, met President U Thein Sein in Washington.

GE and Lighting Co Specialist aim to distribute a wide

range of GE lighting products in Myanmar. Through Partners Associates, GE aims to sell its batteries to telecom companies, which are overly-reliant on diesel powered generators for energy.

GE became the first US company to re-enter Myanmar following the easing of US sanctions in July last year. Its first deal was to provide medical equipment to two Yangon Region hospitals through local partner Sea Lion.

Last September its aviation branch leased two aircraft to state-owned Myanma Airways.

Two months later GE made a foray into Myanmar's energy sector through a project for a natural gas-fired power plant project with TOYO Thai Power Corp in Yangon's Alhona Township.

Despite GE's bullish outlook for Myanmar, the company has quickly learned of some of the troubles that come with being one of the first US firms on the ground in a country that is still under targeted sanctions imposed by the US government.

GE had planned to open its office earlier this year, but was delayed after it submitted a list of guests to the US Embassy to be checked against the Treasury Department's Specially Designated Nationals (SDN) list.

The process of clearing around 400 names, according to Mr Dean, took far longer than expected.

US companies are barred from engaging in business with individuals and companies from Myanmar that appear on the SDN list.

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Dated: 27 May 2013

Mobiles are singing a new tune

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UPSTART Hello Music is making a grab for the burgeoning ring-tune market by providing a ring-tune service to the 350,000 new mobile users who snapped up K1500 SIM cards in the lottery held in April.

The application allows mobile users to download songs for K300 each, after paying a monthly charge of K2000. Rivals My Ring Tune and Y Tune charge the same price but operate on different networks and SIM cards due to regulations set by Myanma Posts and Telecommunication, which does not allow ring-tune services to access all networks and SIM cards.

My Ring Tune and Y Tune both sell their services on the GSM and WCDMA networks. The first is only accessible with SIM cards sold by Myanma Posts and Telecommunication more than one year ago, when they cost K1.5 million. The second is only accessible with SIM cards that were sold last year when prices fell as low as K200,000.

All three services share several characteristics, including murky ownership, lack of data on sales figures and user numbers and marketing strategies tailored to the teen and young adult market. Hello Music's top 10 list includes three songs by teen heartthrob Bunny Phyo. Ring-tune companies are scrambling for his fan base because it dovetails with their market segment.

Celine Dion is also making a comeback on Myanmar's ring-tune charts, with her 1990s hit "My Heart Will Go On" racing up the charts.

Teens who use ring tunes say they sometimes let their phones ring longer than usual so callers can listen to their signature song. Market researchers say this is part of a "global mobile-bonding trend" that is seeing youths forming deeply personal relationships with the gadgets due to an intense and carefully constructed advertising blitz.



Celine Dion at the 2013 Billboard Music Awards in Las Vegas on May 19. Her 1997 hit song 'My Heart Will Go On' is racing up the charts of Myanmar's latest ring-tune service. Photo: AFP

BRIEFS

Bilingual trade-data app expands to iPhones
A free application that provides real-time data on commodity prices – eTm Biz Mobile Application – can now be downloaded on iPhones.

Previously, only mobiles using the Android operating system could download the app developed by e-Trade Myanmar Company, said Ma May Thaw Dar Soe, the company's sales manager. It provides exchange rates and domestic and international prices for gold, beans and pulses, rice, cooking oil, fuel, as well as a market watch for 13 wholesale markets.

"Data is updated in real time and can be tracked back five years in both English and Myanmar," Ma May Thaw Dar Soe said. The app has gained 23,000 users since it was introduced last year, she said.

– Aung Kyaw Nyunt

Gold shops humming as price swings boost business
Fluctuating global gold prices are livening up the local trade, with demand rising at gold shops when the price falls below the K700,000 per tical (0.567 per ounce), shop owners said.

U Kyaw Win, senior vice president of Myanmar Gold Development Public Company, said that price drops in the local market have not been as steep as international ones and that traders have become more reluctant to sell since the Water Festival, when prices began to slide from K740,000 per tical.

On May 18, local gold prices fell to K698,000 from K704,000 per tical the day before. Three days later the price began rising again in Yangon, hitting K710,000 per tical on May 23. Demand for gold bars remained strong, traders say.

– San Yamin Aung

Wireless banking is just months away

AYE THIDA KYAW

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BANKS in Myanmar will begin allowing mobile banking for domestic remittance in July or August, executives said.

U Tin Maung Htay, managing director for Small and Medium Industrial Development Bank, said domestic banks are in the final stage of preparing for mobile banking – a process that began two years ago – and that they have identified the major hurdles.

"The main problem is telecoms," U Tin Maung Htay said, adding that networks are unreliable, especially during bad weather, and this could interrupt transactions made over the phone. "We have to make sure poor Internet and phone line connections do not cause payments to be missed. It's a matter of reputation."

Another issue yet to be resolved, according to U Tin Maung Htay, is whether the system will operate directly from bank to agent or whether payments will be routed through the Myanmar Payment Union, which was set up last year by 17 state-owned and

'We're in final stage ... and will move as soon as possible.'

Spokesperson
Central Bank of Myanmar

private banks to make payments between banks more convenient.

U Pe Myint, the managing director of Cooperative Bank, said mobile banking in remote areas will require banks to select reliable agents. Customers who remit small amounts of money can use agents, but it will be trickier for those who want to transfer large amounts of cash to remote areas because agents may not have it on hand, he added.

U Pe Myint also said a "code" system will be used to ensure the security of remittances.

A spokesperson for the director of the Central Bank of Myanmar said rules and regulation for mobile banking are currently being finalised and will be announced within two months, but added that this could happen within weeks. "We're in final stage. We're gauging how it can benefit people and will act as soon as possible."


Numerous foreign and domestic technology companies are involved in the preparations and will participate in the service.

The central bank spokesperson said most mobile banking transactions are likely to be small. "This system targets small amounts, like cash sent by a worker in Yangon to his family in a village."

Most domestic banks are eager to implement the system, he said. Although it presents risks for the banks, IT and telephone companies involved, he was confident these could be handled.

"Our banks have considered all of the possible problems and can deal with them," the spokesperson said.


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Fisheries bouncing back on stronger dollar



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THE fisheries sector is bouncing back as the strengthening US dollar makes the country's exports more attractive, executives said at last week's Myanmar Fisheries Federation meeting.

By May 23 the dollar was trading at K946 but exporters cautioned that the exchange rate must be stable in the long term or fish farmers and traders could lose money.

U Myo Nyunt, managing director of General Food Technology and Industrial, said the kyat's fall over the past two weeks was good for exports, "but we have to wait and see what will happen because it's important that the exchange rate be stable".

Exporters are happy with an exchange rate of K950 to the dollar, but they say a sudden appreciation could be costly. "If the kyat falls to 1000 we will make bigger profits,

'We are just returning to profit after a couple of years of losses ... it is vital that the exchange rate remains stable.'

U Myo Nyunt
Managing Director
General Food Technology



Fishing boats docked at port in Yangon Region. The industry is expecting an export boom. Photo: Staff

but if it suddenly appreciates we'll lose money," U Myo Nyunt said.

"We are just returning to profit after a couple of years of losses, but it is vital that the exchange rate be stable and at least K950 to the dollar."

Crab exporter U Myat Oo said primary producers are most affected by rate fluctuations. "Over the past two years when the kyat was strong we could not buy raw materials from primary producers because exports were not profitable. This hurt everyone," he said.

"With the dollar rising again we can begin offering better prices to fish farmers, but we all hope the exchange rate will be stable," he added.

U Myat Oo said a rate of K950 to the dollar meant exporters could

make a profit on farmed fish, such as carp, of K200 a viss (1.6 kilograms or 3.6 pounds), but when it was K850 they lost K200 a viss.

U Htun Aye, general secretary of the Myanmar Fishery Products Processors and Exporters Association, said the strengthening dollar reduces production costs and that a rate of K1000 to the dollar would be ideal, as long as it was stable.

"Exports boomed in 2009 when the exchange rate was at least K1000," he added. "We hope that happens again. Most of our costs, such as wages, raw materials and fuel, are must be paid in kyat but our exports are paid in dollars. A higher exchange rate makes it easier to cover our costs."

Stable exchange rates give trad-

ers confidence to increase orders from fish farmers and pay higher prices, association members said.

Fish farmer U Than Lwin said he is already getting higher prices and will expand production.

"When we are paid higher prices we can produce more fish," he added.

"When the exchange rate was low some people quit the business and others operated at just 30 percent capacity, but recently people are coming back to the business and I'd guess that total production is already up by 10pc."

Despite the increase in profits, some fish farmers said they still need government assistance, especially low-interest loans, to expand production.

BRIEFS

Yangon

Annoying rules on tech imports eased

The Ministry of Communications and Information Technology is easing restrictions on the import of telephones and telephone parts. Applicants for an import license will no longer need to provide their banking statements and will not need government approval to import during the year it is valid, the ministry announced in mid May.

Under the new rules, individuals can also bring up to two handsets into the country for personal use, as well as fax machines, wireless routers, access points, 2.4GHz frequency switches, and Bluetooth devices. Satellite phones, however, remain prohibited.

Ko Yan Naing Soe Myint, from mobile phone store Lu Gyi Minn, said pressure from trade officials on the ministry likely prompted the change.

"During the last three years, it has been very hard to get a licence. We tried to get a new one in 2009, but were refused one because they said policies were going to change," he explained.

Daw Phyu Phyu Tun, owner of Access Spectrum Computer and Accessories, said less red tape will make doing business easier. "Under the military regime, they didn't want to hear the word 'wireless'. So, we had to apply [for wireless items] as routers. It is very useful to have the restrictions lifted."

U Ye Myat Thu, managing director of Alpha Info-Tech, said the easing of restriction on imports will make passing through Customs less irritating. "When we brought electronics devices bought from other countries to Myanmar for personal use, we were checked at Customs and couldn't get them in. It was annoying," he added.

- Htoo Aung

Mandalay

Fresh drive to boost industrial zone

A new management committee is being formed to revitalise the Mandalay Industrial Zone, a member of the committee said last week.

"We are now reorganising the zone's management committee," said U Ye Win Aung, who runs an electrical services company in the zone. "We need to lay down some principles and ensure that it's a systematic organisation. The previous committee had no strong principles."

A committee member involved in drafting the new constitution said four meetings have been held to discuss reorganising the committee and "pushing the zone forward".

"The Mandalay Industrial Zone has been deteriorating since it was founded 18 years ago," the owner of one business in the zone said. It has more than 1500 businesses, the vast majority of which are small- and medium-sized enterprises.

- Than Naing Soe, Translated by ZarZar Soe

Mandalay

Region's orchards aiming for global appeal

The Mandalay branch of the Myanmar Fruit, Flower and Vegetable Producer and Exporter Association is gearing up for an expansion by offering technical advice to orchard owners in the region on how to crack overseas markets.

U Ko Ko Htwe, chairman of the association's Mandalay branch said orchard owners had the technology to provide the quality of produce overseas buyers want but lacked critical knowledge about price fluctuations in foreign markets. "Exporters need to keep a watchful eye on the market to make sensible judgements."

A local fruit trader agreed, stressing that it is vital to export quality produce to ensure Myanmar fruits acquire a good reputation globally.

- Kyay Hmon Win, Translated by Thit Lwin



The United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) in Myanmar is inviting qualified candidates to apply for the following positions:

Sr.	Title and level	Duty Station	Position	Deadline
1.	Protocol Associate (LICA4)	Yangon	National	30-May-2013
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Flower power blossoms in Yangon

Nursery and plant shop owners dig in their heels against ‘disgusting’ eviction tactics, including electricity and water cuts



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FLOWER sellers at Mindhamma gardens compound in Mayangone township have had their water and electricity cut after refusing to relocate, they told a press conference on May 20.

A spokesperson from Yangon City Development Committee's Parks and Playground Department, however, said the tenants have had plenty of time to move to a new location. It has sent several eviction notices – “one in October 2012, two in November 2012 and another on February 26, 2013” – telling the 199 shops at Mindhamma to move to Yamona park in Thaketa township.

Daw Thiri Sandar, owner of Thiri Flower House, said only 26 tenants signed the eviction papers and just 10 have moved to Thaketa “willingly”.

The rest refuse to budge and

plan to protest at the Mindhamma compound on May 28 at 10:30am against “illegal actions by law enforcement”.

U Phyo Zaw Min, owner of Shin Than Chin nursery, said that YCDC has been increasing pressure on the tenants since April 2 when it cut their water supply. Electricity was turned off on May 4. A meeting between shop owners and YCDC on May 11 was fruitless, he said.

He described YCDC as “disgusting” for destroying two nurseries on May 17 and 18 with an excavator.

Nursery and flower shop owners said they were given no

‘What the mayor said is untrue, because relocation is quite painful.’

U Phyo Zaw Min
Flower Shop Owner

choice about where they would be located and that they prefer to stay in Mindhamma because their businesses are booming there and that it is becoming Yangon's second central business district (CBD).

“We're citizens of the nation and have a right to refuse the relocation site,” U Phyo Zaw Min said. “Authorities can't do this to us by force. We're doing business legally in Mindhamma compound. ... We also want to be involved in that second CBD plan. Evicting us by force and giving the land to foreign companies to develop is unfair.”

He said that shop owners oppose the draft of the second CBD law proposed to the Yangon Region Hluttaw in April because floral and gardening businesses have not been included in the new development.

In an exchange quoted in local media, Yangon's mayor told a Yangon Region Hluttaw meeting on April 24 that the relocation of the flower shops and nurseries to Thaketa township would not bother the shop owners very much. U Phyo Zaw Min disagreed. “What the mayor said



A Yangon City Development Committee excavator digs into land occupied by flower shops and nurseries in Mindhamma compound in Mayangone township on May 18. Photo: Supplied

is untrue, because relocation is very painful and compensation should be paid for all shop owners,” he said.

Shopkeepers say the evictions and the tactics have been costly – both for those who have left and those who refuse to leave. Land at the new location is more expensive, Daw Thiri Sandar said. Those who refuse to leave have had to pay to water their plants.

“Because of the water and electricity cuts, the cost to buy water as well as diesel to run generators for electricity totals about K350,000 for each shop for a month,” said Daw Kay Thwe Soe, who owns Flower Prince orchid shop. “That's K35 million for 100 owners. This cost should be the YCDC's responsibility.”

WASHINGTON

US housing recovery gaining speed

Existing-home sales in the United States rose in April to the fastest pace in nearly three and a half years but were held back by tight inventory and credit, the National Association of Realtors said on May 22.

Sales rose 0.6 percent from March to an annual rate of 4.97 million units, the association said.

That was the highest sales rate since November 2009 when the pace hit 5.44 million units, helped by the federal government's home buyer tax credit to kick-start the housing recovery, the industry group said.

The March pace was revised up to 4.94 million units annually, from an estimate of

4.92 million. The report underscored resilience in the housing market recovery that has been a key support for growth in the economy.

On a 12-month basis, existing-home sales were up 9.7 percent. Sales prices rose for the 14th straight month of year-on-year gains, and were up 11pc from April 2012.

“The robust housing market recovery is occurring in spite of tight access to credit and limited inventory.

“Without these frictions, existing-home sales easily would be well above the five-million unit pace,” the association's chief economist Lawrence Yun.

“Buyer traffic is 31pc stronger than a year ago, but sales are running only



supply, the Commerce Department said on May 23.

Sales of new single-family houses surged to an annual pace of 454,000, up 2.3pc from March and 29pc from a year earlier.

The median sales price rose to US\$271,600, compared to an average of \$256,200 for the first three months of the year. The year-earlier median was \$236,400.

Supply on the market remained tight at 156,000 new houses, or 4.1 months worth of supply at the current sales rate.

Home sales remained strongest in the west, where they rose 3.3pc in April from March, and weakest in the northeast where sales fell 16.7pc in the month. – *AFP*

about 10pc higher. It's become quite clear that the only way to tame price growth to a manageable, healthy pace is higher levels of new home construction.”

Sales of newly built homes also jumped in April and prices surged as demand picks up against a still constricted

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Dated: 27 May 2013

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for Kentucky Fried Chicken
International Holdings, Inc.
P. O. Box 60, Yangon
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Dated: 27 May 2013

Buyers race to cross the river

Renewed speculation about a bridge linking downtown to Dala has unleashed another speculative frenzy in the township



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BUYERS are once again descending on Dala township amidst a revival of speculation that a bridge will be built across the Yangon River, as transportation infrastructure projects that make commuting easier boost property prices in the city's outskirts.

Real estate agents told *The Myanmar Times* last week that increased talk about a bridge to Dala had sparked a boom in land sales in the township, with

prices doubling since December. "Dala land prices have been rising very swiftly since talk about the bridge project picked up again," said an agent for Mya Pan Tha Khin Real Estate.

The trend started early this year and buyers are snapping up multiple plots, he said. "The attraction is Dala's closeness to downtown for prices that are only a fraction of those in the city centre."

One acre in Dala is selling for K7-K8 million, up from K3-K4 million in December, realtors say.

The agent from Mya Pan Tha Khin Real Estate, who asked not to be named, said on May 24 that prices had been stable for a week.

Ko Min Min Soe, an agent

who sells land in the city's outskirts, said reports of rising prices in Dala have fuelled sales.

"When speculators hear land prices are rising in an area, they jump in," he said, adding that most purchases are for 3 or 4 acres but some are as large as 40 acres. "They are hoping that a bridge will be built and the township will develop with good infrastructure for transportation," he said.

Ko Htun Htun, a spokesperson for Phoenix Real Estate agency, said land prices in Hlaing Tharyar township have risen since the Hledan overpass was completed in April.

"Soon there will be a new bridge and overpass at Bayintnaung junction, so getting to Hlaing Tharyar will be faster,"



A man leaps from a ferry from Dala township as it docks at Yangon city. Photo: Lwin Ko Taik

he said. "We're confident this will lead to an increase in prices in the township, especially at the Pun Hlaing, FMI and Nawa-day housing estates."

Buyers are snapping up roadside plots to open small businesses, with 2400-square-foot plots in housing estates going for about K170 million, an increase of about 6 percent from

the K160 million average in December.

U Khin Maung Aye, a real estate agent for Shwe KanMyay Real Estate agency, said land prices in North Dagon township have doubled since December, with 2400-square-foot plots on Pinlone Road now selling for up to K300 million.

Ko Kyaw Zin, a resident of

North Dagon, said prices began shooting up two years ago when Yangon City Development Committee upgraded BohmuBahtoo Road. Before then, he said, few people were interested in buying land in the area.

"People selling their properties downtown are buying here. North Dagon is starting to develop," he said.

HOUSE OF THE WEEK



Pretty in pink

"SWEET" is a word that springs to mind when approaching this two-storey delight located in a 4800-square-foot compound in South Okkalapa township. With plenty of lawn along the right side of the house and a mini plant nursery, complete with a sun-roof, in the backyard, the three-bedroom home is a gardener's delight.

The house is in the ZiZiWa housing estate, which is tranquil, private and quiet. Its homes are more quirky than ostentatious, though a leap up market from those in adjacent North Okkalapa township.

The ground floor has sturdy security doors at the entrance and at the indoor garage, and almost all of the windows are on the second floor.

No walls divvy up the space on the ground floor, creating a familial, relaxing environment. The facilities are modern and the furniture surprisingly tasteful. The kitchen includes a small pantry and a laundry room is adjacent to it.

Upstairs are three bedrooms, each with an air conditioner, and one bathroom.

The home has no balcony, or much of a need for one considering the large backyard, which invites one to unwind under an umbrella or after sunset with family and friends. The house owner can probably be talked into painting the house another colour for a long-term tenant.

- Ei Thae Thae Naing

Location : ZiZiWa Housing estate, South Okkalapa township
Price : K 2.5 million (rent), K750 million (sale)
Contact : Phoenix Real Estate and General Service
Phone : 09-86-13388

Italy's deepening recession sparks foreign buying spree

FOREIGN buyers are swooping on villages in Sicily to snap up homes for as little as US\$13,000, propping up a property market in freefall as Italy suffers its longest-ever recession.

"When you go to the pizzeria

now, you often meet more foreigners than Sicilians," said Salvatore Sansemi, mayor of Cianciana, near the southern city of Agrigento.

Half the population of the village - set against the stun-

ning backdrop of the Sicani mountains and close to the sea - has emigrated to Canada, France or Germany in recent years, leaving only around 3500 inhabitants.

"We have just signed off on

140 sales to British, French, Norwegians and Poles, as well as a few Canadians and Chinese," Mr Sansemi told *AFP*.

One of the latest buyers in the village is Ray Winstone, a British actor and producer who bought an old farmhouse for \$65,000 and is entirely redoing it to the tune of \$1.67 million.

"Prices are very low. A house needing repairs can cost from \$13,000 to \$40,000. An apartment or a renovated house from \$80,000 to \$100,000," he said.

Cianciana already has around 800 British home owners and the number is growing.

Cianciana's success has inspired neighbouring villages to do more to attract foreign buyers. Aragona, which now has 9500 inhabitants after over 8000 upped sticks, has launched a campaign to try and persuade

Belgians and Russians to move there. "Last year, I invited a delegation of Russians that was visiting Agrigento," said mayor Salvatore Parelo.

"Buy everything!" I told them. Here it's warm year-round," he said.

The state of the property market is such that any buyers are welcome.

A shocking report by the Italian Banking Association and the national tax agency last week showed that the number of property sales in Italy last year dropped by 27.5 percent from 2011 to 448,364 - its lowest level since 1985.

The drop in Sicily was little different, with a contraction of 27.4pc.

"Right now there are just sellers. Sales are not going well at all," said Antonello Cassisa,

director of Sicilproject, a real estate company aimed at the Russian market.

"The number of Russian buyers is more or less stable," he said. The advantage of Russian clients, he explained, is that there is a range of reasons they might be looking for property - a holiday home, an investment or a move linked to business interest in the picturesque island region. Sicilproject offers properties up to \$23 million for an 18th-century Baroque villa built for a Sicilian prince.

The climate is a big factor for Sicily even though the infrastructure and services are not as good on the Adriatic coast, another popular holiday home spot.

Mr Cassisa said his latest big sale to a Russian client was a \$1.5-million villa. - *AFP*

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BANGKOK

Mobile phones a lifeline for migrant workers: study

ASIA'S mobile revolution is set to transform the region's financial services industry, offering a cheap way for millions of migrant workers to send money home to their families, a report said on May 20.

Nearly 60 million migrant workers from the Asia-Pacific region sent almost US\$260 billion home to their families in 2012, said the study, co-authored by the World Bank and the International Fund for Agricultural Development.

An estimated 70 million Asian households – one in 10 – benefit from these flows.

Yet most Asian households receiving remittances still “live outside the world’s financial system”, particularly those from rural areas, with limited access to savings accounts, the report said.

“Mobile telephony offer the prospect of cheaply connecting hundreds

‘Mobile telephony offer the prospect of cheaply connecting hundreds of millions of unbanked rural and low-income people to financial services.’

World Bank /International Fund for Agricultural Development study

of millions of unbanked rural and low-income people to financial services,” it added.

Asia is the fastest-growing market on the planet for mobile financial services, which reach almost every town and village, enabling people to send money, transfer funds between accounts and pay bills, the report said.

Traditionally, rural recipients of remittances had to travel long

distances to a bank or other payout locations to receive their money in cash.

But technological advances mean that these days “mobile wallets” can be used to receive and store money for future use.

Some mobile devices also allow customers to receive money from ATMs without a bank card as well as to pay for goods and services at retail

locations, even if such services are in the early stages.

In the past workers sending money home to families in rural areas faced higher remittance charges, but that is also changing.

The cost of mobile transactions is also about 2 percent of that of branch banking, and 60pc of leading remittance service providers offer mobile transfers.

“The promise of low-cost, instantaneous transfers of funds over large distances directly through mobile phones is one of the most exciting prospects in the industry today,” the report said.

But the authors also sounded a note of caution about mobile banking, saying its long-term success depended on the development of economically sustainable business models, which they warned “remains a challenge”. – AFP



Mobile phones have slashed the cost of money transfers for the millions of Asians who work overseas. Photo: AFP

WASHINGTON

High-tech solutions providing smarter ways to manage cities

RELATIVELY mundane city-management issues, from parking to water use, are going high-tech as cities seek to use analytics and information to improve their operations.

Companies are pushing this kind of work, arguing that it can improve city services and operations while in many cases lowering costs or even generating new revenue.

In Dubuque, Iowa, for instance, the city government hired IBM to pilot new technology for the water system. The city has equipped homes with automated water meters and, with the help of IBM, delivered consumption information to residents, resulting in greater conservation and quicker response to leaks.

“It was really giving [homeowners] the real-time information, which was a very good incentive to have them change behaviours,” Dubuque Mayor Roy Buol said. “It’s like an ‘aha’ moment.”

The city has since started a similar pilot using smart meters for electricity consumption and it is recruiting volunteers for studies to analyse data related to wellness issues.

IBM established what it has dubbed its Smarter Cities initiative about three years ago. It is designed to help cities use technology to improve management and handle challenges including infrastructure and social services.



Traffic congestion on a Los Angeles freeway. Technology giant Siemens has developed a congestion-management system that changes signals to prevent traffic jams. Photo: AFP

“I want the county to be on the cutting edge of technology, because I think it’s just going to allow us to deliver better service,” said Mayor Carlos Gimenez, who sought to have Miami-Dade be an IBM test city so it could experiment with new technologies at a limited cost.

The county is looking into predictive analyses such as forecasts of where criminal activity is likely to occur. “They can predict trends, and then we can do a better job of protecting our citizens,” Gimenez said.

He said that although it’s too early to say whether the partnership is working, the county’s early involvement and feedback are allowing it to shape the kind of technology IBM might offer.

“We’re really just scratching the surface here,” Gimenez said. “I’d like

to go a lot deeper.”

Siemens established its cities and infrastructure unit in October 2011 and has won work with communities such as San Antonio and Reno.

Terry Heath, president of the North American mobility and logistics division within Siemens’ infrastructure and cities sector, focuses his work on transportation improvements, including a system that installs sensors in a city’s parking spots, then links those devices to parking meters.

A smartphone application allows drivers to call up a map and see where spaces are available. The software is not only a convenience to motorists but potentially allows communities to provide fewer spaces by making better use of the ones it has.

‘The potential is just incredible around that technology.’

Roy Buol
Mayor of Dubuque, Iowa

Other options include congestion-management systems that change signals to prevent traffic from backing up.

In San Antonio, Siemens managed an initiative to encourage people to ditch their cars in favour of riding the bus. The company spearheaded a project to create a GPS-based bus rapid-transit system, which allows buses to request a green light when they are behind schedule.

The system helped improve buses’ on-time performance, Heath said, resulting in more riders.

IBM and Siemens executives said they usually work with smaller cities, where it can be easier to isolate problems and make changes.

And while smaller cities often have financial constraints, they’re finding ways to work around them.

Heath said some cities are looking to systems that produce revenue such as tolls and “variable” lanes, where fees increase as demand grows.

“It gives you an option to avoid that traffic,” he said. “And it obviously is a good revenue source for cities and states in tough times.”

Buol, the Dubuque mayor, said he sees virtually endless opportunities to incorporate data into management.

“The potential is just incredible around that technology,” he said. “It’s giving that real-time information so that people will make decisions based on their wants and needs.”

Gimenez said the technology will be useful in a wide range of places. Miami-Dade, he acknowledged, is not necessarily the typical US city.

“We’re different because we have different demographics,” he said. “But the core set of issues is probably the same set of issues [for] Miami as it is for small-town Wyoming.”

– The Washington Post

REDMOND, Washington

New Xbox One: It can also take your pulse

MICROSOFT on May 21 staked a claim to the internet age living room with an eagerly awaited new generation Xbox One console touted as a home entertainment hub that goes far beyond games.

“Today, we put you at the centre of a new generation in the living room,” said Don Mattrick, head of Microsoft’s interactive entertainment business, unveiling the new version of the popular game console.

The beefed-up hardware is powered by software that allows for instant switching between games, television, and internet browsing. Microsoft-owned Skype was also integrated for online group video calls.

Kinect motion and sound sensing accessories accompanying the consoles recognise users; respond instantly to commands spoken in natural language, and even detect a person’s pulse.

“This is the beginning of a new generation of games and entertainment and a new generation of smart TV,” said Microsoft entertainment unit executive Yusuf Mehdi.

Microsoft played to longtime Xbox fans with glimpses of blockbuster games including “Call of Duty Ghosts” and “FIFA” football being tailored for the new consoles.

A beloved “Halo” science fiction shooter franchise was used to showcase the merging of television and videogame play in Xbox One.

Xbox One consoles will be released later this year, said Mattrick, who did not disclose pricing details.

Microsoft has sold some 77 million Xbox 360 consoles since they hit the market in late 2005. Console rival Sony has sold about the same number of PlayStation 3 consoles, which was introduced a year later.

Nintendo sold nearly 100 million Wii consoles, which became hits due to innovative motion-sensing controls after their debut in 2006. However, demand for Nintendo’s recently released Wii U consoles has been disappointing.

Sony announced a new generation PlayStation 4 system in February. The PS4 is due on the market by the end of this year.

“Microsoft wins the next-gen game console launch wars,” said Forrester analyst James McQuivey.

“Where first Nintendo offered us a tablet to accompany the millions we had already bought and Sony then offered us a box that we couldn’t even see, Microsoft has trumped them both by delivering the Xbox One,” he said.

– AFP

World

WORLD EDITOR: Geoffrey Goddard | geoffreygoddard@mmtimes.com

LONDON

British PM calls for calm after soldier hacked to death

Britain reacts with shock and revulsion after a soldier is hacked to death in a sickening attack

BRITISH police made two further arrests on May 23 and raided houses throughout London following the brutal murder of a serving soldier who survived a tour of duty in Afghanistan.

Prime Minister David Cameron appealed for calm after Lee Rigby, 25, was butchered outside a London army barracks on May 22, while an extra 1200 officers were deployed on the capital's streets in a bid to reassure the public.

The intelligence agencies meanwhile came under scrutiny after it emerged that the two murder suspects, who were injured in police gunfire at the scene, had been known to the security services.

Both men, aged 28 and 22, are believed to be Britons of Nigerian origin. One of them had attended meetings by the now-banned Islamist group Al-Muhajiroun, said its UK leader Anjem Choudary.

The two chief suspects are under

arrest in separate hospitals. They are both stable and their injuries are not life threatening, police said.

In a brazen mid-afternoon attack in Woolwich, southeast London, the pair apparently hacked Rigby with knives and a meat cleaver before attempting to explain their actions in an Islamist tirade to passers-by.

The victim, who has a two-year-old son, Jake, was a machine gunner who served with NATO-led forces in Afghanistan in 2009, the defence ministry said.

Police searched five properties in London and one in a village in eastern England and announced the arrests of a man and a woman, both aged 29, for conspiracy to murder.

"This is a large, complex and fast-moving investigation which continues to develop," a spokesman said.

Detectives are sifting through witness statements, social media and security camera footage, while forensic experts have been combing the scene in Woolwich for evidence.

Media reports citing witnesses said the men first ran over their victim in a car before finishing him off with the knives.

A government source said "we will be looking into the possibility that they were known" to the security services.



Floral tributes on May 23 outside the London barracks near where the soldier was murdered. Photo: AFP

British media are naming the suspects as Michael Adebolajo, 28, and Michael Adebowale, 22, both from London.

Islamist preacher Choudary told AFP Adebolajo was from a Nigerian family, converted to Islam in 2003 and took the name "Mujahid". He regularly attended sermons by banned Islamist preacher Omar Bakri, the Al-Muhajiroun founder.

"He used to attend some of our activities over the years. Very peaceful chap actually, not violent at all,"

Choudary said, adding that he lost contact three years ago.

Chilling onlooker footage showed the man thought to be Adebolajo still holding his weapons and saying they killed Rigby "because Muslims are dying daily by British soldiers".

Cameron condemned the attack as a "betrayal of Islam".

Speaking after chairing a second meeting of COBRA, the government's emergency response committee, the prime minister branded the murders "sickening".

"This was not just an attack on Britain and on the British way of life. It was also a betrayal of Islam and of the Muslim communities who give so much to our country," he said outside his Downing Street office.

The murder is the first deadly Islamist attack in Britain since 2005, when suicide bombers killed 52 people on London's transport network.

In the video, which has gone viral on the internet, Adebolajo demanded Cameron's government "bring our troops back".

"You people will never be safe. Remove your governments, they don't care about you," he said.

The Muslim Council of Britain has described the murder as "a truly barbaric act that has no basis in Islam".

- AFP

'You people will never be safe.'

Michael Adebolajo
Murder suspect



IN PICTURES

NIAAMEY

Suicide attacks in Niger target army base, mine

ISLAMIST groups have claimed responsibility for twin suicide car bombings on an army base and a French-run uranium mine in Niger in which at least 20 people died, in retaliation for the country's military involvement in neighbouring Mali.

The attacks on May 23 came four months after al-Qaeda linked militants seized a desert gas plant in neighbouring Algeria in a siege that left 38 hostages dead, also in retaliation against the intervention in Mali.

The Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO), one of the Islamist groups that seized control of northern Mali last year before being driven out by French-led troops, claimed the near simultaneous bombings at the Agadez army base and a uranium mine in northern Arlit.

"We attacked France and Niger for its cooperation with France in the war against sharia (Islamic law)," MUJAO spokesman Abu Walid Sahraoui said after the attacks, the first of their kind in the former French colony.

Later, a spokesman for Mokhtar Belmokhtar said the Algerian Jihadist commander had "supervised" the suicide bombings in conjunction with MUJAO.

"It was Belmokhtar himself who supervised the operational plans of attacks" on the Agadez army base and the uranium mine, El-Hassen Ould

Khalil, spokesman for Belmokhtar's "Signatories in Blood" group, was quoted as saying by a Mauritanian news agency.

He said the near-simultaneous bombings "targeted elite French forces" who were providing security at the uranium mine that is majority-owned by France's Areva.

The first car bomb went off at dawn on May 23 at the army base in Agadez, the largest city in northern Niger.

Eighteen soldiers and a civilian were killed along with four attackers at the army base, Interior Minister Abdou Labo said.

About 30 minutes after the first attack, a suicide bomber blew up a car at the Somair uranium mine and processing facility as employees reported for work at the site, killing one person.

Areva, the world's second-largest uranium producer, condemned the blast as a "terrorist attack".

Niger is part of the African-led Support Mission to Mali (AFISMA), a regional military mission launched to help reclaim northern Mali from Islamist groups that seized the vast desert territory in the chaotic aftermath of a March 2012 military coup.

French troops have so far led the operation against the Islamists, which was launched in January and has pushed the radicals from the territory they had brutally ruled. - AFP

BRIEFS

Moscow

Assad regime to attend peace conference: Russia

RUSSIA said on May 24 that the Damascus regime had agreed "in principle" to attend an international peace conference on the crisis that world powers hope will take place in Geneva in June.

But Moscow also criticised Syria's various opposition groups for presenting tough demands, including the exclusion of President Bashar al-Assad's representatives from the negotiations.

The agreement to take part in the conference had come during a visit to Moscow by Syria's Deputy Foreign Minister, Faisal Muqdad, said Russian foreign ministry spokesman Alexander Lukashevich.

Some European media have reported that the meeting has been already tentatively scheduled for June 10, with the focus on ending 26 months of bloodshed that a Syrian observer group says has claimed more than 90,000 lives.

Syria's main opposition group entered a second day of talks in Istanbul on Friday aimed at finding a joint approach to the conference.

Beijing

Pyongyang wants peace, envoy tells Chinese official

A SPECIAL envoy from North Korean leader Kim Jong-Un told one of China's top officials on May 23 that Pyongyang wants peace, state media reported.

Envoy Choe Ryong-Hae met Liu Yunshan, a member of the Chinese Communist Party's highest ranking body, the Politburo Standing Committee, state television reported on its evening newscast.

The report quoted Choe as telling Liu he was sent by Kim to improve, consolidate and further develop relations and that the North was willing to work with China.

Choe also praised China's efforts for peace and stability on the Korean peninsula. He said the North was willing to accept Beijing's proposals to develop dialogue with other parties.

Choe, a vice marshal and director of the Korean People's Army's General Political Bureau, is believed to be the highest-ranking North Korean to visit China since Kim's late father and predecessor Kim Jong-Il in August 2011. The elder Kim died in December 2011.

Washington

Obama, Xi to meet at Californian resort

CHINA and the United States are hoping for a new chance to set the course for smoother relations through a secluded desert summit as the Asian power's leader Xi Jinping projects a more confident style.

Xi and Barack Obama will meet June 7-8 at the Sunnyslands resort in Rancho Mirage, California, their first encounter since the Chinese president took power and three months ahead of their attendance at a Group of 20 summit in Russia.

The two sides expect the encounter

to be less about specifics and more about setting a tone.

"It may not have a long list of what we call deliverables, but it will enable our cooperation to deliver much more in the future," said Cui Tiankai, China's ambassador to Washington.

White House national security spokeswoman Caitlin Hayden said the casual setting will give Obama and Xi space to discuss "the full diversity of issues" and set "a positive and forward-looking agenda" for Obama's second term.

Islamabad

Polio paralyses child in Pakistani tribal region

A second child has contracted polio in a restive Pakistani tribal region near the Afghan border after the Taliban banned vaccinations there nearly a year ago, a UN official said on May 23.

The first polio case was detected in the North Waziristan region earlier this month.

"This is the second child, a 36-month-old boy getting paralysed after contracting polio," the World Health Organization's senior coordinator for polio eradication in Pakistan, Elias Durry, told AFP.

He said there were about 161,000 children in North Waziristan district alone who have not been administered with a polio vaccine since June last year.

The Taliban have alleged that the vaccination campaign is a cover for espionage. - AFP

Poverty, income and the aid industry

Is raising the incomes of as many as people more important than devoting large sums to eradicate the extreme poverty that blights the lives of a smaller number of people? **Daniel Altman** explores a controversial issue

IS the fight against poverty still worth fighting? In the past eight years, the end of "extreme" poverty – those living on about US\$1.25 a day, when purchasing power is factored in – has gone from a possibility to a prediction.

If it does come to pass, it will not only prolong hundreds of millions of lives but could also be considered humankind's greatest achievement. OK, then what?

Even if extreme poverty is eradicated, a lot of people will still look very poor to residents of high-income economies. There may be a few places in rich countries where you'll be able to get by on \$1.25 a day, but not many. And many people will still feel poor even after they escape extreme poverty – especially when they're bombarded by ads, television series, and movies showing how the other half live.

Moreover, the most recent research on income and happiness suggests that fighting non-extreme poverty may be just as important to the world's wellbeing as fighting extreme poverty. The link between income and happiness is strong in countries around the globe and it persists through fairly high levels of income – above \$100,000 a year in the highest-earning countries measured. Perhaps most importantly, the link follows a logarithmic-linear function that is remarkably consistent across countries: the amount of happiness added by increasing incomes by a fixed percentage stays constant as incomes rise.

So, even if the lives of poor farmers and sweatshop workers are improved beyond the level of mere subsistence, further rises in their material living standards would continue to make them feel better off. Put another way, absolute increases in income will always make people happier, even if their incomes still compare unfavourably to those of their fellow citizens.

All of this sounds like good news for the aid industry.

Tens of thousands of people work for the World Bank, the United Nations Development Program and countless smaller organisations in the fight against poverty.

In the past, they have asked governments of rich countries to devote 0.7 percent of gross domestic product – about \$200 billion a year in the United States and European Union alone – to fight poverty. For compari-



Congolese displaced by fighting, in a file photo taken on May 15, 2012. A 10 percent increase in incomes in the Democratic Republic of Congo would be about \$25 a year per capita. An increase of 10pc in American incomes would amount to about \$5000 a year a person and affect four times as many people, writes Daniel Altman. Photo: AFP

If money can make people happy at all income levels, is fighting poverty really the best way to spend it?

Daniel Altman
Stern School of Business
New York University

son, the global industry for manufacturing automation is worth about the same amount. But if money can make people happy at all income levels, is fighting poverty really the best way to spend it?

Consider a simple comparison. An increase of 10pc in American incomes would be about \$5000 a year a person. In the Democratic Republic of Congo, the same 10pc raise would amount to just \$25 a year.

The population of the US is roughly four times that of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, however, so in principle the world should work four times as hard to achieve the higher incomes in the United States. In either case, a 10pc raise could, on average, increase happiness by the same amount. The difference is that such an increase in the US would affect four times as many people.

This may seem perverse – wouldn't

it be much easier to achieve higher incomes for the Congolese? Maybe. After all, you could simply give each of them \$25 for about \$1.9 billion, the cost of a single offshore oil platform. But making that increase in income stick is much harder, especially in a country that has struggled with border conflicts and poor governance. To push incomes up by 10pc permanently, the cost might be much higher.

This, in a nutshell, is the central problem of the fight against poverty.

The aid industry has become adept at identifying programs that can help a small number of people at a time to escape poverty. But big changes in living standards, by contrast, tend to depend on shifts in political institutions, such as legal and regulatory systems, and the overall growth of the private sector.

The aid industry recognises this problem, which is why it is obsessed with the notion of "scale." Virtually

every donor is looking for "scalable" solutions to poverty, yet most organisations whose mission is to fight poverty are ill equipped for expansion.

The organisations that best understand how to grow are for-profit companies, but the aid industry doesn't want to be too much like them or surrender its work to them. Right now, improving the incomes of 75 million or so Congolese (the way the aid industry knows how) would probably require a bevy of small programs costing many billions of dollars.

Shouldn't this still be a priority, especially since the Congolese are starting from a much lower level of living standards? The answer would likely be "yes" from people who take the Rawlsian view of social welfare, that society should try to maximise the living standards of the people on its lowest rung.

Yet this notion is at odds with the mission of at least one big aid organisation.

The slogan of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation is that every human life has equal value. This suggests a simple utilitarian, rather than Rawlsian, view of the world.

In other words, every human life is worth the same and so is its happiness. Making rich people happier by increasing their incomes by 10pc is therefore just as valuable as making poor people happier by doing the same for them.

Given this axiom, the aid industry may be focusing on the wrong problems. Pouring those same billions from the example above into, say, scientific research in the US might not raise incomes by 10pc, but it might still raise them more than the money would in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. And hey – the United States, the world's wealthiest big country, still has tens of millions of people who occasionally go hungry.

If the aid industry really does believe that every human life has equal value, then it's time to replace the fight against poverty with the fight for higher aggregate happiness, wherever it might be created. If not, then it's time for some new slogans.

– *Foreign Policy*

Daniel Altman teaches economics at New York University's Stern School of Business and is chief economist of Big Think.

World Bank changes course on big hydropower projects

THE World Bank is making a major push to develop large-scale hydropower projects around the globe, something it had all but abandoned a decade ago but now sees as crucial to resolving the tension between economic development and the drive to tame carbon use.

Bank lending for hydropower has scaled up steadily in recent years and officials expect the trend to continue amid a worldwide boom in water-fueled electricity.

Such projects were shunned in the 1990s, in part because they can be disruptive to communities and ecosystems. But the World Bank is opening the taps for dams, transmission lines and related infrastructure as its president, Jim Yong Kim, tries to resolve a quandary at the bank's core: how to eliminate poverty while adding as little as possible to carbon emissions.

"Large hydro is a very big part of the solution for Africa and South Asia

and Southeast Asia... I fundamentally believe we have to be involved," said Rachel Kyte, the bank's vice president for sustainable development.

It is a controversial stand. The bank backed out of large-scale hydropower because of the steep trade-offs involved. Big dams produce lots of cheap, clean electricity, but they often uproot villages in dam-flooded areas and destroy the livelihoods of the people the institution is supposed to help. A 2009 World Bank review of hydropower noted the "overwhelming" environmental and social risks that had to be addressed but also concluded that Africa and Asia's vast and largely undeveloped hydropower potential was key to providing dependable electricity to the hundreds of millions of people who remain without it.

"What's the one issue that's holding back development in the poorest countries? It's energy. There's just no question," Kim said in an interview

'What's the one issue that's holding back development in the poorest countries? It's energy.'

Rachel Kyte
World Bank vice-president

in early May.

Advocacy groups remain sceptical, arguing that large projects may be of more benefit to mining companies or industries in neighbouring countries than poor communities.

The move toward big hydro comes amid Kim's stark warning that global warming will leave the next generation with an "unrecognisable planet."

However, the bank remains in the business of financing traditional fossil-fuel plants, including those that use the dirtiest form of coal, as well

as cleaner but carbon-based natural gas infrastructures.

Kim said he is considering how the bank might get involved in creating a more effective world market for carbon.

"We've got to figure out a way to establish a stable price of carbon," Kim said.

Hydropower projects, however, seem notably inside what Kim says is the bank's sweet spot – complex, high-impact, green and requiring the sort of joint public and private financ-

ing Kim says the bank can attract.

The massive hydropower potential of the Congo River is such a target. Its development is on a list of top world infrastructure priorities prepared by the World Bank and other development agencies for the Group of 20 major economic powers.

Two smaller dams on the river have been plagued by poor performance and are being rehabilitated with World Bank assistance. A third being planned would represent a quantum jump – a 4800-megawatt, US\$12 billion giant that would move an entire region off carbon-based electricity.

It is the sort of project that the World Bank had stayed away from for many years – not least because of instability in the country. But as the country tries to move beyond its civil war and the region intensifies its quest for the power to fuel economic growth, the bank seems ready to move. – *The Washington Post*

GUATEMALA CITY

Former dictator faces retrial for war crimes, genocide

FORMER Guatemalan dictator Efraín Ríos Montt will go back on trial after the nation's highest court threw out his genocide and war crimes conviction in the latest twist in complex proceedings.

Ríos Montt went on trial in March on charges of ordering the massacre of Maya Indians in the 1980s as part of a scorched earth policy during a 36-year civil war that ended in 1996.

He was convicted on May 10 of genocide and war crimes in a historic ruling and given an 80-year sentence.

However, on May 20 the Constitutional Court struck down the conviction and the sentence.

The ruling, by three votes to two, annulled all proceedings that took place after the trial was ordered temporarily halted on April 19, due to a technicality.

Although the conviction was overturned, most of the trial and testimony was left intact. Now, the trial goes back to the point at which it stood on April 19. The judges in the new phase will be the same as in the original trial. No date for the new phase was set.

The Constitutional Court upheld defence lawyers' claim of a procedural error.

It said the error occurred when the court that ultimately convicted the former dictator went ahead with the trial on April 30 without considering a motion filed by the defence with an appeals court.

Ríos Montt's conviction had made him the first former dictator in Latin America to be convicted of genocide – defined as a systematic attempt to exterminate an entire people for political, racial, religious or other reasons.

His alleged crimes occurred during a brief but gruesome period of a war that left about 200,000 people dead or missing, said a 1999 UN-sponsored report.

More than 90 percent of the human rights violations took place between 1978 and 1984.

Under Ríos Montt's rule from 1982-83, the army carried out a scorched earth policy against indigenous peoples, accusing them of backing rebel forces.

Ríos Montt and his former intelligence chief José Rodríguez were charged with ordering the army to carry out 15 massacres that left 1771 Maya Ixil Indians dead in Quiché in northern Guatemala. Rodríguez was acquitted.

During the trial, Ríos Montt strenuously denied the charges saying: "I did not engage in genocide."

"I never authorised, never signed, never ordered an attack against a race, an ethnicity or a religion. I never did it!" – AFP

MOORE, Oklahoma

Dozens die as monster tornado unleashes 45 minutes of terror

FAMILIES returned to a blasted moonscape that had been an American suburb on May 21 after a monstrous tornado tore through the outskirts of Oklahoma City, killing at least 24 people.

Passengers flying into Oklahoma City could see the track left by nature's fury as it played out on May 20: the spot where the tornado touched down, then chewed through the suburb of Moore like a giant lawnmower for 45 terrifying minutes.

Nine children were among the dead and entire neighbourhoods vanished, with often the foundations being all that was left of what used to be houses and cars tossed like toys and heaped in big piles.

"It's unreal. It's so visceral," said accountant Roger Graham, 32, as he combed through the ruins of the three-bedroom home he shared with his wife Kalissa, a school teacher, recovering what he could.

Kelly Pirtle of the US weather agency's Severe Storms Laboratory in nearby Norman, told AFP the tornado was the strongest possible category, EF5, generating winds of more than 321 kilometres an hour (200mph).

Oklahoma City police chief Bill Citty told a news conference that 20 people had been killed in Moore and four more elsewhere in the city.

"There could be obviously others in the coming days. The search is still going on, heavily in Moore because they have such a large area

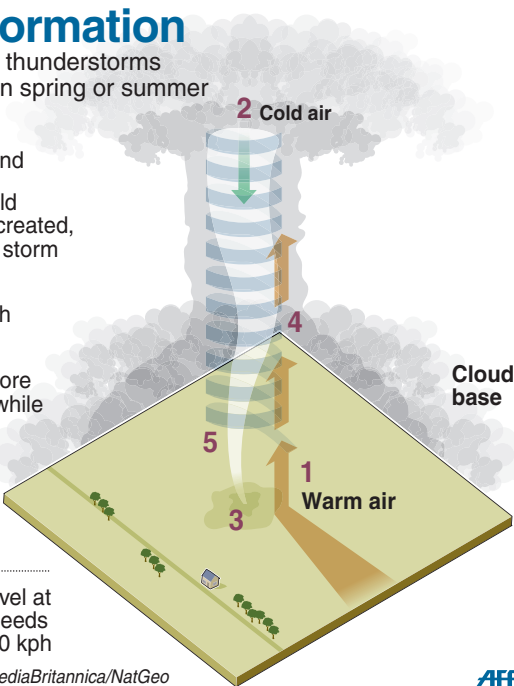
Tornado formation

Twisters develop in thunderstorms on hot days, often in spring or summer

- 1 Warm, moist air rises from the ground
- 2 Warm air meets cold dry air, a vortex is created, descending from a storm cloud
- 3 Vortex contacts with the ground
- 4 Updraft draws in more air, rises upwards while rotating
- 5 Tornado spins at speed, creating a destructive force in its path

Most tornadoes travel at 16-32 kph, wind speeds can reach up to 400 kph

Sources: NOAA/Encyclopaedia Britannica/NatGeo



‘This is bigger than anything I’ve ever seen. It’s horrific.’

Mary Fallin
Oklahoma Governor

The tornado flattened block after block of homes, set off fires, downing power lines and tossed cars.

"To me, this is bigger than anything I've ever seen. It's absolutely huge. It's horrific," Oklahoma Governor Mary Fallin said.

"It looked like somebody just set off something that just destroyed structures, not blocks, but miles of areas, and major buildings from hospitals to schools to banks to shopping centres, movie theatres."

Local television footage on May 20 showed children as young as nine being pulled out of the Plaza Towers Elementary School in Moore, a residential community of 55,000 just south of Oklahoma's state capital.

"I had to hold onto the wall to keep myself safe," one little girl said.

The tornado followed roughly the same track as a May 1999 twister that killed 44 people, injured hundreds more and destroyed thousands of homes. – AFP

UNITED NATIONS

Kony’s LRA has killed more than 100,000: Ban

THE Lord's Resistance Army has killed more than 100,000 people during a reign of terror in central Africa during the past 25 years, United Nations secretary-general Ban Ki-moon said on May 20.

The guerrilla group led by Joseph Kony, whose global notoriety was increased by the Invisible Children internet video, is also blamed for the abduction of between 60,000 and 100,000 children and the displacement of 2.5 million people.

Ban said in a report on Central Africa that the office of High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay had researched the death toll as part of a study on the impact of the LRA since 1987, which is due out soon.

"The report finds that the LRA is responsible for more than 100,000 deaths and that between 60,000 and 100,000 children are believed to have been abducted" by the LRA, said Ban.

2.5

Number of people in millions believed to have been displaced by the Lord's Resistance Army

Kony, a former church altar boy, originally launched an uprising against the Ugandan government in the 1980s. His group has since staged attacks in several countries.

He is wanted by the International Criminal Court for war crimes and is believed to be hiding in jungles on the border between Sudan, South Sudan, Democratic Republic of Congo and Central African Republic. But conflict in the region has brought an international hunt for Kony to a near standstill.

While the intensity of the guerrilla attacks has eased, Ban said "suspected LRA attacks continued to be reported in remote border areas" of Central African Republic and DR Congo.

His report said the LRA was blamed in 2012 for about 212 attacks that left 45 dead.

More suspected attacks had been reported in 2013, with additional casualties and abductions, but the report did not give a figure.

The Kony2012 internet video produced by the Invisible Children activist group has been viewed almost 100 million times since March last year. – AFP

KAMPALA

Police raids silence Uganda’s private sector dailies

UGANDAN police searched the offices of two newspapers for a second day on May 21 after they reported a falling out among army generals over whether the president's son is to succeed him.

Searches continued at *The Daily Monitor*, one of the country's main daily newspapers, as well as at the *Red Pepper* newspaper.

Both were closed for a second day. Two radio stations in the Monitor's offices also remained off air.

"The police is working within the parameters of the law," Ugandan information minister Mary Karoro Okurut said on May 21.

She said the police "will continue to search media houses until they have obtained all the information they require."

The raids came after the newspapers printed a leaked confidential memo by a senior general, David Sejusa Tinyefuza, alleging that President Yoweri Museveni was grooming his son Muhoozi Kainerugaba to succeed him and plot-

‘The police is working within the parameters of the law.’

Mary Karoro Okurut
Information minister

ting to assassinate those opposed to the plan.

Several other generals – among them police chief Kale Kayihura, chief of defence Aronda Nyakirima and Museveni's brother Salim Saleh – condemned Tinyefuza's memo.

But Elly Tumwine, the most senior military figure in the country after Museveni himself, broke ranks by saying there should be no rush to condemn Ti-

nyefuza and that he should be allowed to tell his side of the story. Tumwine was joined by Greg Mugisha-Muntu, another general and former army commander.

"This is a matter of national security concern," Okurut added.

The radio stations KFM and Dembe FM, both owned like the *Monitor* by the Nation Media Group and based in the same building, were also caught up in the raid.

"The police have refused to vacate our premises and to allow us to carry on with our work," the *Red Pepper's* chief executive officer Richard Tumusiime said in statement.

"This is a classic case of economic sabotage," he added, accusing the government of wanting to shut the paper for good.

The closure of the two papers means that the only major newspaper being published is the government-owned *New Vision*. – AFP



A protester outside the *Daily Monitor* newspaper in Kampala after police shut it down on May 20. Photo: AFP



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UFC Ice Coffee 180ml x 6's Ks. 1,950 1,850	HOSEN Peach Halves In Syrup 825g Ks. 2,250 2,050	CHABAA 40% Juice -Red & White Grape -Carrot with Mixed Fruit -Apple & Grape -Valencia Orange 180ml x 3's Buy 1pkt (3's), Get a Free Angry Bird Pencil Sharpener.	TIPCO SuperKid 100% Juice (Shogun Orange/ Red Grape / Apple & Grape) 110ml x 4's Buy 1pkt (4's), Get a Free Shogun Orange 110ml.	
FOOD STAR Dee Do 10% Fruit Juice (Cantaloup/ Orange/ Pineapple) 450ml x 6's each/Ks. 1,850 1,750	KATO Juice with Nata De Coco (Grape/ Lychee/ Orange/ Strawberry) 320g x 6's each/Ks. 1,950 1,850	OLE Cutie 25% Fruit Juice (Orange/ Strawberry) 250ml x 6's each/Ks. 1,850 1,620	MAMEE Instant Noodle -Chicken -Tom Yum (Chicken/ Shrimp) -Migoreng (Chicken/ Vegetable) 55g Price range from, Ks.110 to Ks.120 10% off	
SAMYANG Instant Noodle Ramen Sutah Rich Hot/ Spicy 120g each/Ks. 780 700	TRIANGLE Mackerel In Tomato Sauce 425g Ks. 1,380 1,280	PANTAI Norasingh Cantonese Suki Sauce 730ml Ks. 3,250 2,950	GOLDEN MOUNTAIN Oyster Sauce 660g Ks. 1,150 1,050	SQUID Fish Sauce (Crisp) 730ml/ 700ml Ks. 1,080 980
		HEINZ Chilli Sauce 300g Ks. 980 880		

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SHWE MYA YAR ☎ 01-294063 (9:00AM to 9:00PM)	CHINATOWN POINT ☎ 01-215560-63 (9:00AM to 10:00PM)	JUNCTION MAW TIN ☎ 01-218159 (9:00AM to 9:00PM)	marketplace by City Mart ☎ 01-523840-43 (9:00AM to 10:00PM)	THAMINE ☎ 01-654566 (9:00AM to 10:00PM)	JUNCTION SQUARE ☎ 01-527053 (9:00AM to 9:00PM)	78 (MANDALAY) ☎ 02-71467-69 (9:00AM to 9:00PM)

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Ks.
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FARFALLA
Coffee Maker
FCM-SC12

Ks.
~~18,400~~
16,500



PANASONIC
Rice Cooker
SR-W-18G

Ks.
~~18,200~~
16,500



METRONY
Gas Refill
220g

Ks.
~~1,100~~
1,000



FIVE STAR
Portable Gas Cooker
MS-2500

Ks.
~~10,500~~
9,800



KYOTO
Single Hot Plate
No.369053A 1500W

Ks.
~~14,000~~
12,600



FARFALLA
Induction Cooker
FEC-H33

Ks.
~~33,000~~
29,700



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1,580



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~~1,150~~
1,020



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1,850



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Assorted/ Berry/
Cola
80g

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~~750~~
650



BACK 2 SCHOOL

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30's

Ks.
~~2,000~~
2,000



DISNEY
Sharpener

each/Ks.
~~4,000~~
4,000



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~~1,600~~
1,600



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-Double Line Book
P-80 12's
60g/ 70g

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2,500



LOCK & LOCK
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GENEVA

World not ready for big flu outbreak: WHO

THE world is unprepared for a massive virus outbreak, the deputy chief of the World Health Organisation warned on May 21, amid fears that H7N9 bird flu striking China could morph into a form that spreads easily among people.

Keiji Fukuda told delegates at a WHO meeting that despite efforts since an outbreak of another form of avian influenza, H1N1, in 2009-10, far more contingency planning was essential.

"Even though work has been done since that time, the world is not ready for a large, severe outbreak," Fukuda said.

Rapid-reaction systems were crucial, given that health

authorities' efforts are already hampered by lack of knowledge about such diseases, he insisted.

"When people get hit with an emerging disease, you can't just go to a book and know what to do," he said.

Official data current to May 21 shows that H7N9 avian influenza has infected 130 people in China and killed 35, since it was found in humans for the first time in March.

It is one of a vast array of flu viruses carried by birds, the overwhelming majority of which pose little or no risk to humans.

Experts are struggling to understand how it spread to

'This is a puzzling virus, surrounded by mystery.'

Margaret Chan
WHO director-general

people, amid fears that it could adapt into a form that can be transmitted easily from human to human.

"Any new influenza virus that infects humans has the potential to become a global

health threat," WHO chief Margaret Chan told the meeting.

"This is a puzzling virus, surrounded by mystery," she added.

China's swift reaction to the outbreak, including shutting down poultry markets, has been widely praised.

Critics found fault with its handling of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome - which triggered a global scare in 2003 when it erupted in east Asia, leaping to humans from animal hosts and eventually killing about 800 people.

"After the SARS virus experience 10 years ago, the Chinese government invested heavily to upgrade capacity. We are

reaping the benefit of that investment today," said Chan.

China is considered one of the countries at greater risk from bird flu because it is a top global poultry producer and many chickens in rural areas are kept close to humans.

The number of forms of flu is vast, given that the virus combines two proteins: one of 17 types of haemagglutinin, which provides the H, and any of 10 kinds of neuraminidase, which gives the N.

The more common strain of avian flu, H5N1, has killed more than 360 people globally since 2003, show WHO figures.

Fukuda noted that the far deadlier H7N9 struck in China

at about the same time as fears mounted elsewhere over the SARS-like novel coronavirus, of which there have been 40 laboratory confirmed cases, including 20 deaths.

While the virus has been deadliest in Saudi Arabia, which now counts 30 infections, half of them fatal, cases have also been reported in Jordan, Qatar, Germany, Britain and France.

Fukuda said that novel coronavirus was "more complex" to deal with than H7N9.

"We do not know which one is going to evolve and gain the characteristics that we don't want it to gain," he added.

- AFP

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IN PICTURES

Britain's Prince Harry (right) and his brother Prince William, the Duke of Cambridge, during a visit to Tedworth House, a recovery centre run by the Help for Heroes charity that provides care and support to injured military personnel, in Tidworth, southern England on May 20. Tedworth House is the first of four such centres that Help for Heroes plans to open in Britain. *Photo: AFP*

WARSAW

Tears flow at meeting of imams, Holocaust survivors

MUSLIM religious leaders from throughout the globe met Holocaust survivors and their saviours in an emotional encounter on May 21 at Warsaw's synagogue, as part of an anti-genocide program that includes a visit to Auschwitz.

"Today, we've met real people who suffered the Holocaust and the heroes that saved them at the risk of losing their lives," a visibly moved Imam Mohamed Magid, President of the Islamic Society of North America, told AFP at the event.

Once Europe's Jewish heartland, Poland saw 90 percent of its 3.3 million pre-war Jews wiped out under Nazi German occupation between 1939-45.

"The dead corpses of children everywhere in the streets of the ghetto - I'll never forget that," Marian Kalwary, 83, a Polish Jew who as a child was rescued from the notorious Warsaw ghetto, told the visiting imams, some of whom wept.

'We're all human, respect that.'

Palestinian Imam Barakat Hasan

Out of a total 24,811 people honoured for saving Jews from Nazi genocide by the Israel-based Yad Vashem Holocaust memorial, nearly 6400 are Poles - the most from any single nationality.

Tadeusz Stankiewicz, 83, is one of them.

At just 11 years of age, he risked execution to help save a Jewish friend he identified as Shloma "Jan" Szmulewicz, who died in 2007.

"You have a heart, right? So when someone tries to harm or kill your friend, you use it - what else can you do as a human being?" he told AFP, speaking at the synagogue.

The Muslim religious leaders from such countries as Bosnia, India, Indonesia, Jordan, Palestine, Saudi Arabia,

Turkey and the United States were due to visit Auschwitz on May 22.

More than one million people, mostly European Jews, perished at Auschwitz-Birkenau, operated by Nazi Germany in occupied Poland from 1940 until it was liberated by the Soviet Red Army in 1945.

"I understand the suffering of the Jews in the last century and I pray that both Jews and Palestinians do not suffer," Palestinian Imam Barakat Hasan from Ramallah said.

"Unfortunately, now we see in the world the lesson of the Holocaust has not been learnt. We see this in Gaza, in Palestine, and now in Syria. We're all human, respect that," he added. - AFP

MOSCOW

Wig-wearing US diplomat heads home

AN American diplomat accused by the Russians of being a CIA spy after they caught him allegedly trying to recruit agents left the country on May 19, Russian television reported.

Ryan Fogle flew out of Moscow, Russia's NTV state television channel said, broadcasting pictures showing him at Sheremetyevo International Airport.

Russia announced on May 14 that it had caught Fogle as he prepared to recruit a member of the Russian security forces.

Russian television broadcast images of Fogle wearing a blond wig when he was detained. It also displayed an array of spying equipment, including a compass and an old-fashioned mobile phone.

Russia's foreign ministry declared Fogle *persona non grata* on May 15 and called for him to leave the country as soon as possible. - AFP

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GENEVA

UN criticises Canberra’s new boat people policy

THE UN refugee agency took Australia to task on May 22 over a tough new policy that allows boat people who reach its mainland to be sent to remote Nauru or Papua New Guinea for detention while their asylum claims are processed.

The so-called “excision” rules, passed the previous week, extend legislation which only allowed the authorities to send boat people for detention in the Pacific nations if

they reached Australian offshore territories.

The office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees said that the move fell foul of the 1951 international treaty covering handling of asylum.

“UNHCR’s position has always been for all asylum seekers arriving into Australian territory, by whatever means, and wherever, to be given access to a full and efficient refugee status determination process in

Australia. This would be...in line with international refugee law,” said Volker Turk, its head of international protection.

UNHCR said that it had found “serious shortcomings” at asylum centres in Nauru and Papua New Guinea, including processing delays.

The agency said it was imperative that the more than 18,000 asylum seekers who have arrived by boat to Australia since August 13 last year be

provided with a fair and effective asylum procedure.

Australia argued that the change was needed to remove any advantage gained by asylum seekers who arrive on the mainland, where boat people increasingly have been heading to avoid detention.

Most boats land at or are intercepted near the remote Australian Indian Ocean territories of Christmas Island or the Cocos Islands. – AFP



Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and h 20. Li was on his first foreign visit since beco

ISLAMABAD

Bail refused for Musharraf

A PAKISTANI court on May 22 refused bail to former military leader Pervez Musharraf over the detention of judges during his 1999-2008 rule, the state prosecutor said.

The ruling came two days after a court granted bail to Musharraf, 69, over the murder of former prime minister Benazir Bhutto, who was killed in a gun and bomb attack in 2007.

The retired general has been detained in his farmhouse on the edge of the capital Islamabad since April 19 on charges of conspiracy to murder Bhutto and over the judges’ detention case.

“Judge of the anti-terrorism court rejected Pervez Musharraf’s bail application after listening to defence and prosecution,” said public prosecutor Aamir Nadeem, adding that Musharraf can appeal to the high court.

Court official Mohammad Aslam Joya confirmed bail was refused in the case, which relates to the sacking and detention of judges when Musharraf imposed emergency rule in 2007.

– AFP

CHIANG MAI, Thailand

Summit told of water wars risk

FIERCE competition for water could trigger conflict unless nations cooperate to share the diminishing resource, leaders from Asia-Pacific nations warned on May 20.

From Central to Southeast Asia, regional efforts to secure water have sparked tensions between neighbours reliant on rivers to sustain booming populations.

Breakneck urbanisation, climate change and surging demand from agriculture have heaped pressure on scarce water supplies, while most people in Asia-Pacific still lack access to safe water despite strong economic growth.

“There could be a fight over resources,” Thailand’s Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra cautioned in an address to the Asia-Pacific Water Summit in the northern Thai city of Chiang Mai.

“No country in this region can handle these challenges alone,” she told the forum.

A Thai firm is behind a controversial dam over the Mekong

US\$ BILLION

380

The estimated amount that Asian nations need to spend by 2020 to achieve water security

river in Laos, a project decried by downstream countries Vietnam and Cambodia which fear it could ruin their farming and fishing industries.

Delegates on May 20 adopted a sweeping “Chiang Mai declaration” pledging to build regional resilience to natural disasters, share technical skill on management of water resources and push water security to the top of the agenda.

Asian nations need to spend an

estimated US\$380 billion on water and sanitation systems in the decade to 2020 if they are to achieve water security, Brunei Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah warned the forum.

The “vital undertaking” comes against a backdrop of competition that “could lead to international disputes”, he cautioned.

Bangladeshi Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina cited a water-sharing treaty between her nation and India over the Ganges river as an example of successful water diplomacy.

“Only judicious management of access to water resources” will prevent conflict, she said, adding that low-lying Bangladesh has about 30 million people exposed to rising sea levels.

The Asian Development Bank last month warned that nearly two-thirds of people in Asia-Pacific have no clean, piped water at home despite the region’s strong growth, blaming poor management and a lack of investment in infrastructure. – AFP

NEW DELHI

Asian giants

THE Indian and Chinese premiers pledged last week to resolve a border dispute that has soured ties for decades, saying good relations between the two Asian giants were key to world peace.

Chinese Premier Li Keqiang, making his first foreign visit since taking office, said on May 20 that Beijing was determined to build trust with New Delhi as he and a team of ministers signed a series of joint agreements with India.

His host, Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, also stressed he regarded a good bilateral relationship as crucial to the wider region’s development.

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Dated: 27th May, 2013

BRIEFS

Dhaka
Building’s owner blamed for horrific collapse
THE head of an official inquiry into the deadly collapse of a Bangladesh factory complex said on May 22 the building’s owner was the “main culprit” for the disaster because he violated construction codes.

The cave-in of the nine-storey Rana Plaza outside the capital killed 1127 in the country’s worst industrial disaster.

“He (owner Sohel Rana) is the main culprit,” said Main Uddin Khandaker, head of the government-appointed probe into the April 24 tragedy.

“He became rich with black money and started defying all laws and regulations. He is the by-product of our rotten politics and represents the decadent part of our society. He was a terror personified.”

Khandaker said the panel has asked the government to

prosecute Rana for “culpable homicide” which carries a maximum life prison term.

Seoul
Pyongyang test fires short-range missiles
NORTH Korea fired a sixth short-range missile in three days into the Sea of Japan on May 20, defying warnings from UN chief Ban Ki-moon and South Korea.

The latest firing was confirmed by the South’s Joint Chiefs of Staff, who said it was unclear if the North was testing guided missiles or rockets from multiple launchers.

In a statement on May 20, Pyongyang angrily rejected criticism that the missile exercises were a deliberate attempt to create a fresh cycle of tensions.

South Korea had labelled tests on May 18 and 19 as “deplorable”, while UN chief Ban Ki-moon urged Pyongyang to exercise restraint.

“I have never felt like this in my life. But I’ve never been more exhausted than this.”

It was his third conquest of the 8848-metre (29,028-foot) peak and the feat enabled him to reclaim the record he previously held for being the oldest person to climb Everest.

He previously reached the summit when he was 70 and 75. His 2003 record was broken in 2007 when fellow Japanese Katsusuke Yanagisawa scaled the summit when he was 71.

Hong Kong
Cheering crowd welcomes the return of the duck
HONG Kong on May 21 joyfully welcomed the return of a giant inflatable rubber duck, which drew tens of thousands of visitors before it was abruptly deflated for maintenance for almost a week.

Hundreds packed the waterfront and greeted the duck with cheers.

The southern Chinese city has taken the 16.5-metre-tall (54-foot) yellow inflatable duck, conceived by Dutch artist Florentijn Hofman, to its heart since it was towed into the harbour on May 2 to cheering crowds.

Hofman said he hopes the duck, which is due to stay in Hong Kong until June 9, will act as a “catalyst” to connect people to public art.

Since 2007 the duck has travelled to 13 cities in nine countries. – AFP

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Kathmandu
Japanese octogenarian reclaims Everest record
AN 80-year-old Japanese climber reached the summit of Mount Everest on May 23, becoming the oldest person to scale the world’s highest mountain, his website and a Nepalese official said.

Yuichiro Miura and his party arrived at the summit about 9am local time, said the website.

“I feel like the happiest person in the world,” Miura said.



Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh (right) waves ahead of his meeting with Chinese counterpart, Li Keqiang (left), in New Delhi on May 23. Photo: AFP

India pledges to end border row

‘Peace and tranquility on our border has to be preserved.’

Manmohan Singh
Indian Prime Minister

Li’s visit comes after a flare-up in April in a long-running border dispute between the two countries in a remote Himalayan region.

New Delhi accused Chinese troops of intruding nearly 20 kilometres (12 miles) into Indian-claimed territory, triggering a three-week standoff that was resolved when troops from both sides pulled back.

The Line of Actual Control between the nuclear-armed neighbours has never been formally demarcated, although they have signed accords to maintain peace since the brief Indo-Chinese war in 1962.

Singh said there was a mutual desire to resolve the dispute and that a joint working group would be established to reach a lasting agreement.

“We agreed that our special representatives will meet soon to continue discussions seeking an early agreement on a framework for a fair,

reasonable and mutually acceptable boundary settlement,” Singh said after talks with Li.

“Peace and tranquility on our border has to be preserved,” the Indian leader added at a joint news conference in New Delhi.

Li said the border dispute was a historical hangover and that there was a desire on both sides to overcome it.

“We have established the principles for settling the question,” Li said.

“Both sides believe we need to improve the border mechanisms that have been put into place and make them more efficient ... and appropriately resolve our differences.

“The two sides should continue to advance the negotiations on the boundary question and jointly maintain peace and tranquility in the border area,” he added.

Speaking earlier, Li had said that good relations between India and China would “be a true blessing for Asia and the world.”

“World peace ... cannot be a reality without strategic trust between India and China,” he added.

There was also an agreement to resolve a dispute over a Chinese plan to build three more hydropower dams on the cross-border Brahmaputra river, known in China as the Yarlung Tsangpo. Singh said he had raised Indian concerns about the Chinese activities “on the upper reaches of our shared rivers”. – *AFP*

MANILA

Philippines warns China over warship

Tensions flare again in the South China Sea, this time over a reef occupied by Filipino marines that Beijing says is part of its territory

THE Philippines vowed on May 23 to “defend what is ours” as part of a stand-off over a Chinese warship circling a South China Sea reef which is occupied by Filipino marines.

The Philippines had earlier last week protested against the “provocative and illegal presence” of the warship near Second Thomas Shoal, but China brushed off the complaint with an insistence that the area was part of its territory.

Philippine foreign department spokesman Raul Hernandez said on May 23 the warship, along with two patrol vessels and a fleet of Chinese fishing boats, remained near the shoal.

“They should not be there. They do not have the right to be there... no one should doubt the resolve of the Filipino people to defend what is ours in that area,” Hernandez said in a text message to *AFP*.

“Our navy and our coastguard are mandated to enforce the laws of the [Philippine] republic.”

China claims nearly all of the South China Sea, even waters far away from its main landmass and

near the coasts of Southeast Asian countries.

The Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei and Taiwan also claim parts of the sea, and the area has for decades been regarded as a potential trigger for major military conflict in the region.

Second Thomas Shoal is a tiny

‘They should not be there. They do not have the right to be there.’

Raul Hernandez
Philippine government spokesman

group of islets and reefs in the Spratly Islands chain, about 200 kilometres (120 miles) northwest of the Philippine island of Palawan, the nearest major landmass.

All claimants, except Brunei, have troops stationed on various

TAIPEI

Manila wrong on fishing boat, says Taiwan

TAIWAN on May 21 released a satellite record of the route of a fishing boat fired on by Philippine coastguards, flatly rejecting Manila’s allegations that the boat intruded into Philippine waters.

The killing of crew member Hung Shih-cheng, 65, sparked outrage in Taiwan, which has announced a series of economic sanctions against the Philippines.

Taiwan’s Fisheries Agency said the voyage data recorder from the fishing boat showed it was not in Philippine waters when it came under fire on May 9.

“The satellite records indicated that the Guang Ta Hsin 28 had been fishing within Taiwan’s exclusive economic zone throughout,” the agency’s deputy chief Tsay Tzu-yaw told *AFP*.

The economic zones claimed by each country overlap.

“Since the Philippine authorities repeatedly alleged that the fishing boat had intruded into their waters, then why not make public the video records they claim they have taken from the coastguard boat?” Tsay said.

The Philippines said on May 20 it would make “coordinated efforts” with Taiwan to look into the incident.

Its coastguards claimed that the fishing boat intruded into Philippine waters and tried to ram their vessel, forcing them to open fire.

islands and atolls in the Spratlys to assert their claims.

Second Thomas Shoal is guarded by a handful of Philippine marines aboard a World War II-era ship that was deliberately grounded there in the late 1990s to serve as a base.

It is about 41 kilometres (25 miles) east of Mischief Reef, a Philippine-claimed outcrop that China occupied in 1995.

Second Thomas Shoal and Mischief Reef are within the Philippines’ internationally recognised exclusive economic zone, and surrounding waters are rich fishing grounds.

Last year China took control of Scarborough Shoal, another bountiful fishing area far closer to Filipino landmass than Chinese, after a similar stand-off ended with the Philippines retreating.

China’s announced defence budget of US\$115 billion this year is nearly 100 times more than the Philippines’.

Philippine President Benigno Aquino last week announced a planned \$1.8-billion military upgrade to defend the country’s maritime territory against “bullies”. – *AFP*

Taiwan’s President Ma Ying-jeou has termed the killing “cold-blooded murder” based on an initial inquiry by Taiwan, which showed that the boat had more than 50 bullet holes and showed no signs of ramming.

Philippine Justice Secretary Leila de Lima said on May 20 a National Bureau of Investigation team would fly to Taiwan to examine the fishing boat and interview survivors.

De Lima said the Taiwanese investigators would be given access to their evidence, including statements from the coastguard.

Philippine President Benigno Aquino has personally apologised for the incident but Taiwan has rejected his apology. – *AFP*

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Phone: 372416
Dated: 27th May, 2013

THE PULSE EDITOR: manny.maung@gmail.com

GET YOUR FINGERS ON IT

the pulse

Music matinee death



Photo: Boothee

'We wanted to reconnect with the fans of metal music and let them know about our band, and let them know that we're still making music and we will never stop.'

Lone Lone
Vocalist for Suicide Plan



**LWIN
MAR
HTUN**

lwinmarhtun.mcm@gmail.com

THE sun might have been shining down on Yangon at noon on May 17, but inside the NASA disco club in Mingalar Market, it was all about air-conditioned darkness and musical mayhem.

Despite the oddity of scheduling a concert for midday on a Friday, a decent-sized crowd of young music fans had gathered for the "We Are the Legend" metal and hardcore festival.

About 10 bands participated in the concert, including We Are the Waste, Take My Last Breath, Suicide Plan, Darkest Tears from My Heart, Last Will, Tagadom, Last Days of Beethoven and Fever 109.

NASA was on the fourth floor of the market, and everyone had to run the gantlet of heavy security before

piling into the elevator for the rocket ride up to the club.

Stepping out of the elevator was like setting foot on another planet: The darkness of the club was punctuated by brightly flashing lights, and many of the music fans were wearing black T-shirts emblazoned with the names of obscure foreign metal bands like Sepultura, Burzum or Cannibal Corpse.

Calm at first, the fans broke into a frenzy when the first band, We Are the Waste, took the stage. Ears were assaulted with the thunder of the drummer's double-bass pedal, the guitarists' white-noise riffs and vocals that sounded like the Cookie Monster caught in a bear trap baited with stale Double Stuff Oreos.

Although the security guards – more accustomed to dealing with nocturnal disco queens – appeared quite nervous in the midst of the metal matinee, the fans were clearly thrilled with the event: Death metal shows are a rarity in Yangon, having fallen into obscurity since the heyday of the "Woodstock" series in 2008 and

2009.

Lone Lone, the vocalist of Suicide Plan, said the concert was organised by the bands themselves, using their own money.

"We wanted to reconnect with the fans of metal music and let them know about our band, and let them know that we're still making music and we will never stop," Lone Lone told *The Myanmar Times* immediately after the show.

"I'm really satisfied with today's concert, and the response from the audience was good enough to convince me to keep doing this music. We'll try to organise this kind of concert once every two or three months, and our band will also try to produce our own album."

Vocalist Aung Zaw Myat from Last Days of Beethoven was also happy with the show.

"We need to hold more metal concerts in Yangon. Underground music is not very popular in Myanmar and most people still didn't know much about it. We had an awesome time playing at this show, and we want to

breathes life into metal underground



say thanks to our fans who came to see us," he said.

"It seems like there were a lot of new fans at the concert, and that's a hopeful sign for us."

Even though the bands poured their sweat and blood into their performances, some of the musicians complained that their poor equipment resulted in inferior sound quality.

"Some of our sound equipment isn't up to standard for performing onstage, so it was hard for the audience to hear the songs properly," Lone Lone said. "We're still a long way from being able to organise a great concert, but none of our fans complained at all, so we thank them for that."

Darkest Tears from My Heart singer Moe Lone added, "Since the bands organised the concert ourselves, we didn't have a lot of money to spend and couldn't afford very good sound equipment. But I promise my fans that we'll do better next time."

As the show went on, each band's imminent appearance onstage was announced by a vinyl sign with their

name on it, which was posted on the wall behind the drummer.

The fifth band, Suicide Plan, earned a particularly raucous response from audience members, who slammed and moshed just like little head-bangers should.

Darkest Tears from My Heart also proved to be an audience favourite, but the biggest cheers were reserved for Fever 109. As they took the stage, fans chanted "Fever! Fever!" in anticipation of the sonic bedlam to come.

The band members all put tremendous energy into playing their music. They stood right up against the front edge of the stage, their sweat practically mingling with that of their fans.

Audience members jumped up and down, and sang along to every song. Nothing, not even the befuddled scowling of the security guards, could stop their enjoyment of the concert.

"We only started planning this concert last month, and we didn't have much time to prepare. Our only advertising was on Facebook and on a few flyers, but the response from fans was very good," said Moe Lone.



Solid beats

pump up the night at Jam It!

A PUMPED-UP crowd descended on Eucalypt Bar on May 18 for a free concert organised by RAD Productions. Spirits were high and the concert goes were held captivated all night long with a wide variety of genres and sounds.

Romantic and General Tiger Gun set the pace for the

evening with energetic sets of punk and garage rock at breakneck speed. Next up saw Mandalay's Skunx take the stage with their hip-hop-inspired breed of fist-pumping hardcore. Skunx brought the crowd alive with their captivating performance, inspiring the onlookers to get down to the front and participate in what was becoming a raucous show.

Abnormal December capitalised on the high-octane energy and delivered a short, sharp set of punk rock before making way for the evening's dose of hip-hop. G-Tone took the mic with a very fresh, laidback style, effortlessly changing the pace of the night and bringing the dancers straight down to the front of the stage.

PBD

Hood took the stage next, with three mics and a drum kit, sounding like Cypress Hill straight outta Yangon, beeeeyaaatch! These guys delivered a fresh take on hip-hop, while keeping it very much old-school.

The crowd was definitely in full swing by now, the ceiling was dripping with sweat and the floor was sticky with beer. Local favourites Side Effect, fresh off the back of their European dates, took to the stage and were not going to let a broken foot on the part of the vocalist stop them from delivering their

indie-inspired punk rock to this baying crowd.

The night served up an evening full of diverse, energetic and inspiring music from Mandalay and Yangon. With a packed out crowd out to support all the bands, RAD Productions will be sure to host another successful evening of music in the very near future.

— Greg Holland



The infamous G-Tone raps some groovy tunes (above) and Side Effect performing at Jam It!. Photo: Greg Holland

Photography 101

THE 42nd round of the Myanmar Photography Society's annual photography training course will run from June 3 to August 14, although this year's intake has been reduced to just 75 places from the usual 100.

The society's president, U Phay Myint OO, said while the course offered basic training, further progress in photography depends on the efforts and ability of each student.

"The most important thing is that they are able to meet with people who share the same interests, and that they get the chance to take photos," he said.

Applications for the course be available from May 27 at No. 27/29, 35 Street (Lower Block). The cost is K100,000. — Nuam Bawi

Cleanse like (Georgia May) Jagger

"UP until five years ago, the vast majority of women in Myanmar weren't interested in anything more than basic colour cosmetics and thanaka," said Daw Khine Cindy Soe, who has 12 years of experience in the beauty industry.

She now heads the California Skin Spa in Golden Valley, which launched its range of high-end skin treatments by the US company Dermalogica on May 1 – the likes of which are used by A-listers Sarah Jessica Parker, Victoria Beckham and Georgia May Jagger.

Needless to say, treatments don't come cheap – expect to pay about K70,000 for an hour's massage or facial (which is in line with Dermalogica's prices around the world). Cindy said she feels confident that Myanmar has the clientele for a luxury skincare service: Over the next few months, Dermalogica will open clinics in other parts of Yangon, as well as Nay Pyi Taw and Mandalay.

As well as the influx of expats in Yangon, Cindy said that a noticeable number of Myanmar women are now concerned about the effects of ageing, pigmentation caused by overexposure to the sun and increased oiliness and acne from the country's humid climate.

A Dermalogica facial deploys an impressive variety of pleasantly scented products and – to me at least – mysterious implements (including a sort of Egyptian mummy-styled damp plaster cloth and an electronic exfoliating brush).

With background music fusing birdsong and classical sounds, it started to feel as though a symphony was playing on my face. My skin was undoubtedly brighter as a result, but I balked at purchasing a moisturiser that cost more than US\$150 and instead opted for one a third of the price, though without the former's ability to even out sun spots or provide SPF protection. The clinic's "skin bar" sells Dermalogica's full range of products – 150 in total. Expect to be taken there after a treatment.

The foot reflexology treatment is promoted as a form of detox, or to ease stress, prevent migraines and improve blood circulation. While it's impossible to know how effective this is, there's no denying that it felt really, really good. And that should count for something.

— Jessica Mudditt

California Skin Spa is located at 32B Inya Myaing Road, Bahan Township, Yangon.

Rockers want peaceful concert



lwinmarhtun.mcm@gmail.com

LWIN
MAR
HTUN

A ROCK concert will be held at People's Square in Yangon on May 29 to mark the 10th anniversary of Nine Planets Entertainment.

The event will feature bands that are produced by Nine Planets, including Big Bag, Wanted, Idiots, Reason, Drive and Fever 109.

"On that day, our rock family will perform together. Normally, it's very difficult to arrange for all of our bands to perform on the same stage," Gai Chote, general manager of Nine Planets Entertainment, said at a press conference at Royal Rose Restaurant in Yangon on May 16.

"We will also have a lucky draw at the show to give away three Yamaha guitars for our fans who have supported us from the beginning," he added.

Fokker, vocalist of Wanted, said at the press conference that fans would have something new to look forward to when his band performs.

"Our album was released three years ago, and since then we have

performed the same songs at our concerts. So at the upcoming show we will debut two new songs from our next album," he said.

Idiots vocalist Raymond also made a special request at the press conference: "I want to say one thing to our fans. Please don't fight at the concert."

Tickets cost K6000 (minus a K.01 rebate), and concert will start at 6pm.



Outside the current Pansodan Art Gallery in Yangon. Photo: Aung Htay Hlaing

Pansodan Scene

ON Pansodan Street, modern buildings rub shoulders with worse-for-wear colonial-era buildings.

One of these will house a new art gallery, now under renovation. ‘Pansodan Scene’ will open at the end of June at no. 144 Pansodan Street.

“I have a passion for colonial buildings which have changed ownership several times, have been repainted many times and damaged by years of neglect,” says artist U Aung Soe Min, founder of the Pansodan art gallery. “I long ago set my heart on setting a gallery in a colonial building.

“Even the building number, 144, is beautiful,” he said. “The building is more than 100 years old. It’s disfigured by large signboards and is painted to look ugly, but once was enchanting.

“The sight of the building really shocked me. I met a resident, a former ambassador, who told me he had lived there for more than 50 years,” he added.

U Aung Soe Min said the walls of the room were made of wooden planks which had rotted over the years. “When we peeled off the wooden walls, which were eaten away by white ants, we piled

‘I have a passion for colonial buildings which have changed ownership several times, have been repainted many times and damaged by years of neglect.’

U Aung Soe Min
Artist

up the damaged planks until the room was half full of them,” he said.

He said the photo exhibition ‘Skateboarders of Yangon’ was held to bid farewell to the original room before renovation started. “We held the exhibition in the room in its semi-derelict state to say goodbye to the original space,” he said.

Pansodan art gallery opened in 2008 at No 286 Pansodan Street, Kyauktada township.

“The gallery has limited space and can’t hold public activities. I wanted somewhere architecturally beautiful and historic, like a colonial-era building,” said U Aung Soe Min, who thinks modern structures lack artistic merit. “Pansodan Scene will be larger than Pansodan gallery so we can hold public events.”

“Along with the opening of the new gallery, I will launch a weekly art journal named Pansodan Art and Culture in both Myanmar and English,” he said. – Zon Pann Pawint

From village path to international catwalk

Myanmar fashion designers to showcase the cutting edge of tradition at ASEAN Fashion Week

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FOR the five designers who will represent Myanmar at the 2013 ASEAN Fashion Week in Kyoto, Japan on May 28-31, the opportunity comes with an unusual wrinkle: it’s the first time Myanmar has participated in the annual event.

“This is the first time Myanmar

styles have been on display in Japan,” said Thet Hnin Aye, from fashion label Dozo, “so we have to show our creations at their best.”

Thet Hnin Aye has completed 25 dresses for the Indigenous category of the competition.

“I’m presenting Naga ethnic designs from Upper Myanmar with their traditional shawls and woven clothes,” she said.

For the designers, the event has meant extra pressure during the past few weeks, as they work to put their

own unique spin on some of the country’s rich ethnic design traditions.

“Making the dresses didn’t take as much time as coming up with the designs,” said Ma Pont, from the My Favourite label.

“I’m planning to present Chin and Lesu ethnic styles [in the Indigenous category] because this is my area of expertise.”

Ma Pont will also compete in the Best of East Couture category, for traditional weaving, and in the Eco Fashion category for designs

made from natural or recycled products. For this category Ma Pont will be displaying outfits made from traditional *pin ni*, a red woven cloth dyed using tree bark. The results should stand out, even in a busy Fashion Week crowd: the *pin ni* process is unique to Myanmar, Ma Pont said, and her designs will feature rings “made from plants and coconut shells” for the all-natural look.

Other categories for the five designers – including Ma Myint Zu (Zu Zu collection), Pyay Soe Aung and San

Bauk Ra (Shayi) – are Exotic, Glamour and Contemporary.

While the event will help show Myanmar fashion to the world, Ma Myint Zu told a press conference, it will also allow designers to learn from their international peers.

“We can learn from international designers. We all have our own businesses but we need to look at the rest of the world,” she said.

Myanmar will display a total of 125 dresses in Kyoto, each to be shown off by Japanese models.

Myanmar's emerging 'Queen of pastry'

JENNY MACINTYRE

A YOUNG chef wants to become "Myanmar's Queen of Pastry" – and her work at Shwe Sa Bwe, the French hotel and restaurant training centre in Yangon, may give a taste of what's in store.

Though still a student, Soe Myat Thwe, 28, was recently selected as a replacement for Cyrielle Korczeniuk, the previous pastry chef at Shwe Sa Bwe, who has returned to France.

"I'm excited by the new ideas and recipes [in French cooking]. They are very different from Myanmar food," says Soe Myat Thwe.



Emerging talent, Soe Myat Thwe.
Photo: Jenny Macintyre

Crème brûlée is her favourite dish. She works to perfect it every time she makes it and in a recent assessment her crème brûlée was voted number one. When *The Myanmar Times* visited, she was mastering shortbread Brittany-style topped with mango coulis and caramelised mangoes.

Under the tutelage of French chef Romain Hertrich, Soe Myat Thwe has been learning now to achieve the right mix of acidity and sweetness in her pastry. To balance the sweetness of the caramelised mangoes, Hertrich added some sea salt to the mix.

An experienced sous-chef from two triple-star Michelin restaurants, Bras and Troisgros, Mr Hertrich is teaching his students to "feel" as they cook. Anyone can follow a recipe he says, but it takes imagination, good culinary technique and the ability to taste, to make changes to a recipe and create something special.

"It's impressive. These students learn very fast," he said.

Hertrich respects Soe Myat Thwe. "I trust her," he says, adding that she has a good future as a pastry cook because she has a repertoire of recipes, knows the best seasonal foods, is committed to fresh ingredients and has the confidence to create.

Last year, Soe Myat Thwe, from Monywa, Pa YitKone village in Sagaing Region, was one of 20 trainees selected by Shwe Sa Bwe from 110 applicants throughout Myanmar.

Director François Stoupan said trainees must have achieved 10th



Shwe Sa Bwe's shortbread Brittany-style topped with mango coulis and caramelised mangoes. Photo: Jenny Macintyre

standard education, be aged 18-25, come from a disadvantaged background and "express a willingness to stay in Myanmar."

Commitment to Myanmar is assessed through students' respect

"It's impressive. These students learn very fast."

Romain Hertrich
Chef, Shwe Sa Bwe

for their families. "They must have a good education and respect for their parents, boss, hierarchy, profession, colleagues and leadership." Stoupan is proud that restaurant managers and chefs report that SSB graduates are exemplary employees.

The youngest of nine children, Soe Myat Thwe was a teenager

when her father died. The family's livelihood depended on five cows, whose milk was sold to a local dairy company.

Since Soe Myat Thwe's aunt knew the farm could not sustain the family, she sent her young niece away to Pakokku in Magwe for vocational training at the Agro-Forestry Training Centre. There, Soe Myat Thwe studied organic farming, hygiene, Japanese cuisine, food processing and tailoring. She also studied by correspondence for a BSc degree in chemistry. Her four years of training was followed by a further three years as a trainer in the centre's food processing and bakery department.

In an email from France, Korczeniuk wrote that she chose Soe Myat as her replacement because she was calm and patient, with a yearning to learn. Korczeniuk believes Soe Myat Thwe has an outstanding future "because she is the only one

who knows French pastry".

It was students like Soe Myat Thwe who captured Korczeniuk's heart during her five months in Myanmar. "I enjoyed their smiles, their capacity to remember and concentrate. They want to do their best."

Hertrich looks on as Soe Myat Thwe decorates her shortbread with caramelised mangoes. "See the plate as a guest," he reminds her. "The food needs to look fresh, fit for a gourmet. I want to excite guests a little bit."

Meanwhile, Soe Myat Thwe is preparing for her final exams. Graduation is at the end of June, and already Soe Myat Thwe is working out how she can carry her crème brûlée and tartlet home to Sagaing to share them with neighbours and relatives.

- Jenny Macintyre is a freelance journalist and English teacher, based in Yangon.

DVD REVIEW

Les Misérables: A more or less miserable viewing experience

BEFORE I watched director Tom Hooper's film adaptation of *Les Misérables* (2012), a friend warned me that if I wasn't already a fan of the stage musical on which it was based, the movie would do little to win me over. Oh, how right he was.

Les Misérables, the musical, was first performed in 1985, and since then it has been seen by more than 60 million people in 42 countries. As a cultural phenomenon, it holds a position similar to that of Gangnam-style; that is, its popularity clearly demonstrates the collective insanity of the human race.

The storyline of *Les Misérables* is, of course, based on French author Victor Hugo's classic 1862 novel of the same name, which, if rationality prevailed on Planet Earth, would never have been set to music in the first place. Why, you might ask, would anyone bother to produce a movie version of a stage musical? One obvious advantage of the cinematic approach is the opportunity to show close-ups of the actors' faces. Allow me to explain: When onstage, the actors are *far away* from the audience, but with cameras, the director can (brace

yourself) *zoom in* on their skillfully rendered facial expressions.

But with *Les Misérables*' childishly unsubtle song lyrics bludgeoning the listener with cheesy, overwrought emotion, why resort to acting at all? It's a classic case of telling rather than showing: The words reveal everything the characters are meant to be feeling, and they often do so when no other characters are onstage/onscreen to listen to their gripes.

This frequently leaves the lead actors (Russell Crowe, Hugh Jackman and Anne Hathaway) in the uncomfortable position of crooning into the heavens while the camera hovers near their faces.

This style of filmmaking can easily be observed elsewhere in Myanmar: It is commonly used in karaoke videos in which rain-drenched damsels clutch wilted roses and stare wistfully into space, while generic lyrics about lost love and heartache scroll across the bottom of the screen.

Speaking of crooning, neither Jackman nor Crowe are particularly amazing singers. They aren't terrible, but it's doubtful whether they would make the cut into the Top 100 on

Australian Idol.

About an hour into *Les Misérables*, I suddenly felt an intense urge to head for the kitchen and pour myself a stiff drink. Had I been watching a less disagreeable movie, I would have paused the DVD before wandering off to fetch my mind-numbing beverage of choice.

In this case, however, I refrained from reaching for the remote; the kitchen visit served as a welcome opportunity to allow *Les Misérables* to continue doing its own thing in my absence. I figured I wouldn't miss much, aside from a few minutes of some endless, meandering song detailing the extent to which life sucked in 19th century France.

Believe it or not, I actually managed to suffer through to end of the film. I even wrote some poignant, heartrending lyrics describing how I felt about the experience (to the tune of "What Have I Done" from *Les Misérables*): "What have I done?/Sweet Jesus what have I done?/I've used my own hard-earned kyats/To purchase this artless piece of crap/Worse, I felt compelled to finish watching it/Even though it was a complete load of ..." – DL



Photosv: Universal Pictures



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Universal Crossword

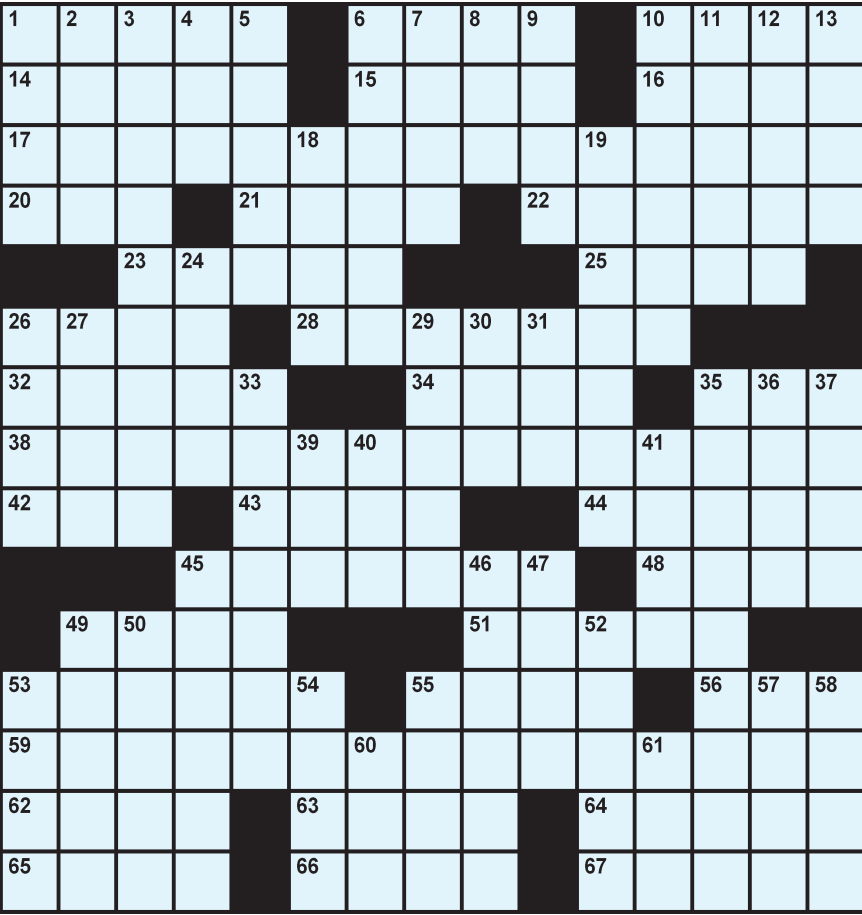
Edited by Timothy E. Parker

NOT IN IN THE MIDDLE By Jill Pepper

- ACROSS**
- 1 Went through an "oar-deal"
 - 6 Primal impulse
 - 10 Oscar-winner Guinness
 - 14 Licorice-like flavor
 - 15 Wart-giver of folklore
 - 16 Featherbrain
 - 17 What a fed-up parent's had?
 - 20 Havana residue
 - 21 Run without much effort
 - 22 Sudan's ____ Desert
 - 23 They have very low ranges
 - 25 Villainous sneer
 - 26 Plain of Jars locale
 - 28 Amounts of coins for subway singers?
 - 32 Breathing anomaly
 - 34 CD system precursor
 - 35 Birling object
 - 38 Says something inappropriate
 - 42 Leaky balloon sound
 - 43 Blood sample container
 - 44 State flower of New Mexico
 - 45 Most unpleasantly damp
 - 48 Obnoxious young'un
 - 49 Prisoner's blade
 - 51 Divided nation
 - 53 Gum-yielding tree
 - 55 Parched
 - 56 Mad Hatter's drink
 - 59 Be self-evident
 - 62 It's heard in the Highlands
 - 63 McCormack of "Will & Grace"
 - 64 One place for a first date
 - 65 Whitetail or roebuck
 - 66 Addition or subtraction, e.g.
 - 67 Upholstery material

- DOWN**
- 1 Indian prince
 - 2 Heavy burden
 - 3 Turkey parts
 - 4 "C' ____ la viel!"
 - 5 Distributes cards

- 6 Best of all possible worlds
- 7 Womanizer
- 8 Weapon also known as a "lead-spitter"
- 9 Barbara who played Jeannie
- 10 Sun-dried bricks
- 11 Danny DeVito's "Taxi" role
- 12 Painter Degas
- 13 "The Facts of Life" actress Mindy
- 18 Meaningless talk
- 19 Invalidate
- 24 Sailing on the ocean
- 26 Galloway girl
- 27 Android programs, for short
- 29 Air base in Greenland
- 30 In good shape
- 31 Area 51 craft
- 33 Caraway-flavored Scandinavian spirit
- 35 Producing a sizeable profit
- 36 Dangerous marine creature
- 37 Teeny biter
- 39 Religious error
- 40 Wine barrel wood
- 41 Paper towel roll leftover
- 45 More problematic
- 46 Charcoal drawing, e.g.
- 47 High rocky hills
- 49 Music for a movie
- 50 Anchor line's hole
- 52 500-sheet units of paper
- 53 Like geriatric patients
- 54 Interrupter's interjection
- 55 One of four in a deck
- 57 Wife of Geraint, in Arthurian lore
- 58 "A Death in the Family" author James
- 60 Man-mouse filler
- 61 Uncle Sam poster word



DILBERT

BY SCOTT ADAMS



PEANUTS

BY CHARLES SCHULZ



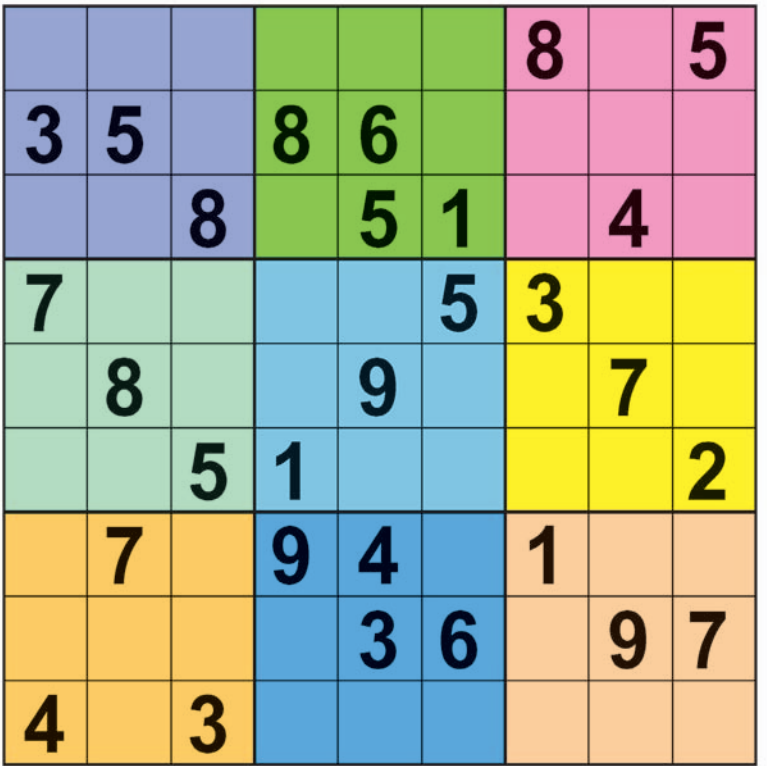
CALVIN AND HOBBS

BY BILL WATTERSON



SUDOKU PACIFIC

Complete the grid so that every row, column and 3x3 box contains every digit from 1 to 9 inclusively.



5/25 DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

WONDERWORD By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY**. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD. The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

MORSE CODE Solution: 4 letters

L W S E H S A D T D T S T O D
E A D T L E A R N I E T I C N
N R N I R H Q E N D Q H U U E
G S U G S A S U O E U G C R T
T H O N U T I C I E A I R R S
H I S A D A R G O P L L I E I
P P A V E E G E H P M E C N L
I S T I D C R E S T Y E O T E
L P A G E S N S S S K I N Y T
O I D A R A T E T I T E V T T
T D R T O N E S U A L A Y S E
T R A I N E D S I Q N E G P R
I O N O E C I V E D E D N A S
M W G N C H A N N E L S O C X
E T E S E S L U P A D D L E E

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Making the most of mango



PHYO'S COOKING ADVENTURE

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MANGO season is upon us again. And if there's one thing I like more than the aroma of fresh mango on the street, it's the smell of mango dishes being whipped up in the kitchen.

I've chosen two mango salad recipes for this week, an Asian one and a fusion concoction.

Traditional green mango salad is a very popular dish in Southeast Asia and makes a great snack. I use pork mince in this version, but seafood or chicken mince will do just as well. Ask

for *yin kwe* at the market for the green mango.

The fusion mango reipe is inspired by Australian cuisine and offers an enticing mix of fresh tropical mango and mint. Use *sein ta lone* mangoes.

Another great pairing is duck and mango, but I'll save that for later.

GREEN MANGO SALAD INGREDIENTS

- 250 grams shredded green mangoes
- 150 grams pork or chicken mince
- 2 red small onions (thinly sliced)
- 2 cloves garlic
- ½ teaspoon grated ginger
- 1 teaspoon soy sauce
- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 1 teaspoon Chinese masala
- ½ teaspoon chilli oil
- Coriander

- ½ chilli sliced
- 2 tablespoons roasted, crushed peanuts
- A couple of slices of deep fried pork fat (called *wet sip phat* in the market)

DRESSING INGREDIENTS

- 2 tablespoons fish sauce
- 2 tablespoons lime juice
- 2 teaspoons sugar

Cut off the top of the mango, soak the fruit in water and wash well.

Sauté the crushed garlic in medium-hot oil in a wok. Stir in the mince and throw in Chinese masala, grated ginger, soy sauce and salt, and season. When the meat is cooked through, let it cool before placing in a large bowl with the other ingredients.

Garnish with coriander and thin slices of deep-fried pork fat.

FUSION SALAD INGREDIENTS

- 6 prawns
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 2 ripe mangoes
- A few mint leaves
- Salt and black pepper

DRESSING INGREDIENTS

- 2 teaspoons lime juice
- 2 teaspoons olive oil
- A pinch of sugar
- Salt to taste

Snap the heads off of the prawns and remove the black vein in the tail. Leave the tail attached. Wash and drain well.

Add olive oil to a non-stick frying pan and bring to medium heat. Fry the prawns for about 3 minutes. Let them cool and season with salt and pepper.



Peel the mango and cut into small cubes. Toss with mint leaves and dressing.

Always soak a mango in water after cutting off the top, especially when using the *yin kwe* mangos. Soak the onions after slicing, wash well and pat dry.

TIPS: For mango and prawn salad, the mango should be ripe but not too soft.



Photo: Phyo

WINE REVIEW

Red Wine:

Penfolds Rawson's Retreat Cabernet Sauvignon 2010



Deep, red ruby – a sultry drink for a sultry night. Old friend, new friend, good friend. This is a keeper - you want it nearby to ease your woes.

Score
8 /10

11,900

White Wine:

Arkeo Sauvignon Blanc 2011



A light and fruity blend that follows as a rum-punch chaser nicely. The downside are some oakey notes. (Oak doesn't belong anywhere near a good "Sav"-Blanc.)

Score
7 /10

10,000

Indulge in a slice of heaven at Yangon Bakehouse



MANNY MAUNG

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I CAN'T wait until Yangon Bakehouse extends its seating area (right now there is a make-shift arrangement to one side of the bakery). Carelle, one of the brains behind the social enterprise, assures me there are plans to extend the premises so they can fit people in for a real café-style atmosphere. If they do this and also start opening on the weekends, I'll be in seventh heaven.

The menu at Yangon Bakehouse is simple and fresh, with vegetarian options aplenty. The choices are simple: fresh salads and baguette rolls baked fresh from their ovens the same morning they're served. They also provide "halfies" options – half a roll with your choice of a side salad, perfect for not leaving one feeling bloated and heavy in the Yangon heat.

I ordered a half ham-and-gruyere cheese baguette with a Perfectly Paired Pear and Reblochon salad (K4500) and an Americano coffee (K2000). The baguette was perfectly crisp on the outside and fluffy on the inside and it was "amazeballs" to be able to get

gruyere cheese – even in half a roll, it felt like pure decadence. My first mouthful of salad was an explosion of zingy lemon that contrasted with the sweetness of vibrant red grape tomatoes. The next bite took in both the sweet pear and reblochon. A stomach pain I have been suffering from since the last food review seemed to ease.

My friend ordered the vegetarian mixed grilled roll on bianca with a side portion of Greek salad (K4500) and a soya latte (K3000). While proclaiming the roll delicious, she did stare enviously at my baguette after tasting the bianca bread. She liked her latte but found the soy milk a bit sweet, as are most soy milk options in Myanmar. We were full, but not quite done yet. The enticing smell of freshly baked cookies and pies lured us ordering

- chocolate chip oatmeal biscuits and had us giggling like sugar-charged school girls.
- If you're prepared for a trip from downtown through heavy traffic to the Pearl Condo complex, a visit to Yangon Bakehouse is well worth it. You're also supporting a social enterprise, that focuses on giving young women the skills to break out and possibly run their own bakehouses in Yangon.
- Food: 9
Drink: 8
Atmosphere: 8
Service: 9
X-factor: 9
Value for money: 8
Score: 8.5/10



Photo: YM



Uncle Geoffrey & Nicky's farewell extravaganza



Uncle Geoffrey and friends at The Myanmar Times office



Nepal Tourism Board presentation



Nayani Win Company product exhibition



Brayden, Raymond, Don Tan, James Gwee and Ko Myat Aung



Vonce Hui and model

ICCG donation ceremony



Ma Phyu Phyu Tin and Ma Myint Zu



Dr Khin Maung Lwin and Dr Pauline Khin Maung Lwin

Ogawa products lucky draw



Sai Sai Kham Leng

Ei Chit

Bossini product launch and fashion show



Ma Khine Thit Lwin and Ma Wai Thit Lwin



Ko Zaw Latt and his daughter

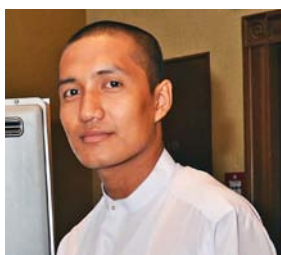


Yu Thandar Tin and Chan Me Me Ko



Nant Chit Nadi Zaw

Rinnai 8th anniversary



Ko Than Naing



Dr Myo Thant and Daw Yu Zaw



U Htin Lin



U Aung Myo Min and Daw Soe Soe Yee



Yuza Yushida



NYEIN
EI EI HTWE

nyeineieihtwe23@gmail.com

SOCIALITE needs some new shoes after dancing away most of the weekend. Luckily, she'd noticed a pair she rather dug at the Bossini fashion show at Junction Square on May 18. That night, she managed to wear her old shoes down to the bone after she spent hours doing the funky robot, the washing machine and a host of other über-hip dances at the seriously cool Jam It! night at Eucalypt bar in Pearl Condo. So the next day she hightailed it back to Junction Square to scoop up the pair she had spotted the day before. Disaster averted! But before any of this had occurred, Socialite covered the serious side of socialising at the launch of the International Culture and Charity Group (ICCG) donation ceremony at Central Women's Hospital in Yangon on May 14. That done, she was at the new wine tasting event at Signature restaurant the day after. For the final event of the week, Socialite wiped away a tear while saying goodbye to our very own *Myanmar Times* stalwart and World editor Uncle Geoffrey, who leaves us for the greener pastures of Bangkok. We also say goodbye to our favourite Myanmar Times son, Nicky Swe.

Signature wine tasting




Mee Mee, Siew Siew, Li Jun and Bay Bay



Daniele Lizza and Andrea Balsamo James Marsden and Ko Yan Naing

ELIQ restaurant launch



Nicolas Joseph Hearn, Ko Soe Moe Aung Kaung Myat

Toshiba showroom opening



U Myat Thin Aung Tetsuya Yoneda Yosuke Goto



Nge Nge Jarmani Punters at Jam It! Eaid Dhi, Abnormnormal Decemember

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Music lovers at Jam It!



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MON	6T 401	6:20	7:15
	UB-A1	7:30	8:30
	UB-B1	11:30	12:30
	UB-C1	16:30	17:30
TUE	UB-A1	7:30	8:30
	UB-B1	11:30	12:30
	UB-C1	16:30	17:30
	UB-A1	7:30	8:30
WED	UB-B1	11:30	12:30
	UB-C1	16:30	17:30
	UB-A1	7:30	8:30
	UB-B1	11:30	12:30
THUR	UB-C1	16:30	17:30
	UB-A1	7:30	8:30
	UB-B1	11:30	12:30
	UB-C1	16:30	17:30
FRI	UB-A1	7:30	8:30
	UB-B1	11:30	12:30
	6T 211	15:30	16:25
	UB-C1	16:30	17:30
SAT	UB-A1	8:00	9:00
SUN	UB-A1	15:30	16:30
NAY PYI TAW TO YANGON			
MON	UB-A2	8:50	9:50
	UB-B2	13:00	14:00
	UB-C2	18:00	19:00
	UB-A2	8:50	9:50
TUE	UB-B2	13:00	14:00
	UB-C2	18:00	19:00
	UB-A2	8:50	9:50
	UB-B2	13:00	14:00
WED	UB-C2	18:00	19:00
	UB-A2	8:50	9:50
	UB-B2	13:00	14:00
	UB-C2	18:00	19:00
THUR	UB-A2	8:50	9:50
	UB-B2	13:00	14:00
	UB-C2	18:00	19:00
	UB-A2	8:50	9:50
FRI	UB-B2	13:00	14:00
	6T 212	17:00	17:55
	UB-C2	18:00	19:00
	UB-A2	10:00	11:00
SAT	UB-A2	10:00	11:00
SUN	UB-A2	17:00	18:00
YANGON TO MANDALAY			
MON	YJ 891	6:10	8:15
	YH 917	6:10	8:40
	Y5 234	6:15	7:30
	6T 401	6:20	9:00
	YH 909	6:30	8:10
	K7 222	6:30	8:40
	YJ 201	7:00	8:25
	YJ 001	8:00	8:55
	K7 624	8:00	9:25
	YJ 511/W9 7511	10:00	11:25
	YJ 761	11:00	12:55
	YH 727	11:15	13:25
	K7 622	12:00	13:25
	K7 224	14:30	16:35
	YJ 781	14:30	15:55
	6T 501/K7 224	14:30	16:35
	YH 731	15:00	17:10
	YJ 891	6:10	8:15
	YH 917	6:10	8:40
	Y5 234	6:15	7:30
	6T 401	6:20	8:25
	K7 222	6:30	8:40
	K7 226	6:45	8:10
	YJ 201	7:00	8:25
	YJ 001	8:00	8:55
	8M 6603	9:00	10:10
	K7 822	10:00	13:45
	YJ 251/W9 7251	11:00	12:55
	YJ 761	11:00	12:55
	YH 729	11:15	14:15
	K7 622	12:00	13:25
	YJ 781	14:30	15:55
	K7 224	14:30	16:35
	6T 501/K7 224	14:30	16:35
	YJ 891	6:10	8:15
	YH 917	6:10	8:40
	Y5 234	6:15	7:30
	6T 401	6:20	8:25
	K7 222	6:30	8:40
	YJ 143/W97143	7:00	8:20
	YJ 201	7:00	8:25
	K7 826	7:30	9:35
	YJ 001	8:00	8:55
	K7 624	8:00	9:25
	YJ 751/W97751	10:45	12:40
	YH 737	11:15	13:25
	K7 622	12:00	13:25
	YJ 791	14:30	16:25
	K7 224	14:30	16:35
	6T 501/K7 224	14:30	16:35
	YJ 201	6:00	7:25
	YJ 891	6:10	8:15
	YH 917	6:10	8:40
	Y5 234	6:15	7:30
	6T 401	6:20	8:25
	K7 222	6:30	8:40
	K7 226	6:45	8:10
	YJ 143/W97143	7:00	9:05
	YJ 001	8:00	8:55
	8M 6603	9:00	10:10
	YJ 511/W9 7511	10:00	11:25
	YJ 601	11:00	12:25
	YH 729	11:15	14:15
	K7 622	12:00	13:25
	K7 224	14:30	16:35
	K7 224	14:30	16:35
	6T 501/K7 224	14:30	16:35
	YJ 201	6:00	7:25
	YJ 891	6:10	8:15
	YH 917	6:10	8:40
	Y5 234	6:15	7:30
	6T 401	6:20	8:25
	K7 222	6:30	8:40
	K7 226	6:45	8:10
	YJ 143/W97143	7:00	9:05
	YJ 001	8:00	8:55
	8M 6603	9:00	10:10
	YJ 511/W9 7511	10:00	11:25
	YJ 601	11:00	12:25
	YH 729	11:15	14:15
	K7 622	12:00	13:25
	K7 224	14:30	16:35
	YJ 201	11:30	12:55
	6T 501/K7 224	14:30	16:35

Days	Flight	Dep	Arr
FRI	YJ 211	7:00	8:25
	YJ 891	6:10	8:15
	Y5 234	6:15	7:30
	6T 401	6:20	8:25
	YJ 211	11:30	12:55
	YH 917	6:10	8:40
	K7 222	6:30	8:40
	YJ 143/W97143	7:00	9:05
	K7 826	7:30	9:35
	YJ 001	8:00	8:55
	K7 626	8:00	9:25
	YJ 751/W97751	11:00	12:55
	YH 727	11:15	13:25
	K7 622	12:00	13:25
	K7 824	13:00	14:25
	YJ 791	14:30	16:25
	YJ 224	14:30	16:35
	6T 501/K7 224	14:30	16:35
	YJ 891	6:10	8:15
	YH 917	6:10	8:40
	Y5 234	6:15	7:30
	6T 401	6:30	8:35
	K7 222	6:30	8:40
	YJ 201	7:00	8:25
	YJ 001	8:00	8:55
	K7 822	10:00	13:45
	YJ 601	11:00	12:25
	YH 729	11:15	14:15
	K7 622	12:00	13:25
	YJ 781	14:30	15:55
	K7 224	14:30	16:35
	6T 501/K7 224	14:30	16:35
	YJ 211	7:00	8:25
	YJ 891	6:10	8:15
	YH 917	6:10	8:40
	Y5 234	6:15	7:30
	6T 401	6:30	8:35
	K7 222	6:30	8:40
	YJ 143/W9 7143	7:00	9:05
	K7 822	7:30	9:35
	YJ 001	8:00	8:55
	K7 626	8:00	9:25
	8M 6603	9:00	10:10
	YJ 251/W97251	11:00	12:25
	YJ 751/W97751	11:00	12:55
	YH 737	11:15	13:25
	K7 622	12:00	13:25
	YJ 781	14:30	15:55
	K7 224	14:30	16:35
	6T 501/K7 224	14:30	16:35
MANDALAY TO YANGON			
MON	Y5 233	8:10	9:25
	YH 910	8:10	10:15
	YJ 892	8:30	10:25
	YH 918	8:30	10:25
	6T 402	9:20	11:20
	K7 223	8:55	11:00
	YJ 002	11:00	11:55
	YJ 202	11:30	12:55
	K7 625	14:40	16:05
	6T 502/K7 225	16:50	19:00
	YJ 762	16:35	18:00
	K7 623	16:40	18:05
	YH 728	16:45	18:10
	YJ 518/W97518	16:50	18:15
	YJ 782	16:10	18:15
	K7 225	16:50	19:00
	YH 732	17:10	19:15
	Y5 233	8:10	9:25
	YH 918	8:40	10:45
	YJ 892	8:30	10:25
	6T 402	8:45	10:45
	K7 223	8:55	11:00
	YJ 202	11:30	12:55
	YJ 002	11:00	11:55
	YJ 782	16:10	18:15
	K7 623	16:40	18:05
	YJ 762	16:35	18:00
	K7 225	16:50	19:00
	6T 502/K7 225	16:50	19:00
	8M 6604	17:20	18:30
	YH 730	18:00	19:25
	K7 823	18:00	19:25
	YJ 252/W97252	18:05	19:30
	Y5 233	8:10	9:25
	YH 918	8:40	10:45
	YJ 892	8:30	10:25
	6T 402	8:45	10:45
	K7 223	8:55	11:00
	YJ 143/W97143	9:20	11:15
	Y5 132	9:30	10:30
	YJ 002	11:00	11:55
	YJ 202	11:30	12:55
	K7 625	14:40	16:05
	K7 623	16:40	18:05
	YJ 792	16:40	18:45
	K7 225	16:50	19:00
	6T 502/K7 225	16:50	19:00
	YH 738	17:25	18:50
	YJ 752	17:50	19:15
	Y5 233	8:10	9:25
	YH 918	8:40	10:45
	YJ 892	8:30	10:25
	6T 402	8:45	10:45
	K7 223	8:55	11:00
	YJ 143/W97143	9:20	11:15
	YJ 002	10:30	11:55
	YJ 002	11:00	11:55
	K7 623	16:40	18:05
	YJ 762	16:35	18:00
	YJ 602	16:10	17:35
	6T 502/K7 225	16:50	19:00
	K7 225	16:50	19:00
	8M 6604	17:20	18:30
	YH 730	18:00	19:25

Days	Flight	Dep	Arr	
FRI	Y5 233	8:10	9:25	
	YJ 211	7:00	8:25	
	YJ 892	8:30	10:25	
	YH 918	8:40	10:45	
	6T 402	8:45	10:45	
	K7 223	8:55	11:00	
	YJ 143/W971431	9:20	11:15	
	Y5 132	9:30	10:30	
	YJ 002	11:00	11:55	
	YJ 212	12:00	13:25	
	YH 728	16:45	18:10	
	K7 623	16:40	18:05	
	K7 225	16:50	19:00	
	6T 502/K7 225	16:50	19:00	
	K7 825	17:40	19:05	
	YJ 792	16:40	18:45	
SAT	YJ 752/W97752	16:55	19:00	
	YJ 752	17:50	19:15	
	Y5 233	8:10	9:25	
	YH 918	8:40	10:45	
	YJ 892	8:30	10:25	
	6T 402/K7 223	8:55	10:55	
	K7 223	8:55	11:00	
	YJ 143/W97143	9:20	10:45	
	Y5 132	9:30	10:30	
	YJ 002	11:00	11:55	
	YJ 202	11:30	12:55	
	YJ 762	12:35	14:00	
	YJ 602	16:10	17:35	
	YJ 782	16:10	18:15	
	K7 623	16:40	18:05	
	K7 225	16:50	19:00	
SUN	6T 502/K7 225	16:50	19:00	
	YH 730	18:00	19:25	
	Y5 233	8:10	9:25	
	YH 918	8:40	10:45	
	YJ 892	8:30	10:35	
	6T 402	8:55	10:55	
	K7 223	8:55	11:00	
	YJ 143/W97143	9:20	10:45	
	Y5 132	9:30	10:30	
	YJ 002	11:00	11:55	
	YJ 212	12:00	13:25	
	YJ 782	16:10	18:15	
	6T 502/K7 225	16:50	19:00	
	K7 623	16:40	18:05	
	K7 225	16:50	19:00	
	8M 6604	17:20	18:30	
YH 738	17:25	18:50		
YJ 752	17:50	19:15		
YANGON TO NYAUNG U				
MON	YJ 891	6:10	7:30	
	YH 917	6:10	7:45	
	6T 401	6:20	8:15	
	K7 222	6:30	7:50	
	YH 909	6:30	8:55	
	6T 501/K7 224	14:30	17:20	
	YJ 781	14:30	16:40	
	K7 224	14:30	17:25	
	YH 731	15:00	17:55	
	TUE	YH 917	6:10	7:45
YJ 891		6:10	7:30	
6T 401		6:20	7:40	
K7 222		6:30	7:50	
6T 501/K7 224		14:30	17:20	
YJ 781		14:30	16:40	
K7 224		14:30	17:25	
WED		YH 917	6:10	7:45
		YJ 891	6:10	7:30
		6T 401	6:20	7:40
	K7 222	6:30	7:50	
	K7 242	6:45	8:05	
	YJ 143/W97143	7:00	8:20	
	6T 501/K7 224	14:30	17:20	
	K7 224	14:30	17:25	
	THUR	YJ 891	6:10	7:30
		YH 917	6:10	7:45
6T 401		6:20	7:40	
K7 222		6:30	7:50	
YJ 143/W97143		7:00	8:20	
6T 501/K7 224		14:30	17:20	
K7 224		14:30	17:25	
FRI		YJ 891	6:10	7:30
		YH 917	6:10	7:45
		6T 401	6:20	7:40
	K7 222	6:30	7:50	
	K7 242	6:45	8:05	
	YJ 143/W97143	7:00	8:20	
	6T 501/K7 224	14:30	17:20	
	K7 224	14:30	17:25	
	SAT	YJ 891	6:10	7:30
		YH 917	6:10	7:45
6T 401		6:30	7:50	
K7 222		6:30	7:50	
YJ 143/W97143		7:00	8:20	
YJ 781		14:30	16:40	
6T 501/K7 224		14:30	17:20	
K7 224		14:30	17:25	
SUN		YJ 891	6:10	7:30
		YH 917	6:10	7:45
	6T 401/K7 222	6:30	7:50	
	K7 222	6:30	7:50	
	YJ 143/W97143	7:00	8:20	
	YJ 781	14:30	16:40	
	6T 501/K7 224	14:30	17:20	
	K7 224	14:15	16:25	
	K7 224	14:30	17:25	

INTERNATIONAL FLIGHT SCHEDULES

Days	Flight	Dep	Arr
YANGON TO BANGKOK			
MON	PG 706	7:15	9:30
	8M 335	9:00	10:45
	TG 304	9:50	11:45
	PG 702	10:30	12:25
	TG 302	14:55	16:50
	8M 331	16:30	18:15
	PG 704	18:20	20:15
	Y5 237	18:05	19:50
	TG 306	19:45	21:40
	PG 706	7:15	9:30
TUE	8M 335	9:00	10:45
	TG 304	9:50	11:45
	PG 702	10:30	12:25
	TG 302	14:55	16:50
	8M 331	16:30	18:15
	Y5 237	18:05	19:50
	PG 704	18:20	20:15
	TG 306	19:45	21:40
	PG 706	7:15	9:30
	8M 335	9:00	10:45
WED	TG 304	9:50	11:45
	PG 702	10:30	12:25
	TG 302	14:55	16:50
	8M 331	16:30	18:15
	Y5 237	18:05	19:50
	PG 704	18:20	20:15
	TG 306	19:45	21:40
	PG 706	7:15	9:30
	8M 335	9:00	10:45
	TG 304	9:50	11:45
THUR	PG 702	10:30	12:25
	TG 302	14:55	16:50
	8M 331	16:30	18:15
	Y5 237	18:05	19:50
	PG 704	18:20	20:15
FRI	TG 306	19:45	21:40
	PG 706	7:15	9:30
	8M 335	9:00	10:45
	TG 304	9:50	11:45
	PG 702	10:30	12:25
SAT	TG 302	14:55	16:50
	8M 331	16:30	18:15
	Y5 237	18:05	19:50
	PG 704	18:20	20:15
	TG 306	19:45	21:40
SUN	PG 706	7:15	9:30
	8M 335	9:00	10:45
	TG 304	9:50	11:45
	PG 702	10:30	12:25
	TG 302	14:55	16:50
YANGON TO DON MUENG			
MON	FD 2752	8:30	10:20
	FD 2756	12:50	14:05
TUE	FD 2754	17:50	19:35
	FD 2752	8:30	10:20
WED	FD 2756	12:50	14:05
	FD 2754	17:50	19:35
THUR	FD 2752	8:30	10:20
	FD 2756	12:50	14:05
FRI	FD 2752	8:30	10:20
	FD 2756	12:50	14:05
SAT	FD 2752	8:30	10:20
	FD 2756	12:50	14:05
SUN	FD 2754	17:50	19:35
	FD 2752	8:30	10:20
YANGON TO SINGAPORE			
MON	MI 509	0:25	5:00
	8M 231	8:00	12:25
	Y5 233	10:10	14:40
	SQ 997	10:25	14:45
	8M 623/3K 586	11:30	16:05
	3K 586	11:30	16:05
	MI 517	16:40	21:15
	MI 509	0:25	5:00
	8M 231	8:00	12:25
	SQ 997	10:25	14:45
TUE	8M 231	8:00	12:25
	Y5 233	10:10	14:40
	SQ 997	10:25	14:45
	8M 623/3K 586	11:30	16:05
	VN 942	14:25	17:10
WED	MI 517	16:40	21:15
	8M 231	8:00	12:25
	Y5 233	10:10	14:40
	SQ 997	10:25	14:45
	8M 623/3K 586	11:30	16:05
THUR	8M 231	8:00	12:25
	Y5 233	10:10	14:40
	SQ 997	10:25	14:45
	3K 586	11:30	16:05
	8M 623/3K 586	11:30	16:05
FRI	MI 517	16:40	21:15
	8M 231	8:00	12:25
	Y5 233	10:10	14:40
	SQ 997	10:25	14:45
	8M 623/3K 586	11:30	16:05
SAT	MI 509	0:25	5:00
	8M 231	8:00	12:25
	Y5 233	10:10	14:40
	SQ 997	10:25	14:45
	8M 623/3K 586	11:30	16:05
SUN	MI 517	16:40	21:15
	8M 233	15:05	19:30
	MI 517	16:40	21:15
	MI 509	0:25	5:00
	8M 233	15:05	19:30

Days	Flight	Dep	Arr
YANGON TO KUALA LUMPUR			
SUN	MI 509	0:25	5:00
	8M 231	8:00	12:25
	Y5 233	10:10	14:40
	SQ 997	10:25	14:45
	3K 586	11:30	16:05
	8M 623/3K 586	11:30	16:05
	VN 942	14:25	17:10
	8M 233	15:05	19:30
	MI 517	16:40	21:15
	MI 509	0:25	5:00
YANGON TO KUNMING			
MON	MI 509	0:25	5:00
	8M 231	8:00	12:25
	Y5 233	10:10	14:40
	SQ 997	10:25	14:45
	8M 623/3K 586	11:30	16:05
	3K 586	11:30	16:05
	MI 517	16:40	21:15
	MI 509	0:25	5:00
	8M 231	8:00	12:25
	SQ 997	10:25	14:45
TUE	8M 231	8:00	12:25
	Y5 233	10:10	14:40
	SQ 997	10:25	14:45
	8M 623/3K 586	11:30	16:05
	VN 942	14:25	17:10
WED	MI 517	16:40	21:15
	8M 231	8:00	12:25
	Y5 233	10:10	14:40
	SQ 997	10:25	14:45
	8M 623/3K 586	11:30	16:05
THUR	8M 231	8:00	12:25
	Y5 233	10:10	14:40
	SQ 997	10:25	14:45
	3K 586	11:30	16:05
	8M 623/3K 586	11:30	16:05
FRI	MI 517	16:40	21:15
	8M 231	8:00	12:25
	Y5 233	10:10	14:40
	SQ 997	10:25	14:45
	8M 623/3K 586	11:30	16:05
SAT	MI 509	0:25	5:00
	8M 231	8:00	12:25
	Y5 233	10:10	14:40
	SQ 997	10:25	14:45
	8M 623/3K 586	11:30	16:05
SUN	MI 517	16:40	21:15
	8M 233	15:05	19:30
	MI 517	16:40	21:15
	MI 509	0:25	5:00
	8M 233	15:05	19:30

Days	Flight	Dep	Arr
MANDALAY TO BANGKOK			
MON	8M 335	8:25	10:45
	8M 335	8:25	10:45
	TG 782	9:30	11:55
TUE	8M 335	8:25	10:45
WED	8M 335	8:25	10:45
THUR	8M 335	8:25	10:45
	8M 335	8:25	10:45
	TG 782	9:30	11:55
FRI	8M 335	8:25	10:45
SAT	8M 335	8:25	10:45
SUN	8M 335	8:25	10:45
	8M 335	8:25	10:45
	TG 782	9:30	11:55
MANDALAY TO SINGAPORE			
MON	8M 335	8:25	15:15
TUE	8M 335	8:25	15:15
WED	8M 335	8:25	15:15
THUR	8M 335	8:25	15:15
FRI	8M 335	8:25	15:15
SAT	8M 335	8:25	15:15
SUN	8M 335	8:25	15:15
MANDALAY TO DON MUENG			
MON	FD 2761	12:45	15:00
TUE	FD 2761	12:45	15:00
WED	FD 2761	12:45	15:00
THUR	FD 2761	12:45	15:00
FRI	FD 2761	12:45	15:00
SAT	FD 2761	12:45	15:00
SUN	FD 2761	12:45	15:00
MANDALAY TO KUNMING			
MON	MU 2030	14:40	17:20
TUE	MU 2030	14:40	17:20
WED	MU 2030	14:40	17:20
THUR	MU 2030	14:40	17:20
FRI	MU 2030	14:40	17:20
SAT	MU 2030	14:40	17:20
SUN	MU 2030	14:40	17:20
MANDALAY TO YAYO			
TUE	8M 603	11:10	12:15
THUR	8M 603	11:10	12:15
FRI	8M 603	11:10	12:15
BANGKOK TO YANGON			
MON	8M 336	6:15	7:00
	FD 3770	7:15	8:00
	TG 303	7:55	8:50
TUE	PG 701	8:50	9:40
WED	TG 301	13:00	13:45
THUR	PG 703	16:45	17:35
FRI	FD 3772	16:50	17:35
SAT	TG 305	17:50	18:45
SUN	8M 332	19:15	20:00
MON	Y5 238	20:15	21:30
	PG 705	20:15	21:00
	Y5 238	21:10	21:55
Tue	8M 336	6:15	7:00
WED	FD 3770	7:15	8:00
THUR	TG 303	7:55	8:50
FRI	PG 701	8:50	9:40
SAT	TG 301	13:00	13:45
SUN	PG 703	16:45	17:35
MON	FD 3772	16:50	17:35
	TG 305	17:50	18:45
	8M 332	19:15	20:00
TUE	Y5 238	20:15	21:30
WED	PG 705	20:15	21:00
THUR	Y5 238	21:10	21:55
FRI	8M 336	6:15	7:00
SAT	FD 3770	7:15	8:00
SUN	TG 303	7:55	8:50
MON	PG 701	8:50	9:40
	TG 301	13:00	13:45
	PG 703	16:45	17:35
TUE	FD 3772	16:50	17:35
WED	TG 305	17:50	18:45
THUR	8M 332	19:15	20:00
FRI	Y5 238	20:15	21:30
SAT	PG 705	20:15	21:00
SUN	Y5 238	21:10	21:55
MON	8M 336	6:15	7:00
	FD 3770	7:15	8:00
	TG 303	7:55	8:50
TUE	PG 701	8:50	9:40
WED	TG 301	13:00	13:45
THUR	PG 703	16:45	17:35
FRI	FD 3772	16:50	17:35
SAT	TG 305	17:50	18:45
SUN	8M 332	19:15	20:00
MON	Y5 238	20:15	21:30
	PG 705	20:15	21:00
	Y5 238	21:10	21:55
TUE	8M 336	6:15	7:00
WED	FD 3770	7:15	8:00
THUR	TG 303	7:55	8:50
FRI	PG 701	8:50	9:40
SAT	TG 301	13:00	13:45
SUN	PG 703	16:45	17:35
MON	FD 3772	16:50	17:35
	TG 305	17:50	18:45
	8M 332	19:15	20:00
TUE	Y5 238	20:15	21:30
WED	PG 705	20:15	21:00
THUR	Y5 238	21:10	21:55
FRI	8M 336	6:15	7:00
SAT	FD 3770	7:15	8:00
SUN	TG 303	7:55	8:50
MON	PG 701	8:50	9:40
	TG 301	13:00	13:45
	PG 703	16:45	17:35
TUE	FD 3772	16:50	17:35
WED	TG 305	17:50	18:45
THUR	8M 332	19:15	20:00
FRI	Y5 238	20:15	21:30
SAT	PG 705	20:15	21:00
SUN	Y5 238	21:10	21:55
DON MUENG TO YANGON			
MON	FD 2751	7:15	8:00
TUE	FD 2755	11:10	11:45
WED	FD 2753	16:35	17:20
THUR	FD 2751	7:15	8:00
FRI	FD 2755	11:10	11:45
SAT	FD 2753	16:35	17:20
SUN	FD 2751	7:15	8:00

Superhero or supervillain?

WILL OREMUS

FROM invisibility to superhuman strength, a wave of emerging technologies promises to give people powers once reserved for comic-book characters. Which raises the question: If humans become superhuman, will we turn out to be superheroes – or supervillains?

Batman uses human-enhancement technologies to fight crime, while the Joker uses them to wreak mayhem. For Peter Parker, the transformation into Spider-Man brings out a deep sense of social responsibility. For Otto Octavius, becoming Dr Octopus means becoming a vengeful megalomaniac.

Comic books typically explain the choices each character makes in response to the pressure of being extraordinary. But what if some types of powers lend themselves to searchers recruited volunteers for an experiment on how virtual superpowers could influence moral decisions. Half were granted the power of flight, like Superman, while the others rode as passengers in a helicopter. Both groups succeeded in their mission, the rescue of a child.

After the simulation, an experimenter sat down to debrief each

subject. As they the experimenter

talked, “accidentally” knocked over a canister full of pens, then waited five seconds before beginning to pick them up. The volunteers in the helicopter group took an average of six seconds to start helping clean up the spill, and some didn’t pitch in at all. But those in the Superman group jumped right in, with most coming to the experimenter’s aid even before she started gathering the pens herself.

The findings suggest that acquiring a superpower can spark benevolent tendencies. Clinical psychologist Robin Rosenberg, who helped design the experiment, said its outcome supported her hypothesis that extraordinary ability brings with it a responsibility to help others.

But what if the researchers had given their subjects a different superpower?

It would be nice to think that morality emanates from the sheer goodness of people’s souls, but research has consistently shown that people

behave far better when they think they’re being watched. That’s why Rosenberg, who has written a book on the psychology of superheroes, draws a distinction between visible powers and stealth powers. Soaring above the masses is a highly conspicuous activity, so it would behoove the flyer to be on his best behavior. X-ray vision is stealthier.

The ultimate stealth power, of course, is invisibility. Its promise is that of impunity – the ability to do things that would otherwise get you in trouble. Powers like mind control also seem to lend themselves to abuse. Mind-reading would be similarly invasive.

Other powers, like supreme intelligence, time travel and indestructibility, could be employed equally for good or ill. Likewise incredible strength, which Bruce Banner’s Hulk uses mostly for good but which also bedevils him by amplifying the consequences of his rage.

That example suggests another way of looking at the risks and benefits of human-enhancement technologies. By definition, they enable people to transcend their natural limitations. Imagine the panic that would ensue

if hypothetical superpowers like mind-reading suddenly became widely available.

We have jet packs, but they’re grossly impractical. Headlines about real-life invisibility cloaks tend to be exaggerated. Muscle suits are only useful for people with disabilities. Brain-computer interfaces let you move things with your mind, but only if you’re willing to undergo brain sur-

gery. Promises of super-longevity or immortality are premature.

That said, each of these human-enhancement technologies are progressing along a path that could someday lead to real-world viability. Before they do, it might be wise to think about whether each one is likely to make people better – or just more potent. – *Slate*

Cartoon: Peter Yong

WEEKLY PREDICTIONS MAY 27 - JUN 02, 2013

AQUARIUS

Jan 20 - Feb 18
Exciting opportunities lie on the road ahead, but remember that so too do obstacles. Anticipation has a habit of setting you up, so measure your expectations accordingly. The key is not to hide the ugliness that often sits just on the surface, but to show the love and happiness in your nature and your soul.

PISCES

Feb 19 - March 20
Destiny is not what you are destined for, but it is the choices you make in life. You must not wait for those opportunities to wait for you, instead go to them yourself and seek them, know that you are the keeper of your own destiny. You are you, don’t attempt to take on another’s personality, but be confident in your own.

ARIES

Mar 21 - Apr 19
Good deeds never go unrewarded. Do something nice for someone. one about it, see how much better that makes Feel how beautiful, magical it feels to do something with sincerity and not receive something in return it. Remember, the best you ever had is just a memory.

TAURUS

Apr 20 - May 20
Those dreams weren’t as daft as they seemed, when you dreamed them up. Be noble to your emotions and open your heart and your mind to every opportunity, you never know where it may lead you. This real and strong and allows you to fulfill every desire you have ever had.

GEMINI

May 21 - June 20
Appreciate the beauty that life brings. Drink it in and smell it because it is all around you. Life may not make much sense sometimes, it might feel that love is not only blind but deaf, but keep strong and keep the faith and love will conquer and with willpower and faith.

CANCER

Jun 21 - Jul 20
I’ve seen your frown and it’s like looking down the barrel of a gun. And it goes off. Remember cuddles in the kitchen to get things off the ground. I know it seems hard to remember that on a day like today when you’re all argumentative, and you’ve got the face on. Make the decision to stop wallowing in non-constructive sorrow and pity and instead work towards your goals. Strive for them! Meet them! Build that mental snowball and turn that frown upside down.

LEO

Jul 23 - Aug 22
Don’t be the kind of fool that’s going to sit and sing a tune about stars. Something in your magnetism must have made it drop, but anyone who was led away into the other room stood pretending. Go searching from the bottom to the top, for such a sight as the one I caught when I saw your fingers dimming the lights, like you’re used to being told that you’re trouble.

VIRGO

Aug 23 - Sep 22
Embrace the physical side of your relationship. There are those times when there is nothing more to do than spend the day without stepping outside to catch the sun’s rays. Embrace those moments and enjoy them for what they are. If things don’t work out like it seemed they once might, embrace that too and be thankful for the friendship that has blossomed.

LIBRA

Sept 23 - Oct 22
Sometimes life just seems like a sad love song. You have to ask yourself if what’s happening is really what you want. Right now it may feel like you’re taking two steps back for every one step forward, and you’re going feel exhausted and frustrated by it all. Keep plugging along. The only way is forward.

SCORPIO

Oct 23 - Nov 21
Learning to let go is one of the biggest lessons you will ever learn. Discover what inspires you and gives you confidence. Understanding and a bit of patience will help seed

professional developments in the direction you want to take.

SAGITTARIUS

Nov 22 - Dec 21
Let your hair down and party but also take the time to uncover the source of ongoing tension in your social life. It is important to maintain the image that you are in control. No human being can stand the mind-numbing experience of his/her own powerlessness (and others can’t stand you being so pathetic).

CAPRICORN

Dec 22 - Jan 19
Grow up Capricorn! Cultivate a strong dose of humility and start being a little less selfish. There are beautiful love vibrations in the air. You might want to harness this instead of being so pessimistic. Find out what it’s like to care about someone other than yourself.

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iPhone 4G 16GB Japan Lock, No Phone Call, Price : 150000, PH : 09450039844



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Email: alif.phoneshop@gmail.com



Employment

Embassy

THE EMBASSY of the Republic of Korea is looking for energetic **Security Guards**. The application must be Excellent interpersonal skills and good command of oral communication in English and Myanmar Languages; The ability to work as part of a team; The ability to work flexible hours; Experience & knowledge of security procedure will be advantage. Submit your application form with a recently taken photo to No 97, University Avenue, Bahan. For more information, call 01-527142~144 in office hour.

UN Positions

IOM Int'l Organization for Migration is seeking (1) **Microscopist**-Malaria in Myawaddy, Kayin State: Myanmar national. Able to speak local languages would be considered as an advantage. High school or higher education. (2) **Mobile Clinic Laboratory Technician** in Myawaddy, Kayin State: Myanmar national. Able to speak local languages would be considered an advantage. Laboratory technician (Grade II). Direct experience on microscopic training on malaria. Pls submit CV to IOM Mission in Myanmar-Yangon. 12th Flr, Traders Hotel, No.223, Sule Pagoda Rd, Yangon. Email: iomyangon@iom.int, Website: http://www.iom.int

IOM Int'l Organization for Migration is seeking (1) **Community Service Provider** in Thaton, Bilin, Kyauko & Ye Townships in Mon State: Must have a client-oriented, result-oriented mind-set & uphold the programme values of caring, innovating, partnering, demonstrating competence & working for positive change. Able to spend up to 80% of the time travel to remote, hard-to-reach areas to accomplish his/her responsibilities as noted in this TOR. Myanmar plus Kayin and/or language proficiency. (2) **Senior Driver/ Mechanic**: Myanmar National. Valid Driving License. 3 years experience as a driver with safe driving record. Strong Mechanical knowledge. Good knowledge of written & spoken English. Pls submit CV to IOM Mission in Myanmar - Yangon. 12th Flr, Traders Hotel, No.223, Sule Pagoda Rd, Yangon. Email: iomyangon@iom.int, Website: http://www.iom.int

IOM Int'l Organization for Migration is seeking (1) **Treasury Assistant** in Mawlamyine, Mon State: Academic background in Business Administration or related field. 2 years of progressive experience in related field. Excellent computer skills. (2) **DRR Community Project Assistant** in South-East Region (Thaton/ Bilin Tsp, Mon State) - (3) **Medical Doctor (Officer)** - HIV/AIDS in Mawlamyine, Mon State : Advanced university degree in Nursing, Public Health or Medicine (must have a valid license to practice). Strong management skills are necessary, demonstrated by 3 years experience. Good in English & Myanmar (Speaking Mon &/or Mon would be an advantage). Computer literacy. Pls submit application to IOM Mission in Myanmar -Yangon, 12th Flr, Traders Hotel : 223, Sule Pagoda Rd, Yangon. Email: iomyangon@iom.int, Website: http://www.iom.int

Overseas

WORKING at the Baron Bakery, 2/112 Ballandella Rd, Pendle Hill, NSW 2145, Sydney, Australia : Must have or Minimum English requirement is IELTS average 5 or above for submission to immigration. Prefer Male and under 30 year age. Prefer with experience at the local bakery or the hotel bakery. Minimum 3 years contract to get the PR visa. Send application to Email : info@baronbakery.com.au, & fredgyi@krasu.net Ph : 02 9631 3000, 61 400 836 164

Ingo Positions

AMDA is seeking a dedicated person to work as (1) **A Program Officer** for Yangon Office. University Medical degree with 3 years programming experiences in relevant sectors (INGO experience would be an asset). Excellent in English and Myanmar communication both spoken & written. Strong computer skill. (2) **CDF** (Community Development Facilitator) 1 post in Kokang. Minimum high school level of government school (10th Standard passed). Prefer Fluent in Kokang and Myanmar languages (reading & writing). Fluent in Palaung or Myaung Zee (Pae Pu) is more eligible. 1 year experience, background & knowledge about the community development activities or relevant fields. Pls enclose a C.V., copies of testimonials (references) & passport photo to Khin Nyo Yee, Senior Officer, Admin/ Finance Unit, AMDA Myanmar Country Office, 19 B, Thukhawaddy Rd, Yankin, Tel: 578353, Email: amda@mptmail.net.mm Closing date : 31st May 2013.

MEDECINS Sans Frontiers - Holland (AZG) is seeking **Translator** 3 posts in Sittwe: Good command of English & Myanmar. Good Computer skill. Pls send your application letter, CV and passport photo, copies of education qualifications and references to: MSF-Holland/ AZG (Yangon Coordination), No.62A, Bawdiyeiktha-Thaniwin Rd, Bahan, Yangon, or through msf.myanmar.recruitment@gmail.com, Closing date: 3rd June, 2013.

ACTION CONTRE la Faim Myanmar (ACF-Myanmar) is seeking motivated & experienced (1) **Programme Manager** (Food security / Livelihoods / WaSH) for Maungdaw/Buthidaung, Rakhine State. Basic skills in Agronomy and/or economy and/or WASH, 4 years professional experiences in Program Management of Rural Development activities (Agriculture and/or social sciences or engineering), Analytical capacity, Capacity to supervise a team, Good human relations, Good knowledge of projects implementation & command of PCM tools, Computer knowledge, Good command in English (spoken, read, written). Pls send application (cover letter, CV, references) to ACF Office, No 78(D), Than Lwin Rd, Bahan, Yangon OR via an e-mail: jobs.acf.mya@gmail.com

MYANMAR Red Cross Society is seeking (1) **Epidemic Preparedness Project Officer** 1 post in Nay Pyi Taw: University degree. In good mental & physical health. Good computer literacy. Effective English language skill. (2) **Program Officer (CBHFA)** 1 post in Nay Pyi Taw : Any graduate. Good computer know

ledge . Effective English language skill. (3) **Training Officer** (Water Safety) 1 post in Nay Pyi Taw: University degree in any field and must finish Water Safety (TOT) Training with Grade-A. 2 years experience in training or other related field. Computer literate. (4) **Township Branch Capacity Building Officer** 1 post in Nay Pyi Taw: University degree or diploma related to the position. 3 to 5 years experiences. Effective both Myanmar & English Language skills (Written and Oral). Good Computer literate. Good knowledge of Red Cross Movement principles. (5) **Livelihood Officer** 1 post in Sittwe: University degree. 2 years experience. Effective both Myanmar & English Language skills. Computer literate. (6) **DRR Program Coordinator** 1 post in Nay Pyi Taw: University degree & Diploma related to the position. 2 years of relevant experiences. Very good computer literate. Effective English & Myanmar language . Pls submit a letter of application, relevant documents , CV, 1 passport photo (Cover letter CV documents only need to be sent via e-mail) to U Khin Maung Hla, Executive Director, Myanmar Red Cross Society, Nay Pyi Taw mrcshrrecruitment@gmail.com before 31st May 2013.

THE INT'L HIV/AIDS Alliance is seeking a **Regional Advisor** to provide technical oversight and support to the delivery of the Link Up programme. The successful candidate will ensure that project-specific objectives, strategies and technical support, are relevant to the entire portfolio of Alliance HIV/SRH efforts in the region. Importantly, the Regional Advisor will be responsible for the strategic and operational oversight of the programme in their region. The ideal candidate will be highly motivated, flexible, capable of working both independently & as part of a team. A strong commitment to HIV, Health and Human Rights is essential, along with the ability to represent the Alliance at a senior level. For more details on this post, including Job Description and Person Specification pls visit our website www.aidsalliance.org & click on 'jobs'. Previous Applicants need not apply. Application deadline: Midnight UK time on Sunday 19 May 2013. Interviews: Weeks commencing 27 May and 3 June 2013

MYANMAR Red Cross Society is seeking **Shelter Officer** 1 post in Rakhine Project (Sittwe): Completion of university education in civil engineering with expertise in / focus on shelter construction or similar related fields. Good computer skills. 2 years experience in constructing & rehabilitating shelter or infrastructure. Pls submit: a letter of application, relevant documents & CV, 1 passport photo & necessary documents (Cover letter CV documents only need to be sent via e-mail) to mrcshrrecruitment@gmail.com before 28th May 2013.

WORLDVISION Myanmar is seeking (1) **Project Technical Officer** (Income and Economic Development Project) in Yangon Region: Bachelor of Economics/ Agriculture Economics is essential. Master in Business Administration or Master in Public Administration is prefer able. Excellent command of Myanmar

& English & excellent knowledge in report writing. (2) **Economic Development Specialist** (Non-Agriculture) in Yangon : Master of Business & Administration (MBA) Degree holder is essential. Knowledge in MS Word, Excel, Power Point & Internet is essential. Knowledge in SPSS software & Access is desirable. (3) **Design, Monitoring and Evaluation Facilitator** in Thayetchaung, Coastal Region : Bachelor University Degree in any discipline. Competent in use of Microsoft Office computer programs including Word, Excel & Power Point. 2 years of progressive experience in project programming & monitoring. Good command of Myanmar & English and report writing skill is desirable (3) **Customer Services Coordinator** in Konkyan, Shan (North) State; University Bachelor Degree in any subject. 2 years experience in the field of customer services in commercial/ public institutions/ INGO. Strong Communication skills in English & Myanmar (Chinese language, Kokang dialogue is preferable). Excellent computer aptitude and experience in word processing, database management, & spreadsheet software. Pls submit resume (clearly identify the post you apply) by post to HR Department, World Vision Myanmar or in person to application drop-box at No (18), Shin Saw Pu Rd; Ahlone, Sanchaung PO or send to myajobapps@wv.org Closing date : May 28, 2013. www.worldvision.org.mm

MYANMAR Red Cross Society is seeking **RFL Coordinator**, Restoring Family Links (RFL) Unit 1 post in Nay Pyi Taw: University Degree in Social Work, Psychology, Education or other relevant area. 2 years of experience in project management preferably related to psychosocial support and child protection in emergency situation. Excellent command of English and Myanmar especially in translating, including written, spoken and typing. Well development computer skills, with demonstrated competence in Excel, Word & Power point (English & Myanmar). Pls submit a letter of application, CV, Photo with necessary documents to mrcshrrecruitment@gmail.com (Cover Letter CV documents only need to be sent via e-mail)

SOLIDARITES Int'l (SI) is seeking (1) **Logistics Manager** in Sittwe, Rakhine State: 3 years experience in Logistics field with INGO/ NGO. University Degree or Diploma. Knowledge of IT management & MS office. (2) **Deputy Administrative & Finance Manager** in Sittwe, Rakhine State: University level or equivalent in accounting/ management/ administration. 1 year experience in a similar position with NGO. Excellent knowledge of Word & Excel. Fluent in English & Myanmar. (3) **Hygiene Promotion Manager** in Sittwe, Rakhine State: 2 years experience in INGO. Good level in English. Excellent computer skills (4) **Construction Manager** in Sittwe and Pauk Taw, Rakhine State : Civil Engineer Degree; B.Tech (Civil) or B.E (Civil). 2 years professional experience in INGO. Knowledge of the Rakhine State. Good in English. Excellent computer skills & skill in AutoCAD (optional) is an asset. (5) **Deputy**

Logistics Coordinator in Yangon: 4 years of professional experience in Logistics field with INGO/ NGO. University Degree or Diploma (preferably in Logistics Or related proven experience in similar area.). Knowledge of IT management & MS office. Fluent in English & Myanmar. Pls submit application (CV, cover letter, references) to Logistics Coordinator, Yangon Logistics Unit-Solidarites Int'l office: 44-A, Tharyarwaddy Lane, Bahan, or per email: recruitment@solidarites-myanmar.org

Local Position

(1) **ASSISTANCE F5** posts : must be speak English fluently, Age 25 to 30 (2) **Computer F2** posts : word, Excel, photo editor, 2 years experience . (3) **Driver- M2** posts : Age 35 to 55. Ph: 09-421177105.

MALE LIVE-IN HELPER - Expat single father with 2 boys, one 6 and the other 9 years old, living in a 3 bedroom condo on New University avenue, looking for male live-in helper (stay at home) to do house work, taking kids to school and running errands. Salary 180,000 per month. If interested, send email to voirlemonde@hotmail.com with CV & references. Must speak enough English, be honest and reliable, good with children and have some related experience. Start date immediately. Ben 09-421-057-589.

(1) **SOFTWARE/ Web Developer** - 2 post (2) **Network/ Service Technician** - 2 post (3) **Junior Computer Network Technician** - 2 post. Ph: 01 293064, 09-519-8843.

WE ARE currently open below Vacancy for qualified candidates to apply for the following position. **Sales Manager** - M/F 1 post : Any Graduate, (MBA/DMA Degree is preferable). 5 years sales experience in Building materials & Sanitary wares. Excellent command of English both spoken & written. Manage the productivity of the marketing plans and products. Monitor, review and report on all sales & marketing activity & results. Good personality, communication & reporting skills. Work Place : Rm.902, 9th Flr, Ahlone Tower, Ahlone . Working week : 5 ½ days Working hours : 9:00am - 5:30 pm Tel: 212707, 2301579, 09-430-32996. Ctc : Ms.Nway Nway. Pls submit application letter with personal details, qualification details, along with copies of related documents, 1 passport photo to above address not later than 7 June 2013

WE ARE currently seeking (1). **Assistant Sales & Marketing Manager** - M/F 1 Post : DMA or any graduate with 5 years sales experience in management level at reputed FMCG company. Must have excellence communication skills, presentation skills, interpersonal skills and leadership skills. Good command of English & Software skills (Word, Excel, email, internet) (2). **Sales Supervisor** - M1 Post: Any graduate with 3 years practical working experience with relevant position in FMCG. Responsible supervising sales team and sales activities. Age 25 ~ 30, Independent, well-organized, self-motivated & team-player; Good interpersonal and communication skills; Collaborative, hands on & dynamic personalities (3). **Sales & Marketing Executive** - M/F 2 Posts: Any Graduate, Certificate in Sales & Marketing Course is preferable , Good interpersonal and

communication skills, Customer oriented and highly motivated, Strong negotiation skills, Software skills (Word, Excel, email, internet), Good command of both written & spoken English (4) **Driver-M1** post : Age 25 ~ 50, Pls submit application letter with personal details, qualification details, along with copies of related documents, 1 passport photo to Work Place : Rm.902 , 9th Flr, Ahlone Tower, Ahlone . Working week : 5 ½ days. Working hours: 9:00am ~ 5:30 pm. Contact person : Ms. Nway Nway. Ph : 212707 , 2301579 , 09- 4200-74913. Closing date : 7 June , 2013 during office hours.

WE ARE looking for a **Junior Sales Executive** - M/F : Any graduate, but any diploma in Marketing or Business is preferred, Good acquisition skills, Very good personality, self-motivated & mature, Fair level in English language, Can go out for sales and marketing case, Between 20 and 30 years old, Have good team-working and can work under pressure , Female or Male (1 full-time post). Pls send CV to Rocket Internet Myanmar (we recommend to upload your CV and apply via Work.com.mm)! You can also send your CV to theingi.oo@work.com.mm or call 01-2305629 for more info. Rocket Internet Co., Ltd: 512, 5th Flr, Hledan Centre, Kamaryut, Yangon.

SHAN YOMA Travel & Tours is looking for efficient, energetic and motivated individuals who can work for the positions stated as below: (1). **Outbound Manager** 1 Post (2). **Sales & Marketing/ Operation staff** 3 Posts (3). **Web Developer & Designer** 1 Post. Shan Yoma Travel & Tours Co., Ltd.: 124/126, 50th St, Pazundaung, Yangon, Ph: (951) 295510, 299389, 204152, 726323, 9010378. Fax: (951) 299389

INTERNATIONAL law firm seeking qualified **lawyers**. Lawyers should have 5 years of experience in International Firm. Strong command of English required due to significant interaction with foreign clients. Outstanding opportunity with competitive salary package Submit CV to suhlaing07@gmail.com Tel: 526180,

WE ARE well known International Law Firm looking for **Senior Lawyers** (Male/Female) Age 40-50, LLB/LLM at least higher grade pleader over 10 years experience, at least over 3 ~ 5 years in International Firm. Must have good English skills (Intermediate Level) for Foreign firm specializing in business Law Computer Skills (Microsoft office). Submit CV to susu.hlaing@myanmarthanlwin.com Tel: 526810

COATING company is seeking **Sales Representative** with 1 ~ 2 years experience in building materials. Basic skill in English. Able to stay & work in Yangon, Nay Pyi Taw or Mandalay. Please submit CV with 2 photos & other required certificates/ document to Block 8, MICT Park, #06-01, Universite's Hlaing Campus, Hlaing Township, Yangon, Myanmar. Contact person - Ma Thein Thein Aye (01 654810 ~ 654817).

WE ARE looking for personal driver for diplomat who live in Pun Hlaing Estate. The applicant must - can drive well, non alcoholic, not be a reckless driver. For more information please contact to 01-527142~144 in office hour.

WE ARE looking for a **Manager!** Has significant management experience and can lead a team to success, Has a graduate degree, preferable in marketing and/or management, Is fluent in English, Is a proactive, enthusiastic person that can clearly communicate with management, Has a good personality, is self-motivated and mature in meetings, Has experience in marketing and sales, Is familiar with the Real Estate market, Has computer and internet skills, Has a foreign education (not required), Female or Male (full time), Age between 25 ~ 35, Pls send CV to Rocket Internet Myanmar (we recommend to upload your CV and apply via Work.com.mm)! You can also send your CV to theingi.oo@work.com.mm or call 01-2305629 for more info.

PHP Web Developer Gender M/F 2 posts : Highly skilled in Java script, HTML, CSS, PHP, 1+ years of experience in developing & implementing web sites & web applications, Extensive Knowledge in CMS (Content Management Systems) & Web Design, Must be able to work & coordinate with the technical team, Excellent communication & problem solving skills, Diplomas/certificates from reputable institutes Pls send CV attached with photo & other relevant certificates/documents to 104, 1st Flr, Bogoyoke Rd, Pazundaung, Tel : 01-297238. Pls also mention expected salary and detailed working experience in the CV.

CAR DRIVERS - 5 posts : apply with ID card, labour card, police record, etc. Address: 160, Warden St, Lanmadaw, Ph: U Kyaw Oo 01-212-454, 01-212-456.

WE ARE looking for (1). **Graphic Designer** (Assistant)-F3 posts: 1 years design experience in relative field, Knowledge of In Design, Photoshop, Knowledge of MS Office would be an advantage, can type Myanmar font is also preferable, Must be Enthusiastic, team player with positive attitude, Punctual, Excellent multi-tasking & communication skills, Work with design dead line, The salary for this post is commensurate with experience. All candidates should be good in communication & interpersonal skills. Pls bring CV along with a copy of your credentials to 235, Shukhinnhar Myo Pat Rd, Thaketa, Yangon. Ph: 450396, 450397 Closing date : May 30, 2013.

DHAMMADUTA Tours is seeking On call Guide (part time) . No 254 -256, Rm 401, Pansodan St, Kyauktada. Ph: 391718, 398102.

IGCSE Assistant Teachers wanted. Send your CV to ielts. consultant@gmail.com. Teacher Solomon : 09-5417781.

HOTEL Shwe Gone Daing is seeking (1) **Front Office Manager**-M/F 1 post: Any graduate, 3 ~ 5 years experience in hospitality industry. Excellent command on English in four skills, Chinese, Japan & be a computer literate. (2) **Front Office Supervisor** - M/F 1 post : Any graduate. 2 years of relevant full time work experience. Excellent in English, Computer literate. Able to travel and stay at Nay Pyi Daw hotel zone. Pls send CV with 2 photos & other required certificates/ documents to email : monyeekyaw@gmail.com, No 273(A), Shwe Gone Daing Rd, Bahan, Yangon.

NYLECT Technology (Myanmar) Ltd., is need

Senior Professional Accountant contact: 09-420309073 & email. lahihtusan@gmail.com or susan@nylect.vn

MYANMAR Wonders Travel Ltd is looking for: (1) **Operation Executive**. (2) **Travel Designer**: Good communication in English. Bilingual English & French is advantage. Excellent knowledge of MS office applications, 1 ~ 2 years experience. (3) **Chief Accountant** : B.Com. 2 years experience as Chief Accountant in Travel Agency. Able to communicate in English Computer literacy. Pls call 09-512-0848, 09-731-40535 & email CV to hr.myanmarwonders@gmail.com or Address: 256/266, 10 D, Shine Condo, Seikanhar St (Upper), Kyauktada.

WUNZIN HOTEL, Meikhtila is seeking (1) **FO Supervisor**-M/F 1 post (2) **HK Supervisor**-M/F 1 post (3) **F&B Supervisor**-M/F 1 post (4) **Gardener Supervisor** - M 1 post. Pls send CV and necessary documents to sales@tpleasanthotelmyanmar.com or apply to Original Group Co., Ltd : 110, Kabaaye Pagoda Rd, Bahan, Yangon. Tel : 552955, 540644

EUROPEAN LAW FIRM establishing in Yangon is looking for **smart associates** (with 2 to 6 years working experience) for corporate work (advising foreign investors). Team playing, enthusiasm, international spirit and proficiency in English are requested. Interesting salaries. Pls send cv with picture to yangonexecutive2013@gmail.com

ISBC Company is seeking an **Administrative Assistant** - F 1 post: Any Graduate, Age 20 ~ 30, 2 years experience. Good in spoken & written English. Proficiency in MS office. Have knowledge of book-keeping/accounts, good interpersonal, public relation & organizing skills, positive attitude & be initiative. Pls email CV with contact details to ma.ni.lar@gmail.com, Ph: 09-4201-10451 within two weeks.

KELVIN CHIA Yangon Ltd is a foreign legal consultancy firm is invite motivated @ committed individuals to join as (1) **Lawyers** who will work on a variety of corporate & commercial matters & transactions in Myanmar. If you are a Myanmar-qualified lawyer with strong English language skills, you are invited to apply to join our Myanmar practice group. Myanmar nationals admitted to int'l bars are also welcome to apply. Training will be provided. Pls submit to klm@kcyangon.com. (2) **Corporate Affairs Executive/Assistant** A corporate affairs executive/assistant, you will be involved with business development, networking, market research & liaison work. Applicants should be proficient in English, energetic & self motivated. All nationalities are welcome (Myanmar, Japanese, Korean, Chinese, Taiwanese, etc). Pls apply to kk@kcyangon.com (3) **Administrative Assistant** : Must have good written & spoken communication skills in English. Mature & capable of supervising & directing subordinates. Must be well-organized, meticulous, have initiative & execute instructions promptly. Some accounting background & experience preferred. Pls apply full resume stating their current & expected salaries, together with a recent photo to chw@kcyangon.com

QUICK GUIDE

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EMAIL : ADVERTISING@MYANMARTIMES.COM.MM
WWW.MMTIMES.COM



The Essentials

EMBASSIES

Australia 88, Strand Road, Yangon. tel : 251810, 251797, 251798, 251809, 246462, 246463, fax: 246159

Bangladesh 11-B, Than Lwin Road, Yangon. tel: 515275, 526144, fax: 515273, email: bdootygn@mptmail.net.mm

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: egymbyangon@mptmail.net.mm

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

Indonesia 100, Pyidaungsu Yeiktha Road, Yangon. tel: 254465, 254469, 229750, fax: 254468, email: kuckygn@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** Chatrium 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: Laoembcab@mptmail.net.mm

Malaysia 82, Pyidaungsu Yeiktha Road, Yangon. 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, Sayasan Road, Bahan Tsp, Yangon. tel: 558149-151, fax: 558154, email: p.e.yangon@gmail.com

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@slmbyangon.org, www.slembyangon.org

Thailand 94 Pyay Road, Dagon Township, Yangon. tel: 226721, 226728, 226824, fax: 221713

United Kingdom 80 Kan-na 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

UNITED NATIONS

ILO Liaison Officer Rm (M1212-1220), 12 Fl-A, Traders Hotel. 223, tel: 242 393, 242811. fax: 242594.

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, Malikka 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, Malikka 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.

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OPINION

Surprises ahead

Next EPL season could be most unpredictable ever, writes STEVE DOUGLAS

GET ready for the Premier League like you've never seen it before.

No Alex Ferguson. No Roberto Mancini. The expected return of Jose Mourinho. The likely influx of more world-class players on the back of a bumper new TV deal. Two Welsh teams for the first time.

Don't forget the introduction of goal line technology, either.

The English season only finished on May 19, yet fans across the globe are already counting down the days to August 17 when the next campaign begins with a mixture of excitement, trepidation and intrigue.

Much of the buzz has been sparked by Ferguson's decision to step down as Manchester United manager after nearly 27 years.

To many, it signals the end of United's stranglehold on English football dating back 20 years. The future of the Premier League may have been thrown wide open.

Come August, four of this season's top six United, Manchester City, Chelsea and Everton will have newly appointed managers in the wake of an unprecedented amount of high-profile coaching upheaval in May.

"I was with the chief executive of Liverpool at our reserve game the other night and he told me that Brendan Rodgers, who has not been in the job a year, is the 30th longest-serving manager in the country," Ferguson said last week. "That's incredible."

With David Moyes taking control of United, Mourinho set for Chelsea and Manuel Pellegrini — a coach largely unknown to English audiences — heavily tipped for the City hot seat, there will be a new dynamic at the top of the world's most-watched league. Arsenal cannot be discounted, with the club benefiting from a string of new, lucrative commercial deals and the club once again in the Champions League, while Liverpool and Tottenham appear to be on an upward curve under the forward-thinking stewardship of Rodgers and Andre Villas-Boas.

It is anyone's guess what will happen next season.

In Villas-Boas' opinion, it could be time for Chelsea to reassert its dominance under Mourinho, who won back-to-back league titles in his first spell at the club from 2004-07.

"Chelsea next season will absolutely be the team to beat, bearing in mind the manager change and the manager that we expect to come in," the Portuguese coach said.

The likelihood of Mourinho returning to Stamford Bridge is dividing opinion, though.

Some feel it is a perfect match, a union that shouldn't have been broken

up in the first place. Frank Lampard and Petr Cech have already spoken out in favor of the return of the "Special One," giving an adrenalin shot to the team and the fans after the turbulent if ultimately successful tenure of Rafa Benitez.

"With him at the helm, we are going to give it a great go," Lampard said.

Others say Mourinho has lost his magic after what he has described as his "worst" season as a coach in the trophyless year at Real Madrid. Also, can his relationship with Chelsea owner Roman Abramovich, who sacked Mourinho six years ago, be repaired?

It will be no less fascinating to see how Moyes gets on at United.

Ferguson has urged fans to get behind his fellow Scot but what will be the reaction if United loses its opening two games? Can Ferguson hold himself back from meddling in team affairs from his position up in the director's box?

"He will have his own ideas and that's good," Ferguson has predicted.

Moyes will have to act quickly to sort out the futures of Wayne Rooney and Rio Ferdinand this summer and maybe sign the world-class playmaker many United fans have been craving for years, with Paul Scholes having retired and the team's central midfield still lacking creativity at times.

With Ferguson gone, there hasn't been such uncertainty swirling around Old Trafford since the late 1980s and opponents will be keen to seize on it.

Particularly Man City, which will be desperate to reclaim the Premier League trophy from its neighbor and rediscover the consistency and attacking spark that was lost in the final 12 months of Mancini's 3 1/2-year reign.

City demonstrated in the way it beat United 2-1 away in the derby last month that, on its day, there is no better team in England. And with Mancini gone, the likelihood is that the cracks which reportedly developed in the squad in recent months should heal.

Is Pellegrini the man to restore City's fortunes, though? He has never coached in the Premier League and was overwhelmed by all the egos in Real Madrid's squad during his one season at the Spanish giant in 2009-10. Yet, his record at Villarreal and Malaga, his current club, is impressive and has been hailed for his skills in man-management.

It is another appointment that could go either way, adding to the intrigue next season.

There should be plenty of new faces among the playing squads, too, with the transfer kitties of clubs boosted by a 70 percent increase in TV revenues announced last summer and taking effect from the start of next season. — AP



Sergio Garcia watches his shot during the first round of the BMW PGA Championship at Wentworth Golf Club in Surrey, England on May 22. Photo: AP

Golfing feud turns ugly

SERGIO Garcia is yet to speak to Tiger Woods after making an inappropriate remark about the world No. 1-ranked golfer, though he would certainly take an opportunity to open some direct dialogue at the U.S. Open if he gets a chance next month.

Garcia sparked controversy last week by saying he would serve fried chicken if they were to have dinner together at the US Open. That kind of stereotype has been used for at least a century to denigrate African-Americans.

Along with making a public apology for the remark, Garcia on May 23 said he had made contact with Mark Steinberg, who handles Woods' business affairs.

Asked at the BMW PGA Championship if he had spoken to Woods, Garcia said: "Unfortunately not, though I have spoken to Mark Steinberg and he said that they are moving forward. And if I manage to talk to Tiger then I will do that definitely when I see him at the US Open."

The Spanish golfer said he didn't sense any animosity from the crowd during his opening round.

"It was okay out there today and it's been a tough week, but for the most part it's been okay," he said. "And I felt

the warmth of the people and they were very supportive of myself and my playing colleagues.

"That really helped a lot and, like I have always said, I am very, very fortunate because I feel like the people support me everywhere I go, and not just in Europe. So I am very thankful for that and to get a welcome like I did."

Woods and Garcia have exchanged barbs over the past two weeks, dat-

'Most of Sergio's friends are coloured athletes in the United States.'

George O'Grady
European Tour CEO

ing to the third round of The Players Championship when Garcia implied that Woods purposely stirred up the gallery as the Spaniard was playing a shot.

Woods responded on May 22 to Garcia's remark with a series of tweets that said: "The comment that was made wasn't silly. It was wrong,

hurtful and clearly inappropriate. I'm confident that there is real regret the remark was made. The Players (Championship) ended nearly two weeks ago and it's long past time to move on and talk about golf."

However, the controversy took a further twist on May 23 when the head of the European Tour had to apologise for using the term "coloured" during a live television interview in which he was commenting on the spat between Garcia and Woods.

In the interview, European Tour CEO George O'Grady said that "most of Sergio's friends are coloured athletes in the United States."

The word "coloured" is considered an antiquated and offensive term in some countries when referring to black people.

"I deeply regret using an inappropriate word in a live interview for Sky Sports for which I unreservedly apologise," O'Grady said in a statement.

It was a sentiment shared by Garcia.

"I didn't hear about the comments as I was playing today but I have since been told about it, I think it unfortunate," Garcia said.

The US Open will be played June 13-16 at Merion Golf Club in Ardmore, Pennsylvania. — AP

Women's football side blanks India

AUNG SI HEIN

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THE national women's team kicked off the qualifying round for the 2014 Asian Cup with a 2-0 win over India at the Faisal Al-Husseini Stadium in Palestine on May 21.

Myanmar is competing against India, Chinese Taipei and Palestine in Group D.

Myanmar's coach, Kumada, was quoted on the Myanmar Football Federation's website as saying that he was confident his side would win.

"[Chinese] Taipei beat Palestine 6-0 today," he said on May 21. "We need to try and score at least as many goals as

our main rival, [Chinese] Taipei," he added.

Although Kumada's side downed India, he was impressed with the progress the side has made.

"They were wonderful. We made a lot of mistakes," he said.

"But we didn't concede any goals because our defence was good and the goalkeeper played well."

And while Myanmar won the match, India had the better of possession and played an attacking brand of football that left the defenders under constant pressure.

However, Myanmar's strikers took the chances that came their way, with NawArlo Waa Phaw shooting from dis-

tance in the sixth minute and scoring.

India nearly equalised in the 22nd minute when India's striker went one-on-one against goalkeeper Thin Thin Soe but could not find the net.

From the resulting counterattack Yi Yi Oo unleashed another shot, only to see it hit the bar.

But on 26 minutes Khin Moe Wei dribbled through the Indian defence and shot accurately to the left of India's keeper to double the advantage.

In the second half Kumada changed the formation and benched key players Than Than Htwe, NawArlo Waa Phaw and Phu Pwint Khaine. However, bringing on new legs did not help the side add to the scoreline.

Disabled basketball team set for regional games

KYAW ZIN HLAING

kyawzinhlaing91@gmail.com

MYANMAR will field a team to contest the disabled basketball competition at the 7th Southeast Asian Paralympic Games in January, which will be hosted by Myanmar.

A 12-member team is training at the South Dagon indoor sports stadium in preparation for the

January 14-20 competition, and will later train with other national sides to gain experience, said the team's coach.

"This tournament is very good for disabled players and it will boost their morale to play some international matches," said the team's coach, Aung Myo Myint.

The 7th Southeast Asian Paralympic Games will bring together the 10 members of ASEAN to contest

12 categories, including athletics, swimming, table tennis, football, basketball, volleyball, chess and other events.

Aung Myo Myint said Thailand and Malaysia are likely to be the dominant nations in the competition.

Myanmar's Disabled Sports Federation hopes to better its sixth-place finish during the previous games in Indonesia in 2011.



Clockwise from left: Manchester United's new head coach David Moyes, ousted Manchester City coach Roberto Mancini, retiring Manchester United coach Alex Ferguson, former Real Madrid coach Jose Mourinho. Photo: AP

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Sport

Women's football squad opens Asian Cup with a win

SPORT 62

BRIEFS

Sydney

Brad McGee to coach elite Aussie road cycling

Former Tour de France stage winner and yellow jersey holder Brad McGee will share the national coaching role previously held by Matt White in Australian cycling.

Cycling Australia said May 20 that McGee will run the national elite men's road team at the world titles, the Olympics and Commonwealth Games.

Brian Stephens, based in Austria, will take on the role of coordinator for the large number of Europea-based male Australian riders.

Boston

The 50th Super Bowl goes to San Francisco Bay Area

The 50th Super Bowl will be held in the San Francisco Bay Area.

NFL owners voted May 21 for the 49ers' new stadium as host of the 2016 game. That facility in Santa Clara, California, is due to open for the 2014 season.

The 2017 Super Bowl will be held in Houston, which also beat Miami for that game.



Manchester United. Photo: AP

London

Man United earns EPL-record US\$93M from broadcasters

Manchester United earned a record 60.8 million pounds (US\$92.7 million) in Premier League television revenue this season en route to a 20th English title.

Deposed champion Manchester City, which finished 11 points behind United in second, received 58.1 million pounds (US\$88.6 million), according to figures released by the league on last week.

Even finishing last was lucrative, with Queens Park Rangers returning to the second tier after earning 39.8 million pounds (\$60.6 million) from TV companies. - AP

NEW YORK

Pinstripes on the pitch

Man City, NY Yankees establishing MLS team

MANCHESTER City and the New York Yankees have joined forces to establish a US\$100 million Major League Soccer team.

New York City Football Club will be the MLS's 20th team and is set to start playing from the 2015 season.

"This is not a marketing gimmick," City chief executive Ferran Soriano said in a conference call on May 21. "This is about developing a team that will play very good football and will have a chance to win."

City, which is owned by Sheik Mansour bin Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan of Abu Dhabi, will be the majority owner of the team.

The venture is being launched by City amid difficulties in England after the team failed to win a trophy in the 2012-13 season, leading to manager Roberto Mancini being fired.

Soriano said it wasn't a mistake to award Mancini a new five-year contract after City won the Premier League title in May 2012, ending the team's 44-year English title drought.

"We don't think we are under any instability," Soriano said. "We are changing the manager as it happens in other clubs. We feel confident that we will have a good manager and a very good team next year. And I don't think anybody made a mistake on this. It's just, as normally as it happens in football, time to change for the good."

City is in need of new revenue streams to help comply with UEFA's Financial Fair Play rules, which are designed to curtail over-spending by wealthy owners and require clubs to eventually break even on football-related activities.

But heavy spending led to City losing 90 million pounds (\$137 million) in the 2011-12 financial year with transfer fees since the club entered Abu Dhabi ownership

in 2008 went beyond 580 million pounds (\$880 million).

"This obviously has nothing to do with Financial Fair Play," Soriano said.

"So we don't have any problem with the Financial Fair Play rules, and the New York team has nothing to do with it."

There is a chance the New York club will serve as a feeder team for City, while young players unable to break into the

'The Red Bulls now will have a rival here in the market providing them with that derby-like competition that is such a driver of what makes football so successful around the world.'

Don Garber

MLS Commissioner

Premier League squad could be loaned the other way.

"I think naturally it will happen, that some Manchester players will end up playing in New York," Soriano said.

Yankees President Randy Levine will be the lead executive responsible for launching the club.

"They'll be running all the soccer," Levine said. "We know our way around New York, how to get things done."

The expansion fee for the new team is \$100 million. It will compete for attention, and dollars, with 10 other professional major sports teams in the New York market.

NYC FC will start play at an interim venue with one option being the New Yankee Stadium, which opened in 2009.

The venue hosted its first two football matches last year and is the site of a friendly on May 25 between City and Chelsea. The original Yankee Stadium was the home of the North American Soccer League's New York Cosmos in 1976.

The new team is intended to spark a rivalry with the New York Red Bulls, who play in Harrison, New Jersey.

"The Red Bulls now will have a rival here in the market providing them with that derby-like competition that is such a driver of what makes football so successful around the world," said MLS Commissioner Don Garber, calling the addition of a second New York team a "big transformational event."

The Yankees have long been exploring football deals. A partnership with Manchester United was announced in 2001, but that turned into a now-expired licensing and broadcasting agreement. The Yankees' YES Network has broadcast Arsenal games on a delayed basis since October 2010.

Legends Hospitality, co-owned by the Yankees, Dallas Cowboys and Checketts Partners Investment Fund, takes over hospitality and catering at Manchester City's Etihad Stadium next season.

With the decision completed on team No. 20, MLS can turn attention to No. 21.

Former Los Angeles Galaxy star David Beckham, who plays his final game this weekend before retiring, has an option to buy an MLS expansion team at below cost. Miami appears to be a possible market. - AP



IN PICTURES

Robbed:

Milwaukee Brewers left fielder Ryan Braun leaps a to catch a ball hit by Los Angeles Dodgers' Adrian Gonzalez preventing a home run on May 22 in Milwaukee.

Photo: AP



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