

President U Thein Sein leaves for the United States to pay a working visit

YANGON, 17 May— President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Thein Sein left for the United States of America this evening to pay a working visit there.

The President and party were seen off by Yangon Region Chief Minister U Myint Swe and senior military and civilian officers at Yangon International

Airport.

The President was accompanied by Union Ministers Lt-Gen Ko Ko, Lt-Gen Wai Lwin, U Wunna Maung Lwin, U Soe Thane and U Than Htay, Deputy Ministers U Thant Kyaw, U Ye Htut, Dr Pwint Hsan, Dr Myo Myint, Dr Thein Htay and officials concerned.

MNA



President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Thein Sein holds talks with President of the United States of America Mr Barak Obama at Yangon Region Hluttaw on 19 November, 2012.

(FILE PHOTO)

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Silted creeks dredged in Bago District for prevention of floods

Floods hit farmlands at rural areas of Bago, Waw, Thanatpin, Kawa, DaikU, Nyaunglebin, Shwegyin and Kyaukdaga townships of Bago District in Bago Region in the rainy season when there would be heavy rainfalls. In the time of the new government, preparations are being made for overcoming the danger of floods that occur in early- and mid-rainy season periods.

Construction (6) of Irrigation Department was dredging of creeks and drains from 1 February to 18 April. Before the dredging tasks, Kawliya Creek in DaikU Township,

*Byline: Peinzalok Thein Nyunt
Photo: Yan Aung Tun (Peinzalok)*

which is 90 feet wide, eight feet deep and 13.5 miles long, reduced storage of water due to silting. Both banks caused landslides which is one of the facts to silt the creek. In consequence, the creek could not store adequate volume of water.

That is why the department dredged the 90 feet wide, eight feet deep and 11 miles long Khamon-Myitkyo drain between DaikU and Waw townships and Kyaikhtaw Palai drain in Waw Township.

Moreover, Aington Creek that originates from Bago mountain range flows in Kyaukdaga Township. At present, the creek is 25 feet wide and three feet deep only. When torrent flows down, the creek flooded farmlands and villages on its both sides and destroyed them with water and silt. Therefore the local farmers faced social and economic losses. That is why the department dredged Aington Creek to become 40 feet wide, four feet deep and 32000 feet long one.

In fact, dredging the creeks and drains in pre-monsoon period benefit the people preventing floods at farmlands and residences and ensuring better cultivation tasks.

Myanma Alinn: 8-5-2013

Trs: TTA



Statement by the Press Secretary on the visit of President U Thein Sein



YANGON, 17 May—The White House Office of Press Secretary of the US released a statement on the visit of President U Thein Sein of Myanmar to the White House on 15 May.

The Statement said that President Obama will welcome His Excellency President U Thein Sein to the White House on Monday, May 20, 2013. Since President Obama's historic trip to Yangon last November, the United States has continued to advocate for continued progress on reform by President U Thein Sein's government, in close cooperation with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, civil society leaders, and the international community. The President looks forward to discussing with President U Thein Sein the many remaining challenges to efforts to develop democracy, address communal and ethnic tensions, and bring economic opportunity to the people of his country, and to exploring how the United States can help.

President U Thein Sein's visit underscores President Obama's commitment to supporting and assisting those governments that make the important decision to embrace reform, and highlights the dedication of the United States to helping the Myanmar people realize the full potential of their extraordinary country.—MNA

Accident

Headlong plunge of speedy truck from Thiri Mingalar bridge in Sagaing



SAGAING, 17 May— A truck plummeted off Sagaing Thiri Mingalar bridge at about 8 am on 15 May. When the truck driven from Mandalay skidded out of control, the vehicle ended up crashing into barriers on the opposite lane at speed

and plunged headlong to the ground at the base of the bridge. No loss of lives and property damage were reported.

Kyemon

IWT's ferry service in regular operation



YANGON, 17 May— For the convenience of the public, Pansodan-Dala ferry service run by Delta Region branch of Inland Water Transport was in regular operation amid possible dangers of storm.

“Ferry crossings have reached 46 a day. The ferry departs from Pansodan jetty at 5.30 am and so does from Dalla at the same time.

Ferry service ended at 9.30 pm on Pansodan side and 9 pm on Dala side,” says Manager U Sann Tun. Ferry fare has doubled from K 50 to K 100 as of 28 April. Five ferry lines are running Pansodan-Dala, Yangon-Hsarpachaung (Thida), Yangon-Khanaungto, Wadan-Seikkyi, and Wadan-Dala ferry routes, according to Inland Water Transport.

Kyemon

Seizures of illegal teak and hardwood in Sagaing, Magway and Ayeyawady Regions

SAGAING, 17 May —Staff of Forest Departments in Sagaing, Magway and Ayeyawady Regions performed anti-illegal timber logging and smuggling operations in their respective townships, confiscating illegal teak, hardwood and charcoal at separate places recently.

Forest staff seized ownerless 1.7453 tons of teak, sawmill engine and related devices at a place, two-mile from Tonhe Village in Homalin Township, 1.508 tons of teak and 3.518 tons of ironwood at a place in Kyarbin reserved forest in Kalewa Township, 5.7201 tons of hardwood at block No (107) in Maingwun

reserved forest in Kyunhla Township, 1.545 tons of teak at a place near Yaydaw Village in Shwebo Township, 0.4916 ton of hardwood near mile post No (49/2) on Monywa-Yargyi-Kalewa motorway in Kani Township and 19.2 tons of charcoal at block No (13) in Phatsut reserved forest in Indaw Township respectively. They also arrested illegal loggers together with 2.3982 tons of hardwood at block No (13) in Pinhtaung reserved forest in Kani Township.

In Magway Region, forest staff confiscated ownerless 3.872 tons of illegal teak and hardwood in Yebyu protected forest in Pauk Township and

Crime News

intercepted a vehicle carrying 0.4026 tons of illegal teak with an arrest of a suspect near Hsin-myu-aung Village on Koebin-Thagara road in Hsinbaungwe Township.

In Ayeyawady Region, forest staff carried out seizure of 49.9736 tons of illegal teak and hardwood at separate places in Patheingyi Township.— Kyemon

Two-digit banker faces arrest in Sagaing Township

SAGAING, 17 May — A dealer in two-digit gambling was arrested after a tip-off to police at north Minkun ward in Sagaing Township.

While Police sub-inspector Tin Maung Aye and party raided the residence of Daw Khin Soe Yi at the

Odd News

YANGON, 17 May — A man who has suffered partial paralysis was attacked by a swarm of wasps at No (143) on Min Ye Kyaw Swa street in Lanmadaw Township, here, at about 4.30 pm on 13 May.

U Saw Ba Tint (a) U Tar Ta was taken to Yangon West District Hospital soon after he was stung dozens of times by flocks of wasps, but he was pronounced dead in the hospital at about 4 am the following day.

The fatal incident is said to have started after taking a swap at a wasp buzzing near his face when he was having a walk in the compound. As other wasps went out and joined in a frenzied attack on him, stinging on every part of his body, he fell down to the ground and shouted for help. Ko Ba Latt and Ko Sann Shine rushed to take him out of the scene. But

Man dies of wasp stings in downtown Yangon

they were forced to run away by wasp stings. Next, passers-by attended and the victim was sent to the hospital.

As Ko Ba Latt and Ko Sann Shine had got wasp stings while trying to help the victim, their heads, arms and face were horribly swollen. Ko Sann Shine is

being treated at the hospital as wasp stings caused high temperature, insomnia and urinary problem to him. One day after the tragic incident had happened, health staff and YCDC workers carried out spraying of insecticide in the neighborhood of the accident-hit area.— Kyemon



Rusty wartime bomb unearthed in railway yard

YANGON, 17 May— A rusty bomb thought to be from wartime was unearthed while digging a latrine pit in the railway yard in west

Gyotkon ward in Insein Township at about 1 pm on 14 May.

Than Hlaing who was digging a latrine pit at the

backyard of the house of Zarni in the yard discovered the bomb which is caked in full of rust and he informed the police. The unearthed rusty ordnance is 13.75 inches in length and 10.5 inches in girth and its top part is two inches in diameter. Officials of No (905) Field Engineer Battalion rushed there and made careful examination that showed the bomb is harmless to the public.— Kyemon



Middle-aged woman with history of mental illness hanged herself in Labutta Township

LABUTTA, 17 May — A middle-aged woman who has history of mental illness had committed suicide by hanging herself at home in ward-3 in Kanbat Village of Labutta Township on 11 May.

As police was informed of her death by the Kanbat village administrator on that

day, they rushed there and made necessary investigations. According to witnesses, Daw Kyu Mar Zin, 40, was found dead hanging herself in the house. She had received a medical treatment at Yangon General Hospital for her mental illness five years ago.

As there were no signs of foul play, police ruled her death apparently suicide.

Kanbat police station opened a case and further investigations are ongoing to know whether or not there is third party hand in the case.— Kyemon

Haul of tramadol capsules seized in Tachilek

TACHILEK, 17 May — A combined police force seized 52 cartons of 50mg Tramadol Hydrochlorides, which have 25 plastic cards of 10 capsules capacity each while conducting a search of Sai Lon Sai, 42, on a battery-powered bicycle at the checkpoint near No (1) Friendship Bridge in Tachilek

of Shan State (South) at about 9 am on 10 May.

Next, police members raided Kengtung drug store owned by the suspect and they discovered 37,300 tramadol capsules weighing 1.865 kilos. Action was being taken against Sai Lon Sai for possession of narcotic drugs.

Kyemon

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WORLD

Obama says US diplomatic, military options remain open in Syria crisis



US President Barack Obama (R) and Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan hold a joint news conference in the White House Rose Garden in Washington, on 16 May, 2013.—REUTERS

WASHINGTON, 17 May—President Barack Obama said on Thursday he reserves the right to resort to a range of diplomatic and military options if he gets conclusive proof that the government of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad had used chemical weapons in the country's civil war.

Obama, at a joint news conference with Turkish Prime Minister Tayyip Erdogan, said there was evidence of chemical weapons use in Syria but that it is important to get "more specific information" to confirm this before deciding how to

respond. Erdogan had been expected to push Obama, at least in private, for more assertive action on Syria during a visit to Washington this week, days after car bombs tore through a Turkish border town in the deadliest spillover of violence yet.

But the two leaders showed no sign of friction in their appearance in the White House Rose Garden and sought to project a united front on Syria.

Obama—who has been reluctant to arm Syrian rebels or become enmeshed militarily in the two-year-old conflict—expressed hope that the United States and Russia would succeed in arranging a peace conference that would produce results.

But Obama, who had

insisted chemical weapons use would be a "game changer," made clear, however, that Washington was keeping all options on the table, though he did not provide specifics.

"There are a whole range of options that the United States is already engaged in," he told reporters. "And I preserve the options of taking additional steps, both diplomatic and military, because those chemical weapons inside of Syria also threaten our security over the long term as well as our allies and friends and neighbours." Erdogan said Turkey was in "full consensus" with the United States on the need to end the bloodshed in Syria and for a political transition to a government without Assad.

Reuters

US conducts successful missile defence test

WASHINGTON, 17 May—The US military conducted a missile defence test on Wednesday night, with an interceptor missile successfully intercepting and destroying a short-range target missile over the Pacific Ocean, the Department of Defence announced on Thursday.

The target missile was launched from the Pacific Missile Range Facility on Kauai, Hawaii, and flew northwest toward a broad ocean area of the Pacific, according to the department's Missile Defence Agency. Following target launch, the *USS Lake Erie* detected and tracked the missile with its onboard radar. The ship, equipped with the second-generation Aegis Ballistic Missile Defence weapon system, developed a fire control solu-

tion and launched an *SM-3 Block IB* missile, the agency said in a statement.

The *SM-3* maneuvered to a point in space based on guidance from the ship's Aegis system and released its kinetic warhead. The kinetic warhead destroyed the target in a "hit-to-kill" intercept using force of a direct impact, said the agency.

"Initial indications are that all components performed as designed," it added. It noted that this test exercised the latest version of the second-generation Aegis system and standard missile, providing capability for engagement of longer-range and more sophisticated ballistic missiles.

The test is the 25th successful intercept in 31 flight test attempts for the Aegis programme since flight testing began in 2002.—Xinhua

Nine injured including five Japanese in Nepal plane crash

KATHMANDU, 17 May—A small chartered plane crashed in a mountainous district in western Nepal on Thursday, and all 22 on board survived with nine, including five Japanese tourists, suffering injuries, according to a district official and the Japanese Foreign Ministry.

While trying to land at Jomsom airstrip in Mustang District 250 kilometres northwest of Kathmandu, the *Twin Otter* aircraft overran the tarmac and plunged into the nearby Kaligandaki River around 8:30 am, Laxmi Raj Sharma, the district's chief government administrator, told *Kyodo News* by telephone.

A total of eight Japanese tourists—seven women and one man aged between 58 and 65—were aboard the plane, heading for a trekking tour in Mustang.

According to the Japanese Foreign Ministry, all eight were later transported to the Kathmandu to undergo

examinations at a hospital in the capital, which revealed that five of the women suffered fractures. One of them is currently being treated in an intensive care unit at the hospital but is conscious, according to the ministry.

A staffer of the Japanese Embassy in Kathmandu has been posted at the hospital to provide assistance to them.

Sharma earlier said that in addition to the Japanese tourists, the plane's pilot, co-pilot, and cabin attendant also suffered serious injuries. Details regarding their injuries were not immediately available.

After the crash, the injured were initially flown by helicopters to the tourist city of Pokhara for treatment at a hospital there, before being taken to Kathmandu in the afternoon. The Japanese tourist group arrived in Nepal on 14 May for a 12-day trip to the famous Muktinath temple in Mustang District.

Kyodo News



Firefighters work at the fire accident site in Manila, the Philippines, on 16 May, 2013. Two people were rescued from the fire, as firefighters estimate the fire may last for two days.—XINHUA



Dealers from across the world visit the newly opened Taizhou Global Commodity Purchasing Centre in Taizhou City, east China's Jiangsu Province, on 16 May, 2013. The centre, with a total investment of 200 million RMB yuan (about 32 million dollars), opened here on Friday and will provide services mainly to eastern China Provinces of Jiangsu, Shandong and Anhui.—XINHUA

Six killed in fresh mortar attacks in Syrian capital

DAMASCUS, 17 May—Six people were killed on Thursday when armed groups fired mortar shells at a suburb of the Syrian capital Damascus in clashes between rebels and government troops in the vicinity of a central prison in the northern city of Aleppo, the state media said.

Mortar shells fired by rebels killed six people and injured 37 others at the suburb of Jaramana, some 10 kilometres southeast of Damascus, local media said.

Jaramana, a suburb dominated by Druze and Christians, has been a target of mortars and explosions that have killed tens of peo-

ple since last year. It's also known of being loyal to the current administration in Syria.

In the northern city of Aleppo, a military source was cited by the state media as confirming that the government troops repelled on Thursday armed rebels' attack on the city's central prison, killing many rebels and destroying their machineries.

The oppositional Syrian Observatory for Human Rights also confirmed the fighting at the central prison of Aleppo, saying that the troops repelled the rebels' attack.

Separate reports specu-

lated that the rebels were trying to storm the prison in the hope of freeing prisoners whose affiliations are unknown.

Also in Aleppo, the Observatory said that seven rebels were killed and more than 16 injured during violent clashes with government forces around the town of Khan al-Asal.

The Britain-based watchdog also posted a video footage purporting to show members of al-Qaeda-linked Nusra Front publicly executing 11 men in a square of the oil-rich city of Deir al-Zour in eastern Syria.

Xinhua

S Africa, Europe seek closer parliament cooperation

CAPE TOWN, 17 May—The South African Parliament said on Thursday that an agreement has been reached with the European Parliament to further cooperation and to ensure that international agreements are value-based and serve the interests of the people.

The South African Parliament made the statement following a visit by European Parliament President Martin Schulz, his first to the country.

The economic and political future of the world depends on regional cooperation and multilateral relations between countries, Schulz noted at a bilateral meeting with Speaker of the South African National Assembly Max Sisulu and Chairperson of the National Council of Provinces Mninwa Mahlangu. "As a continent, we attach enormous importance to our partnership with South Africa, the Southern Africa region and the continent of Africa," Schulz said. "The European Union is not only interested to keep your confidence, but we are more interested to fight to restore your confidence." Schulz said they intend to give even more attention to the relationship between Europe and South Africa with a view to improving the collaborative arrangement even more.—Xinhua

JANA Partners reveals stakes in Zynga, Groupon



Player avatars from Zynga's FarmVille 2 are seen on a stairway at the entrance to Zynga headquarters in San Francisco, California on 23 April, 2013.—REUTERS

BOSTON, 17 May—JANA Partners, a leading activist hedge fund firm run by Barry Rosenstein, has taken a liking to two of the most beaten-up technology stocks.

JANA, which oversees more than \$4 billion in US stock holdings, disclosed stakes of 24.6 million Zynga Inc class A shares and 21.9 million Groupon Inc class A shares in regulatory filings on Wednesday. The positions represent just over 3 percent of the companies' outstanding shares. The Groupon stake was worth \$134 million as of the end of March, while the Zynga holding was valued

at \$86 million, according to the filings.

Zynga shares rose 1.6 percent to \$3.39 in afternoon trading, after gaining more than 7 percent earlier in the day. Groupon edged up 1.2 percent to \$6.97, after achieving a nine-month high of \$7.38 earlier on Wednesday.

Groupon, the world's largest daily deal company, and Zynga, a leading social game developer, went public in 2011 at lofty valuations, but their share prices have slumped since then amid concern about slowing growth at both companies.

Zynga's initial public offering priced at \$10, while

Groupon's priced at \$20.

JANA Partners, which often pressures the companies it invests in to change their business strategies or sell themselves, released its so-called 13-F filing Wednesday, which describes which US stocks it owned at the end of the first quarter of 2013.

During the first quarter, the JANA Partners fund was up 6.1 percent. A spokesman for JANA declined to comment. JANA's stakes are likely to be passive investments because Zynga and Groupon have dual-class share structures that give management tight control of the companies.—Reuters

Mars bombarded by over 200 space rocks per year: NASA

WASHINGTON, 17 May—Scientists have estimated that Mars is bombarded by more than 200 small asteroids or bits of comets per year forming craters at least 3.9 metres across, US space agency NASA said on Wednesday.

It said these asteroids or comet fragments typically are no more than 1 to 2 metres in diameter, too small to reach the ground on Earth. These space rocks cause craters on Mars because the Red Planet has a much thinner atmosphere.

"It's exciting to find

Rocket blasts off from Florida carrying new GPS satellite

CAPE CANAVERAL, 17 May—An unmanned Atlas rocket blasted off from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station on Wednesday to deliver an upgraded global positioning system satellite into orbit.

The 189-foot (58-metre) tall rocket, built and launched by United Launch Alliance, a partnership of Boeing and Lockheed Martin, soared into blue skies over Florida's east coast at 5:38 pm EDT.

Perched on top of the rocket was a 3,400-pound (1,542 kg) Boeing-built GPS 2F satellite, the fourth

of 12 upgraded spacecraft expected to be added to the orbiting constellation over the next several years.

"It's a big moment for all of us," Travis Pond, a lieutenant with the US Air Force 45th Space Wing at Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, said during a United Launch Alliance launch webcast. The navigation satellites are used by the US military and allies, as well as millions of civilians. The upgraded versions offer greater accuracy, enhanced internal atomic clocks, better

protection against signal jamming and a new signal for commercial aviation. The satellite, which cost about \$121 million, will replace a spacecraft launched in 1996 that already is twice past its design lifetime. That satellite will be repositioned for use as a spare. With Wednesday's launch, the GPS network will include 31 operational satellites in orbit. The next GPS launch is slated for October aboard a United Launch Alliance Delta rocket from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station.—Reuters

these new craters right after they form," said Ingrid Daubar of the University of Arizona, Tucson, lead author of the paper published online in the journal *Icarus*. "It reminds you Mars is an active planet, and we can study processes that are happening today."

According to NASA, researchers have identified 248 new impact sites on parts of the Martian surface over the past decade, using images from the Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter to determine when the craters appeared.

The 200-per-year

planetwide estimate is a calculation based on the number found in a systematic survey of a portion of the planet, it said, adding that earlier estimates pegged the cratering rate at three to 10 times more craters per year.

Xinhua



National Weather Service gets big computing boost

MIAMI, 17 May—The US National Weather Service is getting a quantum jump in computing power that will significantly improve its forecasting and storm tracking abilities to better protect the country from severe weather.

"This is a game changer," Louis Uccellini, who took over as director of the National Weather Service in February, told Reuters in an interview, calling it "the biggest increase in operational capacity that we've ever had."

The Weather Service's global and national weather prediction efforts have long been hampered by aging technology and a lack of computer power to support day-to-day operations. But Uccellini said that was all due to change through upgrades of its IBM system that will give it more than 25 times the computer power it has today.

Over the next two years, the results should be apparent through enhancements across the whole range of products and services the Weather Service produces, focusing on everything from routine weather to tornadoes

and hurricanes to floods, droughts and blizzards.

With the US economy vulnerable to severe weather events that can cost billions of dollars a year, the boost in computing power is sure to come as good news to many,



especially given concerns that climate change is fueling more extreme weather.

That includes millions of people living in hurricane danger zones and US oil and gas producers in the Gulf of Mexico, which is frequently threatened by tropical cyclones.

The Gulf accounts for about 20 percent of US oil production. About 30 percent of US natural gas processing plant capacity and 40 percent of the country's refining capacity is concentrated on the Gulf Coast.

A primary IBM machine in Reston, Virginia, and an auxiliary computer in Orlando, Florida, both will be getting the upgrades, which were largely made possible through \$25 million in funding from the "Hurricane Sandy supplemental" bill recently approved by

Congress, Uccellini said.

He spoke from the Weather Service's headquarters in Silver Spring, Maryland, on the eve of a report issued by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric

NOAA's GOES-13 satellite image taken on 9 Feb, 2013 at 7:01 am EST (1200 GMT) shows two low pressure systems that came together and formed a giant nor'easter centered right over New England creating blizzards from Massachusetts to New York.

REUTERS

Administration (NOAA) on Wednesday about its performance up to and during Hurricane Sandy last year.

The Weather Service is a branch of NOAA, which is part of the US Department of Commerce.

Reuters

Newegg, Overstock win patent fight with Alcatel-Lucent

WASHINGTON, 17 May—The online shopping sites Newegg and Overstock Inc won a patent battle on Wednesday with telecom equipment maker Alcatel-Lucent SA, which had accused the companies of infringing its patented technology.

The US Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit, which hears all patent appeals, upheld a lower court decision which found that Newegg and Overstock did not infringe on a software patent that allows computers to adapt the shopping web sites to their own screen size rather than having a server do the work. The lower court

had invalidated the patent as obvious, a decision that the federal circuit also upheld.

Newegg's chief legal officer, Lee Cheng, said the ruling vindicated a decision made about six years ago to fight infringement lawsuits that Newegg found frivolous. "Patent trolling is a scam. We didn't do anything wrong," he said, using the derisive industry term for companies that file large numbers of patent infringement lawsuits. Cheng said that fewer infringement lawsuits were being filed against his company because they have been aggressive about fighting them and about recouping legal fees.

Reuters



Visitors walk at the Alcatel-Lucent booth at the Mobile World Congress in Barcelona.—REUTERS

BUSINESS & HEALTH

Prospects improve for UK sale of Lloyds stake



Global economic recovery losing momentum: Moody's

LONDON, 17 May—Global economic recovery has lost momentum over the past three months, with several economies still facing significant challenges and are unlikely to resume “normal” growth rates soon, the investors service of international credit rating agency Moody's said on Wednesday.

In a report titled “Update to Global Macro Outlook 2013-14: Loss of Momentum,” Moody's expected the euro area economy to experience a deeper and lengthier recession than previously thought, while the US sequestration cuts would weigh on the recovery momentum visible in the private sector.

According to flash estimates released by Eurostat, the 27-member

EU will see its GDP fell by 0.1 percent in the EU27 in the first quarter of 2013. The euro area economy, meanwhile, will also shrink by 0.2 percent.

Moody's said some major emerging market economies also faced challenges in spurring investment growth to drive sustainable increases in national income. Overall, the rating agency expected the real GDP growth of developed economies in the G20 countries to stand at around 1.2 percent in 2013 followed by 1.9 percent in 2014.

The G20's emerging economies, however, could stand at around 5.5 percent in both 2013 and in 2014, which is somewhat weaker than Moody's February forecast.

Xinhua

EDINBURGH, 17 May—The chances of Britain selling its stake in Lloyds (LLOY.L) improved during 2012 and the government should be able to start offloading its shares “over time”, the bank's chairman told shareholders on Thursday.

Shares in Britain's biggest retail bank are closing in on the 61 pence level which the government regards as its break-even, raising hopes that a sale of its 39 percent shareholding could be imminent.

“2012 has been a year in which that possibility has been enhanced,” Win Bischoff said, presiding over the bank's annual meeting for the last time before he retires.

“We remain committed to operating as a wholly

privately owned group, which is profitable, self supporting and dividend paying,” he added.

Britain pumped 20.5 billion pounds into Lloyds and 45.5 billion euros into rival Royal Bank of Scotland (RBS.L) to keep them afloat during the financial crisis.

Industry and political sources have said the government hopes to start selling its stake in Lloyds before the next parliamentary election in 2015, a move seen as more realistic than selling down its 81 percent shareholding in Royal Bank of Scotland, where it is sitting on a paper loss of around 17 billion pounds

Shares in Lloyds hit a two-year high of 60.5 pence on Thursday. Royal Bank of

Scotland's stock was up 2.4 percent at 314 pence.

Lloyds is further ahead than Royal Bank of Scotland in the battle to slim down and de-risk in the aftermath of the financial crisis. The banks have shed hundreds of billions of pounds of assets

and axed tens of thousands of jobs to cut their dependence on state aid.

Royal Bank of Scotland said on Thursday it was cutting a further 1,400 jobs in the UK over the next two years.

Reuters



A sign from a branch of a Lloyds bank is reflected in a window in central London on 13 May, 2013.—REUTERS

Taipei banks' RMB deposits top 60 bln yuan

TAIPEI, 17 May—Outstanding renminbi-denominated deposits at financial units in Taiwan hit a record high of 60.26 billion yuan (9.72 billion US dollars) as of 15 May, the island's monetary authority said on Friday.

The figure represents a 54.5-percent surge from

the end of February and a 24.8-percent increase from the end of March.

Market analysts attributed the fast expansion in yuan deposits to the currency's steady appreciation and warming cross-strait economic ties.

According to a Standard Chartered report, Tai-

wan will accumulate a yuan-denominated fund pool of between 100 billion and 150 billion yuan by the end of 2013.

Taiwan's banking sector has been allowed to conduct yuan-denominated transactions, such as deposits, lending and remittances since 6 Feb, after a

cross-strait currency clearing mechanism was established.

The island is now the second major market after Hong Kong that is able to clear transactions in the yuan, as the Chinese mainland has stepped up efforts to foster the global use of the currency.—Xinhua

Wal-Mart profit misses Street as US sales weak

NEW YORK, 17 May—Wal-Mart Stores Inc's (WMT.N) quarterly profit just missed Wall Street expectations on Thursday, with sales down 1.4 percent at its Walmart US stores open at least a year.

The world's largest retailer said US sales suffered from a delay in income tax refund checks, cool weather, less grocery inflation than expected, and the payroll tax increase.

Shares of Wal-Mart fell 2.3 percent in premarket

trading to \$78. The stock had hit a new high of \$79.96 on Wednesday.

Wal-Mart earned \$3.78 billion, or \$1.14 per share, in the first quarter ended on 30 April, up from \$3.74 billion, or \$1.09 per share, a year earlier.

The analysts' average forecast was \$1.15 per share, according to Thomson Reuters I/B/E/S. In February, Wal-Mart had forecast a profit of \$1.11 to \$1.16 per share.

First-quarter revenue

rose 1 percent to \$114.19 billion.

Same-store sales at Walmart US fell 1.4 percent, while the company had earlier expected such sales to be about flat. Visits to Walmart US stores open at least a year fell 1.8 percent, while the average amount spent per visit rose 0.4 percent.

Wal-Mart forecast earnings of \$1.22 to \$1.27 per share for the current second quarter, up from \$1.18 a year earlier.

Reuters

China steps up inspection of meat trade after fake lamb scandal

BEIJING, 17 May—China has begun a crackdown on the sales of fake, diseased and tainted meat products after a series of scandals that have further dented public confidence in the food industry, the official Xinhua news agency said on Thursday.

It said the State Council, China's cabinet, recently ordered local government de-

partments to step up checks on meat and processed meat products, and carry out detailed inspections of rural factories, workshops and warehouses as well as private slaughterhouses.

“The current water-injected meat, fake beef and mutton, dead livestock and other types of toxic and hazardous meat has aroused

widespread concern,” said the report.

“Local governments at all levels should strengthen their organization and leadership, to severely crack down on fake beef and mutton and other illegal and criminal activities.”

Pork and poultry prices have suffered this year as a result of a series of food safety scandals, a bird flu outbreak and crackdown on expensive government banquets. China has long been plagued by poor food safety standards, but many of the recent scares have involved its meat trade.

Earlier this month, the police said it had uncovered a crime ring that passed off more than \$1 million in rat and small mammal meat as mutton.

It came after pictures of thousands of dead pigs dumped in rivers supplying Shanghai caused widespread outrage. A media report last year uncovered excessive levels of hormones and antiviral drugs in chicken meat supplied to KFC, whose parent company is Yum Brands, and McDonald's.—Reuters

Spanish regions reduce deficit in first quarter of 2013

MADRID, 17 May—Spain's Secretary of State for Budgets Marta Fernandez Curras welcomed the reduction in deficit of Spain's 17 autonomous communities on Thursday.

New data shows the deficit of Spain's regions reached 1.2 billion euros (1.5 billion US dollars) in the first quarter of 2013, equivalent to 0.12 percent of the country's GDP. Fernandez Curras described the result as “really satisfying,” despite the fact that the government was recently forced to raise its regional deficit forecasts to 1.2 percent from 0.7 percent for 2013. She highlighted efforts the regions

had made in cutting costs, which she said was positive in the face of the decision to be taken by the European Union on whether or not to allow Spain some breathing space in the reduction of the public deficit.

The EU is expected to allow Spain until the end of 2013 to reduce its deficit to 6.3 percent, which had originally been the target for 2012. “The European Union knows it cannot ask much more from Spain,” Fernandez Curras said. She conceded, however, that the country still possessed “imbalances that were produced years ago,” Curras said.—Xinhua



A man stands on a skateboard outside a Wal-Mart store in Williston, North Dakota on 13 March, 2013.—REUTERS

Moai statue from Chile set up in disaster-hit northeast Japan



Workers install a stone replica of a Moai human figure at a temporary shopping area in Minamisanriku, Miyagi Prefecture, on 16 May, 2013. Chile has sent the replica of an Easter Island statue as a present to the northeastern Japan town hit by the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake. —KYODO NEWS

SENDAI, 17 May—A moai statue from Chile's Easter Island that was presented to Japan as a gift in the wake of the March 2011 earthquake and tsunami

was erected on Thursday at a temporary shopping area in the town of Minamisanriku, Miyagi Prefecture, on the Pacific coast of northeastern Japan.

Workers spent about two hours putting up the statue, which weighs around 2 tons and is 3 metres high.

A 44-year-old official of the Minamisanriku town government who watched the installment said he hopes the statue will be seen by as many visitors as possible and that it will help promote the reconstruction of the town.

The town of Minamisanriku was damaged by a tsunami caused by a huge temblor that struck Chile in 1960. In 1991, the South American nation presented a moai statue to Minamisanriku as a gift to deepen friendship between the two countries. But the statue — which was crafted from stone from mainland Chile — was damaged by the tsunami that followed the magnitude 9.0 earthquake that devastated northeastern Japan on 11 March, 2011.

Chilean President Sebastian Pinera Echenique promised to give a new moai statue to the town. The statue, made of stone from Easter Island, reached Tokyo port by cargo vessel in December 2012 and was shown to viewers at exhibitions in Tokyo and Osaka before reaching Minamisanriku. —Kyodo News

Official expects surge in BP spill claims

NEW ORLEANS, 17 May—The deadline for claims against BP Plc in connection with the 2010 Gulf of Mexico oil spill is 11 months away, but the man responsible for paying the claims said on Thursday he is already bracing for a late surge in filings.

Patrick Juneau, a Lafayette, Louisiana attorney experienced in complex litigation, was named by US Judge Carl Barbier last year to oversee BP's settlement with the many individuals and firms who say they were harmed by the spill and its aftermath.

Of 165,877 claims filed as of 15 May, his office has found 40,970 eligible for payment, with a total value exceeding \$3.2 billion (2 billion pounds), he said, adding that the pace of filings from the five states covered by the settlement has picked up in recent months.

"It certainly wouldn't surprise me that we'd break the 200,000 mark," Juneau told Reuters. He said his office has been careful about evaluating

claims, and expressed frustration at a court challenge by BP to payments for economic losses to businesses harmed by the spill. The Deepwater Horizon Claims Administration headed by Juneau took over claims processing last spring from Kenneth Feinberg, who had already paid out \$6.6 billion under a claims process that pre-dated the settlement in April 2012. Juneau said that as the deadline for claims of 22 April, 2014, approaches, the pace is certain to pick up more. "It's happened in every case I've been involved in, and there's no

reason to believe it would be otherwise in this case," he said.

His New Orleans office now employs more than 1,000 people, and still needs more help to handle the load, he said, noting that some claims involve "huge business losses that require a ton of accounting analysis." Juneau expressed frustration over a complaint BP filed in Barbier's court in January, which alleged frivolous and "fictitious" claims were being paid because the administrator was misapplying a formula for calculating eligibility. —Reuters



Fire boat response crews battle the blazing remnants of the offshore oil rig Deepwater Horizon, off Louisiana, in this 21 April, 2010 file handout image. —REUTERS

OECD deputies name Japan as chair of OECD ministerial council

TOKYO, 17 May—Delegates of the member countries of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development on Thursday

unanimously approved Japan assuming the chairmanship of the OECD ministerial council for next year, the Foreign Ministry said.

Japan will become the chair of the top decision-making body of the Paris-based club of developed countries for the first time since 1978, and for the second time since joining the

group in 1964, the ministry said. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida expressed Japan's willingness to chair the council when OECD Secretary General Angel Gurría visited Tokyo last month.

The ministerial council for 2014 is to meet in early May. —Kyodo News

The cost of no sweatshops: South Africa struggles not to be Bangladesh

NEW CASTLE, (South Africa), 17 May — It's not luxurious, but Goldfinch Garments, the Chinese-owned South African factory where Sindisizwe Zwane works nine hours a day, is far from a sweatshop: the ventilation is decent, the lighting is good and basic safety measures are in place.

South Africa says its garment industry is better regulated and workers are better paid than in ultra low-cost Asian producers like Bangladesh, where the collapse of a factory killed more than 1,100 people last month. The ruling African National Congress (ANC) government, with close links to labour unions, wants to go further by enforcing a wage agreement that would guarantee Zwane and her co-workers

a raise.

But the garment industry has already lost three-quarters of its jobs in the past decade as cheaper imports have flooded the local market. Zwane, 28 and one of only two wage earners in a family of 14 people, fears that efforts to win her a raise could cost her livelihood.

"Of course I want more. I want a whole loaf of bread instead of the half I am getting. But half a loaf is better than nothing," said Zwane. "If I lose the job, we lose everything."

Zwane is one of about 250 workers at Goldfinch, one of a cluster of clothing factories in the hard-scrabble industrial town of Newcastle, 260 km (160 miles) southeast of Johannesburg.

Goldfinch is spartan but appears safe and clean.



People work on machines at a clothing factory at an industrial town of Newcastle, 260 km (162 miles) southeast of Johannesburg on 8 May, 2013. —REUTERS

The factory has rows of sewing machines where a workforce of mostly women spend hours stitching together clothes. Workers often bundle up on colder days and some cover their faces with cloth to protect them from dust. Zwane can earn as much as about \$220 per month, with her income depending on how many orders come in. The government-mandated minimum would guarantee her at least

\$238 a month regardless of how many orders the factory received. That compares with monthly minimums as low as \$38.50 in Bangladesh or \$80 in Cambodia.

The government argues that if industry is allowed to skirt centrally negotiated minimum wage rules, millions of black workers will become locked into a lifetime of cheap labour little different to apartheid.

Reuters

Russia, South Africa eye closer cooperation

MOSCOW, 17 May—Cooperation between Russia and South Africa has maintained good momentum and has promising prospects, President Vladimir Putin said on Thursday.

During a meeting with South African President Jacob Zuma in the Black Sea resort of Sochi, Putin said frequent high-level contacts between the two countries show their mutual trust and that "relations between our countries have bright prospects."

The Russian President added he was satisfied with economic ties between the two countries, as bilateral trade grew more than 66 percent in 2012 and 17 per-

cent in the first quarter of this year. Meanwhile, many Russian firms have entered the South African market while South African companies are starting up their operations successfully in Russia, Putin noted.

Zuma, for his part, praised the close ties between the two countries and agreed that South Africa and Russia have a lot in common.

As a member of the BRICS bloc which groups other leading emerging economies such as Brazil, Russia, India and China, South Africa intends to let the voice of Africa be heard by the world, Zuma said.

Xinhua

NATIONAL

Disaster

YeU storm-hit primary school yet to get repaired

YE U, 17 May—A Basic Education Primary School in Nabaung village in YeU-gon village-tract in YeU Township in Shwebo District of Sagaing Region was damaged badly by strong wind on 2 May.

The facility whose foundation was rooted out moved about three inches with walls ripped off.

The fence of the school was also destroyed.

The Township Development Affairs Committee could not approve the damages even beyond 24 hours of the destruction.

The School Board of Trustees and townelders found it hard to fund the repair. Local people voiced concerns over repair of the building before the school starts a new academic year in coming June.

Myanma Alinn



Building of Nabaung village Basic Education Primary School damaged by strong winds on 2 May. After a week, parents voiced concerns over opening of school at the start of academic year.

Deputy Minister visits fire station in Tachilek

TACHILEK, 17 May—Deputy Minister for Home Affairs Brig-Gen Kyaw Zan Myint on 14 May visited fire station in Tachilek.

He was conducted round the station by Tachilek District Deputy Commissioner U Thaug Tin Htway and Head of District Fire Services Department U Aung Kyaw Naing who briefed the deputy minister on preventive measures against possible fire outbreaks.

The deputy minister said Tachilek was a developed border town. The development of a town could not be brought about overnight, it could take a

decade to build up progress, he said.

A fire outbreak could reduce everything built for years to ashes in a blink, he warned, highlighting the importance of prevention against fire.

He called for extension of fire stations, auxillary fire brigades, and fire engines and for cooperation with the public members.

He also urged officials and firefighters to accomplish their duties with committed endeavours.

Deputy Minister for Home Affairs Brig-Gen Kyaw Zan Myint views display of fire extinguishers at Fire Station in Tachilek.



MEIKTILA, 17 May—Meiktila District Police Force warned that a breach of traffic rules might carry fines from K 30000 to K 100,000.

The traffic police force will continue to prosecute traffic rules violators in Meiktila, Thazi, Mahlaing, and Wundwin.

The district police force sent letters to township and district departments and ward/village-tract administrators, saying traffic rules violations would be handled more strictly.

Pamphlets on traffic rules have been distributed to car and motorbike drivers.

“It is good if they effectively take actions against violators,” said an departmental personnel in Meik-

Meiktila police to take a tough line on traffic rules violations



tila.

The source also called for actions against undisciplined parking of motor cars on the road and loading and unloading of passengers by buses.

Meiktila is a busy town where five motor roads from Yangon, Mandalay, Taunggyi, Myingyan, and Kyaukpadaung.

It accomodates more than 30,000 population and

has a large number of motorbikes.

Myanma Alinn

Basic commodity prices show signs of soaring

YANGON, 17 May—Prices of basic commodity such as rice and edible oil have signalled a rise in price in Yangon market.

The rice prices in countryside markets are also on the increase since early May. The price rise of rice is due to the increasing demand of rice for foreign exports and demands from the central Myanmar.

The price of an ordinary rice bag has hung at around K 14800 since 11 May. The price of highly graded rice is up to K 34000.

According to a merchant in Kyaunggon Township, the paddy price is soaring. The edible oil price was jumped up to K 1475 for one viss in Yangon market.

The price hike of imported oil is “strange”, said a oil dealer. The market price of imported oil was K 1475 since 11 April.

Myanma Alinn

HRD

Buddhist cultural course opened in Natmauk

NATMAUK, 17 May—Under aegis of Ywamon monastery’s residing monk U Indaka, Buddhist culture course was conducted in

Ywamon village in Natmauk Township in Magway Region.

The concluding ceremony of the course funded

by donors was held at the monastery on 12 May. The three-week course was from 23 April to 12 May.

Myanma Alinn



Midwifery course opened in Natmauk

NATMAUK, 17 May—Sponsored by Magway Region Government, a mid-wifery course was opened at the meeting hall of General Administration Department in Natmauk

Township of Magway Region on 13 May.

Township Administrator U Than Ko and Township Medical Officer Dr Win Htet Ko delivered speeches at the opening ceremony.

Pyithu Hluttaw Representative U Aung Kyaw Soe and Magway Region Hluttaw Representative U Nay Win provided trainees with stationery.

Myanma Alinn

He said that the firefighters who received honours for their performance and sacrifice conferred by the President should be

taken as examples.

He then visited advanced fire engines and other equipment.

Myanma Alinn

Villages in Yamethin to be electrified by solar energy

YAMETHIN, 17 May—Mandalay Region Electricity and Industry Minister Dr Myint Kyu, Region Hluttaw Representative U Kyaw Myint, Region Electrical Engineer Daw Aye Aye Min, Deputy Commissioner U Kyaw Kyaw Tun and officials of SPCG solar company made a field trip on 10 April to Ywadan station to observe possibility of solar electric supply system in the area.

They met residents and observed the site proposed for installation of solar energy facilities.

They also observed rice

and oil mills in the area.

Ywadan station is formed with 24 villages and holds 4000 households.

It has 21 monasteries, more than 20 schools and one hospital.

According to the proposed plan, 2 megawatt electricity will be produced from solar energy and supplied to the villages in the station.

Local people welcome and are hoping for solar electricity in the villages.

The region government is digging lakes for drinking water in the water-scare villages.

Myanma Alinn

PERSPECTIVES

Saturday, 18 May, 2013

Family

Everyone would know the difference between a house and a home. Without the ones who love you, care you and wait for your homecoming, and whom you love and you care, a house is as incomplete as a tree without leaves, lacking the liveliness.

However strong a man is, there are times he would need a shoulder or a hand or a few words like "everything gonna be alright", amid the twists and turns and ups and downs of human life. There comes the important role of the family.

The family is the basic unit of every society. Therefore, the rise and fall of a society greatly depends on the values and ethics present in our very home. There is a traditional saying that parents are the very first teacher of their offspring. In general, how they grow up or in what kind of environment they are brought up has a significant influence on the way they think and behave.

The traditional role of women as housewives has gone with the time along with the glass ceiling having increasingly shattered and as a result of global economic downturn. Consequently, parents of dual-earner families find it difficult to strike a balance between work and home obligations.

Though it would be a market boom for private kindergartens, there has risen a problem. A family is built on the foundation of mutual love, care, support and understanding, all of which needs time—to speak and listen to each other between family members—to get fostered. The number of single-parent families is on the increase in our country against the time-honoured tradition of marriage for life, making more children growing up with traumas.

While the advanced communication technologies and high-end communication devices have shortened the distance between the people, they somehow have lengthened the distance between family members who now pay more attention to their smart phones than their family members even when sitting together. But, never forget that it is your family who would stand by you whenever you are in trouble.



Deputy Minister for Energy U Htin Aung delivers an address at Offshore Technology Conference (OTC) in Houston in Texas of the USA.

MNA

NATIONAL

Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker meets Myanmar Engineering Society



Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann visits Myanmar Engineering Society in Hline Universities Campus.—MNA

YANGON, 17 May—Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann stressed the crucial role of engineers and technological advancement in national development as he met the chairman and members of Myanmar Engineering Society at its office in Hline Universities Campus in Hline Township here this noon.

The Speaker called modern technologies, industries and engineers preconditions precondition for national modernization, highlighting the instru-

mental role of engineers and technological advancement in national progress.

The bicameral parliament is trying to listen to the voice of the people not only at its sessions but also outside the parliament, said the Speaker who invited open discussions from the members of the engineering society to find out together the requirements of the engineering sector.

Yangon Region Electric Power and Industry Minister U Nyan Tun Oo extended greetings and Chairman of Myanmar En-

gineering Society U Win Khaing briefed the functions of the society before the attendees discussed miscellaneous matters.

Having listened to the opinions of those present, the Speaker admitted that some cases had been unknown to him, demanding some incomplete cases be completed. He called for promoting the old ones while building the new things.

Taking lessons from the past, things are to be improved with constructive approach rather than playing meaningless blame game, urged the Speaker to those present.

He promised parlia-

mentary actions for necessary engineering laws.

Present also were Pyithu Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U Nanda Kyaw Swa, Pyithu Hluttaw committee chairpersons Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, U Soe Tha, Thura U Aye Myint, U Htay Oo, U Maung Maung Thein, U Thein Zaw, U Thein Swe, Thura U Aung Ko, U Soe Naing, Dr Chan Nyein, U Htay Myint and committee secretaries, Yangon Region Electric Power and Industry Minister U Nyan Tun Oo, rectors, professors, instructors and students from technological universities.

MNA

Myanmar delegation attends Offshore Technology Conference (OTC) 2013

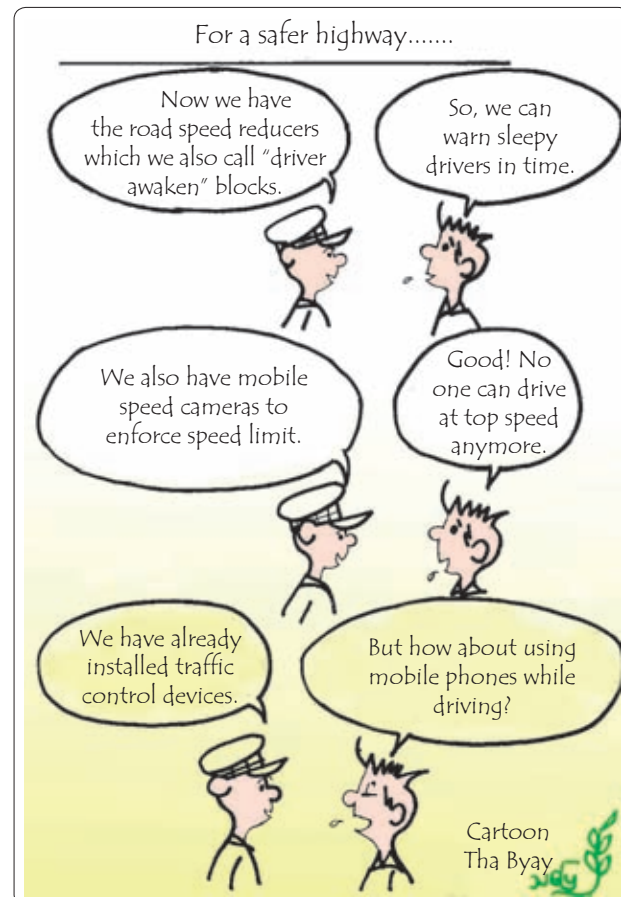
NAYPYITAW, 17 May—Myanmar delegation led by Deputy Minister for Energy U Htin Aung attended the industry breakfast of Offshore Technology Conference (OTC) 2013 at Reliant Park and Stadium in Houston in Texas of the United States of America on 9 May. They made clarifications on investment opportunities in gas and oil industry of Myanmar offshore, requirements for proposals of international bidding round 2013 for offshore and onshore blocks and investment opportunity of Myanmar Investment Law. They also looked round the booths of the petroleum companies.

On 10 May, Myanmar delegation discussed measures on drilling of wells in deepwater blocks and supervision from drilling

support centre, surveying and estimating for gas deposit and oil with the use of seismic technology and deepwater projects and development tasks of US-based Chevron Petroleum Co.

The deputy minister met Principle Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Energy Resources, Mr. Robert F Cekuta from US Department of State. They discussed proposals of US Government to assist the Ministry of Energy of Myanmar on Energy Governance and Capacity Initiative (EGCI), Medium & Long-Term Objectives for Oil and Gas Sector Capacity Building, Workshop on Competitive Building Procedure and Production Sharing Contract for Deepwater Exploration and Production.

MNA



Cartoon Tha Byay

LOCAL NEWS

Cash assistance for eye surgery

Health

YANGON, 17 May—Jointly organized by Yangon Region Women's Affairs Organization, Maternal and Child Welfare Supervisory Committee and District Health Department, a ceremony to donate cash assistance for doing eye surgery was held at the Eye Specialist Hospital on 15 May morning.

Patron of Region WAO Daw Khin Thet Htay made a speech.

The patron of Region WAO presented K 6.7 million to Eye Specialist Hospital Medical Superintendence Dr Ngwe San. He then spoke words of thanks.

They gave words of encouragement to 17 people



who had received eye surgical operations and presented cash assistance to patients.—MNA

Zichaung Power Plant to increase supply soon

KALAY, 17 May—To be able to increase power generation from Zichaung Hydropower Plant in Kalay Township in Upper Sagaing Region, the water storage lake of the power plant was dredged for three days from 8 to 10 May to store more water.

In addition, wooden and iron lamp-posts from Bandoola Statue at the junction of Kalay to the entrance to Kalewa Street township signboard with concrete ones in maintenance efforts of the power supply facilities.

The replacement of

decayed wooden lamp-posts between Kalay University and Taken (1) Transformer has so far been completed by 60 per cent and thus Zichaung Hydropower Plant would be able to generate more electric power soon.

Kyemon



Quality paddy seeds production course conducted in Dawei

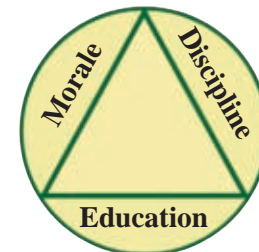
LAUNGLON, 17 May—A quality paddy seeds production course was held at Waidi Central farm of Seed Section under the Agriculture Department of Launglon Township in Dawei District, Taninthayi Region on 14 May.

Present at the ceremony were Heads of Township and Sub-townships, workers of Waidi farm, agriculturalist staff and demonstration teams.

They shared knowledge of good agriculture patterns, systematic cultivation and distribution ways of monsoon paddy.

Kyemon

Ministry of Education School Enrolment Week From (27) to (31) May



People to participate in enrolment of all school-going age children

Education

CCA course opened in Kalay

KALAY, 17 May—A ceremony of basic-level child-centered approach (CCA) course was opened at Basic Education High School No. 1 and 2 in Kalay Township on 12 May.

A total of 71 trainers from Kalay Township shared knowledge to 1049

teachers, headmasters and head-mistresses form 186 BEPSs and 13 monastic schools on 12 to 22 May.

The course was aimed at holding discussions between the teachers and the pupils, and another intermediate and advance CCA courses are underway.—Kyemon

Stake driven for building new primary school

KALAY, 17 May—A stake driven ceremony for construction of new primary school building was held at Thinbaw Village in Mingin Township of Sagaing Region on 14 May attended by Chairman of Township Management Committee U Nay Lin Tun, Township Education Officer U Han Ngwe and teachers, departmental personnel, team leaders and people.

The Chairman of Township Management

Committee in meeting with people said the education system has developed in the time of new government and the villages could grasp the chance in order to make efforts in education while the state is providing more education fund.

Also present at the ceremony were the staff officer of Township Forest Department and the executive officer of Township Development Affairs Committee.

Kyemon

Communication

People apply for low-priced SIM Card



YANGON, 17 May—People from Dagon Myothit (Seikkan) Township started to apply for low-priced SIM Card (CDMA 800 MHz) at Ward-94 Administration Office, here, yesterday. People are more interested in applying for low-priced

SIM Card than ever before. Those wishing to apply for may submit their application forms with CSC and household registration certificates to the Ward Administration Office, said 94-Ward Administrator U Aye Myint.—Kyemon

Agriculture

Over 2.3 million allocated for development fund in Kyaukpadaung

KYAUKPADAUNG, 17 May—Development fund raising ceremony of the Sakawahmyay agricultural production and odd-job workers supporting group of Kyaukpadaung Township, Mandalay Region took place at the township administration department yesterday.

On the occasion, a total of 0.3 per cent of the interest on the loans the group has provided was added to the development fund of the township.

Chairman of Sakawahmyay Foundation U Aung Kyi gave an opening speech.

Chairman of the Sakawahmyay agricultural production and odd-job workers supporting group U Thaug Nyunt gave an explanation about allocation of the interests for the development tasks of the township.

Next, a Sonekon villager spoke words of thanks for paying out the fund to the villages.

The ceremony came to an end with concluding remarks of the Sakawahmyay Foundation chairman.

A total of ten villages received over K 2.3 million for development fund.

Kyemon

Old lamp-posts replaced in West Shwesigon Ward



YAMETHIN, 17 May—Old lamp-posts were replaced with new concrete ones in West Shwesigon Ward in Yamethin Township yesterday and today. A total of ten lamp-posts were replaced along the number

of power lines increased from two to five in a two days' work.

Township electrical engineer U Kyi Win closely supervised the tasks which improved the quality of power supply.—Kyemon

Muse mine blast kills one

NAY PYI TAW, 17 May—There was a mine blast at the rubbish heap near the southwest fence of the township forest de-

partment's staff quarter in Homon Ward, Muse in Shan State (North) at 9.45 pm yesterday.

A man's body was



An unknown man killed by mine blast.

MNA



A packet of mine and its accessories.—MNA

found near the mine blast. He was apparently hit by the mine while attempting to set off the mine. Investigation into the case is under way.

Likewise, at 8.15 am today, Tatmadawmen and officials concerned from the township police force found

a mine that was attached to a fan near the eastern wall of the gymnasium in Christian Ward, Muse when they rushed to the scene soon after they were informed that there was something suspicious.

Finally, they could clear it.—MNA

Tatmadawmen send storm victims back homes

NAY PYI TAW, 17 May—The evacuees from Kyaukpyu, Pynphyumaw, Kanyintaw, Sarpyinkwin Villages were sent back to their homes by Tatmadawmen at 6 pm yesterday, as Mahasen cyclonic storm changed direction and weakened.

Likewise, a total of five monks and 388 people from 96 households from Maha Zeyar Theikdi Oath Monastery in Argyeiktaw

Hill in Sittway were sent back to Palinbyin Village, 445 people from 62 households, from Dhamma Yama Monastery in Kontan Ward of Sittway to Aungdai Village, 57 people from 15 households, from Ohntawlay relief camp in the local battalion of Sittway to their refugee camp, 152 people from Kanyintan Village BEPS and 263 from 4th Mile BEMS to their respective homes.—MNA



Tatmadawmen giving a helping hand to storm victims heading to their homes.—MNA

WORLD

Number of Internet, cell phone users soars in Brazil

RIO DE JANEIRO, 17 May—The number of internet and cell phone users in Brazil has significantly increased since 2005 as more people from the middle and low classes have got access to them, official statistics showed on Thursday.

The tally of internet users rose 143.8 percent to 77.7 million from 2005 to 2011, and the number

of cell phone owners rose 107.2 percent to 115.4 million, the country's statistics agency IBGE said.

Internet access increased in all income brackets, especially among poor people, IBGE said. In the less developed northern and northeastern regions, internet access did not reach a tenth of the population in 2005, but increased to a

third in 2011. The highest shares of internet users are found among teens aged 15-17 (74.1 percent) and aged 18-19 (71.8 percent).

The number of Brazilians who have cell phones for personal use reached 115.4 million in 2011, up from 55.7 million in 2005. Again, the increase was more significant in the poorer northeastern and

northern regions (174.3 and 166.7 percent, respectively), the agency said.

The highest share of Brazilians with cell phones is in the bracket of 30-34 years old, reaching 83.2 percent, it said. The sale of smartphones in the country increased significantly over the last two years, with 65 million active, according to the figures.—Xinhua

Monster Texas tornado kills six, seven people missing

GRANBURY, 17 May—Six people were dead and seven missing after a powerful tornado ripped through a north Texas neighbourhood that included housing for the poor, in the deadliest severe storm outbreak in the United States this year.

Authorities were assessing damage and searching through rubble on Thursday, hoping to find survivors among the twisted metal and splintered wood of flattened homes.

"This tornado was a monster," said Hood County Commissioner Steve Berry. "It's just devastating." The tornado, which brought winds of 166 to 200 miles per hour, was rated an EF4 by the National Weather Service (NWS), the second-most powerful level for such a storm, said NWS meteorologist Mark Wiley. EF4 tornadoes are rare and can blow away a well constructed wood or brick home, according to weather service ratings.

The storm blew homes from their foundations, tossed cars through the air and uprooted trees as it



Rescue workers walk past debris on 16 May after tornadoes swept through the town of Granbury, Texas late on 15 May, 2013.—REUTERS

raged through at least four counties near the Dallas-Fort Worth area on Wednesday evening.

The National Weather Service said there were reports of 10 tornadoes touching down in the area. Granbury, a town of 8,000 people about 35 miles (55 km) southwest of Dallas-Fort Worth, took the hardest hit.

Officials counted four men and two women dead in Hood County, where Granbury is located, said Tye Bell, a county spokesman. Another seven were missing and at least 45 people were injured, many of

whom lived in Granbury's Rancho Brazos subdivision of about 110 mostly single-family homes.

Authorities said 17 mobile homes in Granbury were destroyed, while 19 houses were destroyed, 17 suffered major damage and 30 received minor damage.

In Cleburne, about 30 miles east of Granbury, Mayor Scott Cain said more than 600 homes were damaged, with about 30 of them now unliveable.

"People in Cleburne heeded the warnings to take shelter and we really believed that saved lives," he said.—Reuters

RBS announces 1,400 job cuts over next two years

EDINBURGH, 17 May—Royal Bank of Scotland (RBS) on Thursday announced that it will cut 1,400 jobs over the next two years as part of plans to restructure its retail head office operations in Britain.

No customer-facing staff will be affected and support staff for the bank's retail arm including those working in communications, marketing and customer analytics are expected to be affected by the job losses, said the RBS in a Press release.

"To serve our customers well we have to ensure that our resources are focused on the things that matter most to them," Ross McEwan, chief executive officer of the bank's UK retail, was quoted as saying.

"Regrettably, we can only do that by restructuring the way we work in head office so that every effort is concentrated on supporting our customers and the front-line staff that serve them," said McEwan.

"This is clearly difficult news for our staff and we will do everything we can to support them, including seeking redeployment op-

portunities wherever possible to ensure compulsory redundancies are a last resort," he said. With about 8,000 staff as the fourth largest employer in Edinburgh, RBS also announced that it would invest 175 million pounds (268 million US dollars) in

Scotland over the next three years in areas such as branch refurbishments, improved complaints handling, quicker and simpler processes for account opening and mortgage processing and improved technology in branches.

Xinhua



Filed photo taken on 5 May, 2013 shows a woman using ATM at Royal Bank of Scotland (RBS) in Edinburgh, Scotland, Britain. RBS on Thursday announced that it will cut 1,400 jobs over the next two years as part of plans to restructure its retail head office operations in Britain.—XINHUA

REGIONAL

Forest moratorium extension proves Indonesia's commitment to forest preservation

JAKARTA, 17 May—A senior official at Indonesia's environment ministry said on Thursday that the extension of forest business moratorium demonstrates the government's strong commitment to forest conservancy.

"The second phase of moratorium would strengthen what we already accomplished (in the first phase) and correct what should be improved," Arif Yuwono, environment damage and climate change

deputy at the environment ministry, said on the sidelines of a seminar discussing forest and peatland preservation held here.

"The second phase of the moratorium indicates that government has stepped forward towards better forest management," he said in response to Presidential Decree No. 6/2013 issued on Monday, extending the forest business moratorium which was applied last year till 20 May this year.

The moratorium was part of the government's aim to reduce carbon emission by 26 percent with the country's own efforts and by 41 percent with foreign help by 2020, a target set at the G20 Summit in 2009.

Arif said that in the extended moratorium period, the government should take transparent and innovative moves to address problems lingering in the management of forest and peatland.

Xinhua



A Boeing 787 Dreamliner jet of All Nippon Airways Co leaves Takamatsu Airport in western Japan for Tokyo's Haneda Airport in a test flight on the evening of 16 May, 2013. ANA has modified the jet after it made an emergency landing at Takamatsu Airport in January 2013 due to a battery-related problem.—KYODO NEWS

LDP once again biggest receiver of subsidies to political parties

TOKYO, 17 May—Japan's ruling Liberal Democratic Party is once again the biggest receiver of political subsidies thanks to its landslide victory in the 12 Dec, 2012 general election for the House of Representatives, or the lower house, government data showed on Thursday.

The party received 14.55 billion yen (about \$142 million) in 2013, an increase of 4.39 billion yen from a year earlier, according to the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, which decides the allotment of the subsidies.

The opposition Democratic Party of Japan, which lost power in the election,

fell to second with 8.53 billion yen, a decrease of 7.97 billion yen.

The total amount of subsidies to political parties in the year stands at 31,768,330,000 yen. The subsidies will be given to political parties based on the strength of parties in both houses of the Diet and the results of the latest general election and of the past two regular elections for the House of Councillors, or the upper house.

The LDP's coalition partner, the New Komeito party, will receive 2.56 billion yen followed by the Your Party with 1.79 billion yen, the People's Life First Party with 816 million

yen, the Social Democratic Party with 541 million yen, the Green Wind party with 138.8 million yen, and the New Renaissance Party with 124.7 million yen.

The Japanese Communist Party, which is opposed to the provision of subsidies to parties, failed to submit the necessary documents with the ministry.

The subsidies will be given to the parties in four installments, with the first batch being paid to on 24 May, ministry officials said.

The amounts of subsidies to the parties will be recalculated after this summer's upper house election, expected to be called in July.

Kyodo News

Singapore, Brunei to exchange ideas on environmental issues

SINGAPORE, 17 May—Singapore's Ministry of the Environment and Water Resources on Thursday said they are scheduled to have the 7th Brunei-Singapore Annual Exchange of Visits during the following two days, mainly focusing on idea exchanges and bilateral collaboration on environmental issues.

Pehin Dato Suyoi Haji Osman, the Minister of Development of Brunei, will

be on visit here from Friday to Saturday.

During the annual meeting held between the city-state's Ministry of the Environment and Water Resources and Brunei's Ministry of Development, officials from both countries will "exchange information and views on environmental and water issues of mutual interest as well as review the progress of joint activities and collaboration

in the areas of solid waste management, air quality monitoring, water resource management and an environmental youth exchange programme."

The ministry said the active information exchange and collaboration between the two countries will help both side to address common environmental challenges and opportunities.

Xinhua



Photo shows the Australian Navy's guided-missile frigate Sydney calling at Sasebo port in Nagasaki Prefecture, southwestern Japan, on 16 May, 2013. The Australian Navy showed reporters the inside of the 4,200-ton vessel, which was in Japan to take part in an exercise of the US 7th Fleet.

KYODO NEWS

Funding boosts New Zealand's frontline military capability

WELLINGTON, 17 May—Increases to the New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) budget and cost savings are helping to improve military capability across all three services, Defence Minister Jonathan Coleman said on Friday.

"In the year to July 2013, the NZDF will deliver 190 million NZ dollars (153.87 million US dollars) in savings after achieving 140 million NZ dollars in the year prior," Coleman said in a statement the day after the government delivered its annual budget.

"These savings free up resources to improve the Defence Force's military capability. The Defence Force budget estimate for 2013 sees increases across

a range of military outputs, such as land combat forces, naval patrol and support forces, and fixed wing transport forces," he said.

The funds would be used to move from the back office to the frontline.

"There has also been a significant increase to the defence capital budget reflecting the military upgrade projects the government has approved, including the ANZAC frigate system upgrade, Seasprite helicopter replacements, and new medium and heavy trucks," said the minister.

"This sees the NZDF capital expenditure budget increase from 318 million NZ dollars to 583 million NZ dollars for the financial year," he added.—Xinhua



Students of the central primary school of Shangli Town play rope-skipping in a makeshift classroom in Shangli, Lushan County, southwest China's Sichuan Province, on 16 May, 2013. The schoolhouses of the Shangli Town Centre School were destroyed in the 7.0-magnitude earthquake taken place in Lushan on April 20, leaving more than 1,200 students to have classes in newly built prefab houses.—XINHUA

Japan local gov't water purification technology to be used in Vietnam

KITAKYUSHU, 17 May—The sophisticated water purification technology for which a southwestern Japan city government holds a patent will be applied to a water purification plant in the Vietnamese port city of Haiphong, the municipal government said on Thursday.

The use of the technology, developed by the Kitakyushu city government in Fukuoka Prefecture in conjunction with the Kobe-based Kobelco Eco-Solutions Co, marks the first time for the equipment to be introduced overseas, the municipality said. The municipality has been seeking to cash in on water-related projects in Asian developing countries by engaging in such activities as the provision of consultant services.

The up-flow biological contact filter technology removes harmful substances such as ammoniac nitrogen and trihalomethane from water by harnessing the natural functions of microbes to take in and decompose such pollutants. Kobelco Eco-Solutions has landed a 23 million yen order from Haiphong for civil engineering work for the project. The municipality will contribute to the project as an adviser.

The company will start building the purification plant on 30 May with an eye to starting its operations this fall.

Kyodo News

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UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME



Vacancy Announcement - 016/UNDP HR/2013 (Re-advertised)

Functional Title : National Project Manager/Senior Economic Statistician
Grade : SC-9
Type of Contract : Service Contract
Duration of Assignment : One year with the possibility of extension
Duty Station : Based in Yangon (Frequent travel to Nay Pyi Taw and survey sites as required)

For more details, please refer to information on the bulletin board at UNDP Office, No 6 Natmauk Road, Yangon or please follow the link below:
http://www.mm.undp.org/Myanmar_Vacancies.html

Applications should be addressed to **Deputy Resident Representative (Operations)**
Attention: Human Resources Unit, No. 6, Natmauk Road, UNDP, Yangon or apply on-line through application.mm@undp.org. Female candidates are encouraged to apply.

Candidates who have already submitted their applications for this post **need not re-apply**. Only those candidates in whose qualifications and experience the Organization has further interest will be contacted for subsequent interview(s).

Closing date: 31 May 2013



Visitors watch paintings during the preview of Christie's spring season auction in south China's Hong Kong, on 16 May, 2013. The auction will be held in Hong Kong from May 25 to 29 this year. XINHUA

Albanian border police seize 25 kg of hashish

TIRANA, 17 May— Albanian border police seized at least 25 kg of hashish on Kakavija border crossing point, south of Albania, police sources said on Thursday.

The police detained a Greek citizen on the charges of getting involved in international drugs trafficking, Gjirokastra police sources said in a telephone interview.

"The quantity of hashish was found on the vehicle type Qaewo, ... in possession of the Greek citizen Christos Tzouganatos, 73, who is under arrest," said the sources.

Police sources said the hashish, bought in Lazarat, Gjirokastra, Albania, was destined for Athens, Greece.—Xinhua

Angry Bird nests at 3D animated movie

HELSINKI, 17 May— The Finnish entertainment company Rovio, which successfully created the world's famous game of Angry Birds, will launch a 3D animated movie featured with the same characters, the company said on Thursday.

According to Rovio, the 3D film is being developed, produced and financed by the company itself.

The movie will be officially released in July 2016 by Sony Pictures Entertainment, which beat several major rival studios and won

the exclusive worldwide distribution rights.

Sony "convinced us that we have found the right partners and team to help us market and distribute our first motion picture," said Rovio's CEO Mikael Hed.

Reports said that the 3D cartoon Despicable Me's producer John Cohen and Iron Man's executive producer David Maisel had signed agreements with Rovio, to respectively serve as producer and executive producer for the new film.

Rovio Entertainment was founded in 2003, with its headquarters in Espoo,

Finland. The casual puzzle game Angry Birds was created by Rovio in December 2009, and became an international phenomenon within a few months of its release.

To date, the Angry Birds and Bad Piggies games have been downloaded more than 1.7 billion times across different platforms and versions around the world. In recent years, the image of Angry Birds has expanded rapidly into entertainment, publishing, and licensing, turning into a popular global brand. Xinhua



An Egyptian worker carries white chicken in a chicken farm in Sombokht village about 140 km north of Cairo, before the start of the process of selling chicken at the end of the semi-annual season for the poultry trade in Dakahleya, Egypt, on 16 May, 2013. Chicken prices have witnessed an enormous rise in the Egyptian poultry market due to the high feed prices which led the majority of Egyptians away from buying white meat in a country that suffers from severe economical problems.—XINHUA

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV GENIUS STARX VOY NO (27)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV GENIUS STARX VOY NO (27) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 18.5.2013 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of S.P.W(2) where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the by-laws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
 MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
 AGENT FOR: EASTERN CAR LINER S'PORE
 PTE LTD

Phone No: 256924/256914

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV FORE SIGHTER VOY NO (10)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV FORE SIGHTER VOY NO (10) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 19.5.2013 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the by-laws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
 MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
 AGENT FOR: EASTERN CAR LINER S'PORE
 PTE LTD

Phone No: 256924/256914

Singapore's export performance improves in April

SINGAPORE, 17 May— The non-oil domestic exports of Singapore, a key gauge of the trade hub's export performance, fell by 1 percent year on year in April, trade promotion agency International Enterprise Singapore said on Friday.

It followed a year-on-year contraction of 4.8 percent in the previous month, exceeding market expectations.

The agency said the contraction was largely due to a drop in electronic exports, which contracted by 9 percent in April, however, it represents an improvement from the previous month's 17.9 percent decline.

The non-oil domestic exports to half of the top ten markets declined in April, but those to the United States, Thailand and China, including its Hong Kong and Taipei markets, increased.

The top three contributors to the export contraction in April were the European Union, South Korea and Malaysia.—Xinhua



People visit the 11th China (Luohe) Food Fair in Luohe City, central China's Henan Province, May 16, 2013. The five-day food fair, with an exhibition area of 50,000 square meters and attracting more than 1,500 enterprises from 17 countries and regions, opened here on Thursday.—XINHUA

Seven crew missing after ship collisions on Yangtze River

HEFEI, 17 May— Collisions involving three vessels in the section of the Yangtze River in east China's Wuhu City, Anhui Province, early on Friday morning, left seven people missing.

Twenty crew members on board the three vessels fell into the water after the collisions on Baimao Waterway. Thirteen of them have been rescued, according to the Yangtze River Maritime

Department. The vessels included a tug boat carrying iron ore from central China's Henan Province, and cargo ships carrying steel products and limestone, respectively from Zhejiang Province and Jiangsu Province.

The Ministry of Transport and the ministry's affiliated maritime affairs authorities have sent rescuers and experts for salvage and investigation.—Xinhua

ENTERTAINMENT

New accuser says Michael Jackson trained him to lie about abuse

LOS ANGELES, 17 May — A close friend of Michael Jackson who had testified in defence of the late pop king at his child sex abuse trial said on Thursday that the singer had intimidated and brainwashed him into lying about years of sexual activity with him. “It was complete manipulation (by Jackson) and brainwashing,” choreographer Wade Robson told NBC’s “Today” show. “He would role play and train me for these (court) scenarios.” Robson, 30, filed a creditor’s claim under seal against Jackson’s estate earlier this month alleging he had been sexually abused by the singer from

age 7 to 14.

He made his claim against the singer’s estate nearly four years after Jackson’s sudden death in June 2009 from a lethal dose of surgical anesthetic propofol. Robson, an Australian native, was a child dance prodigy and developed a friendship with Jackson, appearing in some of the singer’s music videos in the early 1990s and sleeping over at Jackson’s Neverland Ranch home in Southern California. “From day one of the abuse, Michael told me that we loved each other and that this was love, that this was an expression of our love,” Robson said.



US pop star Michael Jackson gestures during a news conference at the O2 Arena in London on 5 March, 2009. Jackson said he will hold a series of final concerts in Britain later in the year.—REUTERS

“And he would follow that up with, ‘But if you ever tell anyone what we’re do-

ing, both of our lives and careers will be over.”

Reuters

Emma Watson turns to crime in celebrity-obsessed film at Cannes

CANNES, 17 May — British actress Emma Watson has turned to crime in her latest role as part of a celebrity-obsessed teenage gang robbing their Hollywood idols’ homes in a film that made its debut at the Cannes film festival on Thursday.

“The Bling Ring”, written and directed by Sofia Coppola, is based on a real-life gang fixated by glamour who tracked their targets’ whereabouts online and stole \$3 million of luxury goods from celebrities including Paris Hilton and Lindsay Lohan. Watson, 23, proved her days as Hermione in “Harry



Cast member Emma Watson poses during a photocall for the film ‘The Bling Ring’ during the 66th Cannes Film Festival in Cannes on 16 May, 2013.

REUTERS

Potter” are long gone as she donned skimpy outfits and perfected a Los Angeles accent to play a fictitious version of one of the

Bling Ring gang, who were caught in 2009 and sent to jail.

She said her main challenge was to work

out why these teenagers, from mainly wealthy backgrounds, were so preoccupied with celebrities.

Her research involved watching reality TV shows like “Keeping up with the Kardashians” and “The Hills”.

“I enjoy the chance to transform into new roles and work with new creative people,” Watson, dressed in a short, black dress and black stilettos, told a news conference on Thursday where her presence creating a frenzy among photographers. “Harry Potter seems like such a long time ago,” she said.

Reuters



Von Trier’s hotly-awaited Nymphomaniac film gets December launch

CANNES, 17 May — Danish filmmaker Lars Von Trier’s “Nymphomaniac”, one of the most hotly anticipated movies of 2013 for its erotic content and all-star cast, will open in theatres on Christmas Day, the producers said on Thursday.

The provocative director, expelled from the Cannes film festival in 2011 for joking that he sym-

pathized with Hitler, cast Charlotte Gainsbourg as the self-diagnosed nymphomaniac of the title, alongside rising Hollywood star Shia LaBeouf. Uma Thurman and Willem Dafoe also appear in a movie which, if the pre-release buildup is to be believed, could match Von Trier’s ultra-violent “Antichrist” for shocking audiences.

“December is a good month. Besides, what’s more Christmassy than a film like this?” joked production company Zentropa’s CEO Peter Aalbaek Jensen in a statement. He added that Von Trier, 57, had just begun editing the second part of what will be a double bill, and promised impressive visual effects.

Reuters

US soul singer Candice Glover wins ‘American Idol’

NEW YORK, 17 May — Candice Glover, a soul singer from rural South Carolina, was named “American Idol” on Thursday, becoming the first female singer to win the television singing competition since 2007. Glover, 23, defeated country singer Kree Harrison in the popular vote with her powerful voice in what judges deemed a close contest to take the title on season 12 of the Fox network show.

“You are officially our American idol,” host Ryan Seacrest said as the crowd of more than 7,000 at the Nokia Theatre in Los Angeles cheered. With tears streaming down her face after hearing her name, Glover seemed lost for words. “Oh, my God,” she said. “Three years.” The third time was lucky for Glover, who appeared in two earlier seasons of the show, and finally won

the crown by making songs like “Somewhere” from the musical “West Side Story,” and the jazz tune “You’ve Changed” all her own. “Three years, persistence, determination and a lot of talent. You deserve it,” said Seacrest.

He announced Glover as the winner at the end of Thursday’s two-hour show, which featured performances by judges Keith Urban and Mariah Carey, as well as Aretha Franklin, Jennifer Lopez, rapper Pitbull and South Korea’s Psy, who sang his new single “Gentleman.” Glover, the first woman to be crowned “Idol” since Jordin Sparks six years ago, won a record deal, which could help propel her to the stardom enjoyed by other women “Idol” winners such as Grammy Award winners Kelly Clarkson and Carrie Underwood.—Reuters



Finalist Candice Glover and singer Jennifer Hudson perform “Inseparable” during the Season 12 finale of “American Idol” in Los Angeles, California on 16 May, 2013.—REUTERS

Madhuri Dixit’s Ghagra makes Ranbir Kapoor’s Badtameez dil go Dhak dhak

NEW DELHI, 17 May — The return of Madhuri Dixit has been heralded by a stunning item performance in Yeh Jawani Hai Deewani starring Ranbir Kapoor and Deepika Padukone.

Costumed in a series of shimmering skirts, Madhuri is irresistible in Ghagra. Eyes

flashing and hair tumbling, she takes a smitten Ranbir to Dilli via Agra. Lovely as Deepika is in the previously released songs from the film — Balam pichkari, Badtameez dil and Dilliwali girlfriend — we have to say that Madhuri, 46, completely upstages her. And she didn’t

have to try very hard to make Ranbir’s heart beat faster. The actor “bribed” director Ayan Mukherji to let him kiss Madhuri Dixit, Ranbir’s teen crush, on the cheek. Yeh Jawani Hai Deewani also features Deepika Padukone and will release on 31 May.—PTI



Ranbir Kapoor had fun while shooting with Madhuri Dixit.—PTI

Bradley sets record pace with 60 at the Nelson

LOS ANGELES, 17 May—Former champion Keegan Bradley shrugged off two bogeys around the turn to set a course record with a blistering 10-under-par 60 in Thursday's opening round of the Byron Nelson Championship in Irving, Texas. Taking advantage of preferred lies on a rain-softened layout at the TPC Four Seasons Resort Las Colinas, the 26-year-old American piled up 10 birdies and an eagle at the par-five seventh to grab a three-shot lead in the PGA Tour event.

Winner here in 2011 before going on to claim his first major title at the PGA Championship just three months later, Bradley covered his final nine holes in six-under 29 after storming home eagle-birdie-birdie.

Roma eyes Brazilian defender Rocha

RIO DE JANEIRO, 17 May—Roma is preparing a bid to sign Brazilian defender Marcos Rocha in July, local media reported on Thursday.

Rocha was last year called up for Brazil's national team after a series of impressive performances for Atletico Mineiro. The 24-year-old right back's agent, Luciano Brustolini, said he had heard the reports but denied any contact with the Italian Serie A club over a possible move.



Brazilian defender Marcos Rocha

Former Masters champion Charl Schwartzel of South Africa opened with a seven-birdie

63 while Americans Harris English and Ted Potter Jr. and Swede Robert Karlsson carded 64s. "Today I rematched up unbelievable ball-striking with great putting, which is very rare," Bradley told Golf Channel after hitting 15 of 18 greens in regulation and totaling

only 24 putts on a course softened by overnight rain. "You needed to go out this morning and shoot a good number if you could. I drove the ball great so I had the ball in my hand pretty much every hole. And I was hitting some really good iron shots. It felt really good. "Just a really fun round," added the American, who started his day at the par-four 10th. "It kind of felt like a Saturday morning round with my buddies." Bradley tied the tournament record of 60 held jointly by Sam Snead (1957) and Arron Oberholser (2006) while improving on the course record of 61 shared by Cameron Beckman, Justin Leonard and Charlie Rymer.—Reuters

"I just found out now that Roma are interested in Marcos Rocha, but there is nothing to it," Brustolini said. This sort of speculation is normal for someone who is playing the way he is. But right now all that Marcos is concentrating on is playing as well as he can for Atletico Mineiro."

Xinhua

Boston Marathon runners to be given another chance to finish

BOSTON, 17 May — Thousands of runners whose Boston Marathon was cut short by the deadly bombings at the finish line will be invited back next year, the organizer of the world-famous race said on Thursday. The Boston Marathon attracts runners from the United States and all over the world who sometimes train for years to qualify, with most competitors required to post fast times in other 26.2 mile races to earn a spot in the 27,000-runner field.

"The opportunity to run down Boylston Street and to cross the finish line amid thousands of spectators is a significant part of the entire Boston Marathon experience," said Tom Grilk, executive director of the Boston Athletic Association, which organizes the race.

"With the opportunity to return and participate in 2014, we look forward to inviting back these athletes and we expect that most



will renew their marathon training commitment."

About 5,600 entrants will be eligible for return running of the Boston marathon, organizers said.

This year's race was halted at 2:50 pm EDT on 15 April when two pressure cooker bombs left at the finish line exploded in a crowd of thousands of spectators and athletes, killing three people and injuring 264 others.

Runners were rushed off the course as emergency responders searched to see

if any additional explosive device had been planted, but none were found.

Two ethnic Chechen brothers who lived in neighboring Cambridge, Massachusetts, were accused by the FBI of planting the bombs.

The younger of the pair, 19-year-old Dzhokhar Tsarnaev, was arrested on 19 April after a day-long manhunt that shut most of the Boston area, while his older brother, 26-year-old Tamerlan, died in an earlier gunbattle with police.

Reuters

Pacers' Hill to miss playoff game versus New York with concussion

NEW YORK, 17 May—Indiana Pacers point guard George Hill will miss on Thursday's Game Five of the NBA Eastern Conference semi-finals against the New York Knicks because of a concussion, the team said. The Pacers lead the best-of-seven series 3-1 and can advance to the conference finals against the defending NBA champion Miami Heat with another win against the Knicks.

"He (Hill) had the test this afternoon," Pacers coach Frank Vogel told reporters before the game at New York's Madison Square Garden. "It happened when he had a collision with (Knicks center) Tyson Chandler in the first half of Game Four." Vogel said he did not know what Hill's status would be for a possible Game Six in Indianapolis on Saturday should the Knicks stave off



elimination in the second-round playoff series.

Hill had his best scoring performance of the series in Game Four, with a

game-high 26 points along with three rebounds and four assists. Vogel said DJ Augustin would play most of the minutes at point

guard in place of Hill, and that Lance Stephenson and Ben Hansbrough could see some back-up time at the position.—Reuters

FIFA says 76% of Confederations Cup tickets sold

RIO DE JANEIRO, 17 May—More than 76% of tickets available for next month's Confederations Cup in Brazil have been sold, world football's governing body FIFA said on Thursday. The South American country is on target to break the record set by Germany in 2005 when the tournament's attendances reached 83% of capacity, according to FIFA secretary-general Jerome Valcke.

"The response from Brazilian fans to the Confederations Cup has been unique and already makes it one of the most successful ever," Valcke said during a press conference. Among

matches not yet sold out is the battle for third place in Salvador on 30 June.

Three-time FIFA world player of the year and World Cup ambassador Ronaldo said it was time to focus on football, not stadium delays. "We are 30 days away from the Confederations Cup and I don't think there is anybody who doesn't think we won't have the stadiums ready. It's a certainty, however we need to completely change our focus." Brazil will open the Confederations Cup against Japan at Brasilia's Mane Garrincha stadium on 15 June.

Xinhua

David Beckham to retire from soccer at end of season



File photo shows England midfielder David Beckham (R) competing for the ball with Brazil's Ronaldo during a World Cup soccer game in Shizuoka, Japan, in June 2002. Beckham said on 16 May, 2013, he will retire from soccer at the end of the season.

KYODO NEWS

LONDON, 17 May—Former England captain David Beckham will retire from professional soccer at the end of the season, British media reported on Thursday.

The 38-year-old midfielder's decision came just

days after winning his latest title with French club Paris Saint-Germain, which he joined in January.

Beckham had also played with Manchester United, Real Madrid, AC Milan and the Los Angeles Galaxy.—Kyodo News

GENERAL



A participant gives a brief introduction of mushroom to visitors at "The Edible Fungus of New Products and New Technology Promotion and Marketing Docking Fair" held in Shijiazhuang, capital of north China's Hebei Province, on 16 May, 2013. Some 200 makers of edible fungus products took part in the three-day event, which kicked off here on Thursday.—XINHUA

MYANMAR INTERNATIONAL

(18-5-13 09:30 am ~ 19-5-13 09:30 am) MST

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- * An Oasis Trip to Mt Popa
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- * Preparation for Myanmar Traditional Chinlone Sport to be Included (2013) SEA Games
- * Kayah Traditional Museum
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- * Bagan: The Land of Pagoda
- * News
- * Taste of Myanmar (Noodle Salad)
- * News
- * Myanmar Movie Impact "Iodine Ko Ko Gyi & Queen Victoria"
- * News
- * The Heart Love influenced (U Hla Tun Cancer Foundation)
- * Myanmar Movies "Challenging of Love"

Myanmar TV

(18-5-2013, Saturday)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 6:00 am | (Part-2) |
| 1. Paritta By Venerable Mingun Sayadaw | 4:15 pm |
| 6:25 am | 4:40 pm |
| 2. To Be Healthy Exercise | 19. Poem Garden |
| 6:35 am | 20. University Of Distance Education (TV Lectures) - Second Year (Oriental Studies) |
| 3. Song & Dance of National Races | 5:00 pm |
| 6:50 am | 21. News |
| 4. Documentary | 5:15 pm |
| 7:00 am | 22. Documentary (SEA Games) |
| 5. News | 5:30 pm |
| 7:20 am | 23. Musical Programme |
| 6. Documentary | 6:00 pm |
| 8:00 am | 24. News |
| 7. News | 6:20 pm |
| 8:25 am | 25. Documentary |
| 8. India Drama Series | 6:45 pm |
| 9:00 am | 26. TV Drama Series |
| 9. News | 7:00 pm |
| 9:20 am | 27. News |
| 10. How It's Works | 7:15 pm |
| 10:00 am | 28. TV Drama Series |
| 11. News | 8:00 pm |
| 10:15 am | 29. News |
| 12. TV Drama Series | 8:35 pm |
| 11:00 pm | 30. Documentary |
| 13. Shwe Yin Khone Than | 8:45 pm |
| 12:00 pm | 31. Golden Music Of Old Stars |
| 14. News | 9:00 pm |
| 12:25 pm | 32. News |
| 15. Round Up of The Week's TV Local News | 33. Myanmar Series |
| 1:00 pm | 34. TV Drama Series |
| 16. Myanmar Movie (Part-1) | 35. Gitadagale Phwintbaohn |
| 3:00 pm | |
| 17. News | |
| 3:15 pm | |
| 18. Myanmar Movie | |

First foreign volleyball coach for Japan up for challenge

Tokyo, 17 May—Gary Sato says he is ready and relishing the challenge of reviving the flagging fortunes of Japan's men's national volleyball team after the American's appointment earlier this year as head coach. The Japan Volleyball Association has turned to a foreign coach for the first time after the men's team failed to qualify for last year's London Olympics.

JVA President Taizaburo Nakano said earlier

this year that a fundamental change was in order after Tatsuya Ueta's team failed to secure a berth to London. "We have to forget the glory of the past and start over fresh," Nakano said. "I think that a foreigner who can look at Japan in an objective way will be able to courageously execute a new strategy."

Sato, a former assistant coach for the US men's team, was appointed in February and has set a tar-

get of not only qualifying for the 2016 Rio de Janeiro Games, but being in medal contention."My goal, and I hope the team's goal and everybody else's, is to compete for a medal," he told *Kyodo News* in a recent interview.Sato was involved with the US men's team as a coach for many years and contributed to its gold medal at the 1988 Seoul Olympics and the team's bronze medal at the 1992 Barcelona Games.—*Kyodo News*

Masterpiece paintings return to England for first time in 230 years

LONDON, 17 May—A world-class collection of oil paintings returned from Russia to England which was set to exhibit on Friday is like the treasures of the Forbidden City returning to Beijing, the exhibition curator said.

The bulk of the collection of oil paintings brought together by the first British Prime Minister Sir Robert Walpole in the first part of the 18th century is returning from its current Russian

home in the Hermitage Museum to the mansion which was built to house it.

Paintings have also come from other collections in Russia and in the United States.

The exhibition was planning to open today, Friday, at Houghton Hall, in the English countryside about two hours' drive north of London, the stately home which Walpole built to house his huge collection of masterpieces.

The hall was built between 1722 and 1735, and was the work of several famous British architects including Colen Campbell and James Gibbs.

The hall is now in the hands of Lord Cholmondeley, a direct descendant of Walpole. Dr Thierry Morel, the exhibition curator told Xinhua that it had taken three years to set up the exhibition, "I wanted to find a project that would resuscitate some of the his-

toric episodes of cultural relations between Russia and England. This was the most significant collection that had entered the Hermitage in Catherine the Great's time."

The collection was sold off by Walpole's grandson, because he was short of money, and he raised more than 40,000 pounds, in those days a fortune, with his sale of the paintings to Catherine the Great in 1779.—Xinhua



Photo shows vehicles used in past Formula One motor races on display in front of the Honda Motor Co. head office in Tokyo on 16 May, 2013. The automaker announced the same day that it will make a comeback to Formula One racing in 2015 as an engine supplier, teaming up with former partner McLaren of Britain. Honda withdrew from the racing after last taking part in 2008.—KYODO NEWS

Russian climber dies on Mt. Everest, brings season's death toll to four

KATHMANDU, 17 May—A Russian mountaineer fell to his death on the lower slopes of Mt. Everest in the early hours of Wednesday, making him the fourth person to have died on the mountain this climbing season, a government official said Thursday.

Alex Bolotov's body was found Wednesday

by his Sherpa guide near Khumbu Icefall at 5,600 meters, the government's liaison officer, stationed at Mt. Everest Base Camp, said. Last week two Nepali Sherpa guides died on the mountain.

One guide fell to his death while returning from Camp 4 at 7,900 meters, to Camp 3 at 7,200 meters.

The second Sherpa guide died in his sleep, apparently due to altitude sickness. Last month, Mingma Sherpa, who was among a group of Sherpas, nicknamed "Icefall Doctors" for their expertise in fixing ropes over the Khumbu Icefall, fell into a crevasse while fixing ropes for climbers. He died instantly.—*Kyodo News*

Battery maker GS Yuasa to increase stake, commitment in Thai unit

OSAKA, 17 May—GS Yuasa Corp. is taking a controlling stake in Thai affiliate Siam GS Battery Co. and stepping up technology transfer to and enhancing the operations of its key Thai arm, according to the Japanese battery maker.

GSYuasa announced Thursday it will increase

its interest to 60 percent by the end of May from 49 percent now, with the remainder continued to be held by Thailand's Siam Motors group.

It is planning to transfer its latest battery technology for idled-engine vehicles to Siam GS Yuasa and equip it with automated production machines.

The Japanese company is also planning to globalize and diversify the Thai unit's operations by investing management resources in nearby countries such as Myanmar, Laos and Cambodia, it said. Siam GS Battery, set up in 1966, has been a core marketing base of GS Yuasa in Thailand.—*Kyodo News*

Outstanding Ayeyawady people honoured



Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann presents award to an outstanding person in Ayeyawady Region.—MNA

YANGON, 17 May—A ceremony to honour the winners at President's Excellence Awards, those who won honorable certificates, State/Region-level short-listed winners and top ten outstanding matriculation students in Township, here, yesterday in conjunction with cash donation ceremony for Ayeyawady Region Dhammayone.

Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann delivered a speech in honour of the awardees. He said he took pride for success of people of Ayeyawady Region. After that, Chairman of Pyithu Hluttaw Peasants, Labour and Youth Affairs Committee U Tin Htut extended greeting and Ayeyawady Region Dhammayone Board of Trustees Vice-Chairman Col San Lwin (Retd) explained the facts about the Dhammayon.

After wards, Patron of Ayeyawady Region Dhammayone Board of Trustees Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann presented certificates of honour to best exporter award winner Chairman of Golden Delta Co.Ltd U Chit Khaing, top tax-payer award winner Max Myanmar Co Ltd Chairman U Zaw Zaw and winners.

Wellwishers donated K 105.2million for Ayeyawady Region Dhammayone through the Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker.

It was attended by Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann's wife Daw Khin Lay Thet, Pyithu Hluttaw Affair Committee Chairmen U Tint Htut, U Htay Oo and U Soe Naing, Ayeyawady Region Chief Minister U Thein Aung, Hluttaw representatives and donors.

MNA

Union Foreign Affairs Minister congratulates Malaysian counterpart

NAY PYI TAW, 18 May—U Wunna Maung Lwin, Union Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, has sent a congratulatory message to His Excellency Datuk Seri Anifah Aman who has been re-appointed as Minister of Foreign Affairs of Malaysia.

MNA

Twenty-three prisoners granted amnesty

NAY PYI TAW, 17 May—Altogether 23 prisoners having served their appropriate jail term at the respective prisons and labor camps were granted amnesty today under Section 401(i) of the Code of Criminal Procedure as their remaining sentence has been commuted in order that they can serve the interest of the State and the people and of their own realizing the magnanimity of the State.

MNA

Myanmar, ROK signs MoU on economic cooperation

YANGON, 17 May—A ceremony to sign MoU on economic cooperation between Long Luck Group of Companies of Myanmar and HANBAEK ITC Co., Ltd of the Republic of Korea was held at Traders Hotel, here, yesterday morning.

Yangon Region Chief Minister U Myint Swe made a speech.

Daw Su Yamin, Marketing Executive Officer of Long Luck Group of Companies and Mr Oh Bock Hwan, Chief Executive Officer of HANBAEK ITC Co., Ltd signed the MoU. Both companies will make cooperation in manufacturing of cosmetics and LED bulbs, conducting beauty courses, wedding services and waste to energy project.

Under the supervision of Myanmar Foodstuff Manufacturers Association,

the opening ceremony of 3rd Myanma Foodstuff Exhibition 2013 was held at Tatmadaw Convention Hall this morning.

Deputy Minister for Commerce Dr Pwint Hsan, Yangon Region Development Affairs Minister Mayor U

Hla Myint, Region Planning and Economy Minister U Than Myint, President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI) U Win Aung and Chairman of Myanmar Foodstuff

Manufacturers Association U Zaw Min Win cut the ribbon to open it.

Later, the Region Chief Minister and party looked round the booths. A total of 76 companies with 124 booths are participating in the three-day exhibition.—MNA



Skills Malaysia-Invite Programme introduced



The Department of Skills Development under the Ministry of Human Resources of Malaysia together

with REXPO-JENKO introduces Skills Malaysia-Invite Programme that will enable Myanmar students to pursue specialized technical and vocational skills training courses accredited by the Malaysian Government.

In the areas of education, training and developing vocational skills enhancing employability, Malaysia has become a trusted destination for international students.

International Technical Education and Vocational Training Programme in Malaysia is a government initiatives designed specially for international students. It has been developed with the aim of producing graduates with comprehensive skills and knowledge in technical and vocational disciplines to become more skilled employees or entrepreneurs.

The Programmes accredited by the Malaysian

Government contain pathways that enable students to gain internationally recognized qualifications through built-in programmes that incorporate certification by City & Guides (UK), Confederation of Tourism, Hotel & Catering Management (UK), LCCI (UK), TAFE (Australia) and other international and professional bodies.

Making Myanmar students' dream of aspiring quality education combined with vocational

training and guaranteed industrial placement, JENKO-REXPO will help students who have completed basic vocational training to obtain paid internship in Malaysia.

Those interested may participate at the free workshops organized by the Ministry of Human Resources at Park Royal Hotel on 18-19 May and register at social network www.facebook.com/ex-pomyanmar.

Moe Thu Zar Soe (NLM)