

## Half of population over 40 suffers from hypertension due to “unhealthy habits” and stress

By Aye Min Soe

Hypertension among people over 40 is growing at an alarming rate, with the current estimate of middle-aged and elderly people suffering from high blood pressure standing at 50 percent of the population, officials said Thursday.

The main causes of hypertension in rural areas in Myanmar are a salty diet, betel nut, alcohol and nicotine consumption as well as the daily struggle to make a living, according to Dr Kyaw Myo Naing, a doctor of the station hospital in the village of Taung Nyo in the western part of Nay Pyi Taw. Obesity and general stress also play a major role, he said.

“When I arrived here eight months ago, I really wished I could provide affordable blood pressure monitors to every family in this village because the number of hypertension patients is very high in this village. Each family should have equipment to monitor blood pressure,” said one of the young doctors, who was posted to the station hospital of Taung Nyo Vil-

lage-tract, and has to treat patients from 26 villages, with a population of around 25,000.

Hypertension has become a common disease among the non-communicable diseases in rural areas, and should prompt people to change their habits.

“We all should change our daily eating habits and lifestyles as soon as possible because hypertension is seriously threatening our health,” said Dr Hla Mya Thway Eindar, Deputy Director of the Health Department of the Ministry of Health.

She was present as about 60 of the villagers had their blood pressure taken as part of a health care campaign, jointly conducted the Ministry of Health and Japan-based company Omron, which donated 200 Omron digital blood pressure monitors on Thursday to the Health Ministry in Taung Nyo Village.

According to Dr Hla Mya Thway Eindar, a member of a medical team which is providing mo-



A nurse monitors blood pressure of an aged women with the use of Omron automatic digital blood pressure monitor.—PHOTO: AYE MIN SOE

bile health care services to over 2,000 villages in the Nay Pyi Taw Council Area, consumption of salty dry fish, mixed edible oil and alcohol were the main causes of hypertension. According to the discussion on eating and lifestyle habits, which was attended by 60 people from Taung Nyo Village, children as young as ten are drinking toddy, with women chewing betel

nuts with tobacco and also increasingly relying on other unhealthy means to deal with the stress of daily life.

“There is this wrong assumption by villagers that hypertension simply occurs as a symptom of a major disease,” the doctor said.

According to Win Zaw Oo, 31, who also received blood pressure monitoring, villagers tend to go to

hospitals only if they suffer from a serious illness that affects their mobility.

“Now, at least some villagers here understand that they should monitor their blood pressure frequently, but only over half of them said they will go to a station hospital to monitor their blood pressure, because we all are struggling to make ends meet,” Win Zaw Oo said.

## NLM prepares move to Yangon, with joint venture to start soon

NAY PYI TAW, 20 March—The stakeholders and advisors of the New Light of Myanmar held a meeting on Thursday to discuss pressing issues related to the Ministry of Information’s joint-venture partnership with a private investor slated to begin op-

erations in the next months, with the advisors voicing concern about the lack of finances, resources and transparency to guarantee a smooth transition.

The joint venture between the Myanmar-born investor who will own 49 percent, and the Ministry

of Information which will own the remaining 51 percent, has prompted worrying questions not only on how to improve the content and quality of the daily but how to remain at least on the same level during the transition period, as the majority of staff

have announced they will leave the paper before the start of the joint venture. The NLM will relocate from Nay Pyi Taw to Yangon where a new printing press is being built, with the move currently organized by the private stakeholder.

The CEO of the NLM Mr. Nitobe—sent by the Japanese news agency Kyodo News headquartered in Tokyo, which supports the daily with advice and equipment—said at the meeting that, “a bureau should be established in Nay Pyi Taw to gather breaking government news,” stressing that “pressing topics such as human right abuses and environmental destruction should be featured in the daily in the future.”

The NLM currently relies heavily on translations from the Myanmar News Agency, with international news taking up most of the paper. In future, the daily should act “as the window to Myanmar” based on the concept of The Straits Times, with the target readership foreign diplomats, businessmen and other decision makers, Deputy Minister for Information U

Ye Htut said at the meeting. How to finance such an ambitious project and how much money will be offered to highly-skilled staff has not been decided yet in detail, with the editorial staff voicing concern on how to keep the newspaper going with the lack of manpower, resources and finances. Basic equipment such as cameras and telephones have not yet been provided, with the monthly salaries for editorial staff well below market average. Journalistic training has only been given sporadically due to the time constraint during daily operations.

The lack of transparency and communication among the stakeholders and the multitude of parties involved has also led to a series of complications.

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### Brunei’s Sultan to pay state visit to Myanmar

NAY PYI TAW, 21 March—At the invitation of U Thein Sein, President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu’izzadin Waddaulah, Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam, will pay a state visit to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar in the near future.—MNA



The NLM news room in Nay Pyi Taw.—PHOTO: AYE MIN SOE

## UEC to hold by-election in 30 constituencies



**Union Election Commission Chairman U Tin Aye.**—MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 20 March — The Union Election Commission plans to

hold a by-election for 30 vacant constituencies, said U Tin Aye, the Chairman of the Union Election Commission, at the parliament on Thursday.

The UEC will announce the date for the by-election 3 months before polling start.

During today's Q and A session of Pyithu Hluttaw, Deputy Minister for Finance Dr Lin Aung said that Myanmar has a national debt of US\$ 9.5 billion to be paid off to 16 countries and three international financial institutions.

Regarding a question on how action will be taken against departments which are not carrying out tasks in conformity with financial rules and regulations, the deputy minister replied that the Ministry of Finance is taking necessary measures to fight tax evasion.

According to the Section 96 of the constitution, the Union Government collects income tax, commercial tax, stamp duty, lottery tax, and according to the Section 254 of the constitution, regional and state governments collect remaining nine taxes.

During the today's meeting of Amyotha Hluttaw, (the National Parliament), the Bill Amending the Political Parties Registration Law with amendments of members of the parliament was approved by Amyotha Hluttaw.

Regarding the expenditure on hosting the 27<sup>th</sup> SEA Games, the government spent 33.958 billion kyat, US\$ 11.955 million, 4,600 Canadian dollar and Singaporean \$70,000 on the games, said U Thaung Htike, Deputy Minister for Sports.

MNA

## Ministry to ease restrictions on imported cars

NAY PYI TAW, 20 March—Due to the restrictions on importation of cars in the olden days, car prices are extremely high. The government has introduced an old-age car import-substitute system. For convenience of car buyers, the government gives the go-ahead for importation of cars. This move covers opening of sale center and showrooms. It can be seen that thanks to it, the current car price amounts to one-fifth of those in the past.

The number of imported cars has reached over

250,000. Mostly-populated Yangon sees traffic jam problem due to increasing number of imported cars. The government is making efforts for easy access to cars by its citizens at a cheaper price.

On the other hand, it needs to take account of smooth traffic. Plans are underway to reduce the rates collected on importation of cars in the coming financial year, according to Directorate of Road Transport under the Ministry of Rail Transportation.

MNA

## All participation crucial for stability and development in Rakhine State

YANGON, 20 March—Secretary of Central Committee for implementation of Stability and Development in Rakhine State Deputy Minister for Border Affairs Maj-Gen Maung Maung Ohn together with officials from UNICEF, UNOCHA, UNHCR, UNDP, UNFPA, IRC, Malteser, RI, ACF and DRC inspected basic education schools and women's vocational training schools in Minbya Township, Rakhine State on Wednesday.

The deputy minister and party visited relief camp in Hsanhtoetan Village where he stressed the need to fulfill requirements

of the region in coordination with UN agencies and INGOs.

They held a meeting on development and stability in Rakhine State with townseiders at MraukU Hotel in MraukU Township in the evening.

They donated offertories to the monks at Saddhammaguru Monastery in Sittway and visited development center for national races from border area where they discussed matters on achievements of stability and development in Rakhine State with state ministers, officials and townseiders at Sittway airport lounge on 20 March.

MNA

## Illegal arms, ammunition confiscated in Maungtown, Rakhine State

NAY PYI TAW, 20 March — Arms and ammunition have been confiscated at two separate places in Maungtown Township, Rakhine State recently.

During a police patrol near a creek in Kanyutkwin

village in Maungtown Township at 2 pm on 14 March, police said, they spotted a suspected stationary boat at the water's edge and saw five unknown Bengalis who left the boat before they got into the

NAY PYI TAW, 20 March—The National Electrification Plan-NEP will comprise the topics seeking the best way for minimum cost of electrification to each houses depending on the geographical condition, said U Khin Maung Soe, Union Minister for Electric Power at the workshop for the third NEP on Thursday morning.

Union Minister U Ohn Myint disclosed that the Union government is striving for supply of electricity to over 20,000 villages out of over 40,000 during remaining 26-month term.

Mr. Vikram Kumar, Director of International Finance Corporation, one of the members of World Bank, said that WB assists in implementing the National Electrification Plan for the nation to get electricity in 2030. WB had pledged to provide assistance to Thaton Gas and Recycle Power Plant through IDA loan and Myingyan IPP Combined Cycle Power Plant Project through advisory service of IFC and put investment in



**Workshop on development of Myanmar National Electrification Plan towards universal access.**—MNA

rested Mahmud Sadid, guard of the boat, of Kanyindan village and Asha Dullah, 17, of Hnakhaungto village who was seen in a suspicious manner at the jetty near the boat and filed lawsuits against the two suspects and five unknown men who still at large.

In a thorough search of more suspicious items in the boat, one .38 revolver

and five rounds of ammunition, one pistol bag and one towel used for wrapping the pistol have been found in the presence of witnesses.

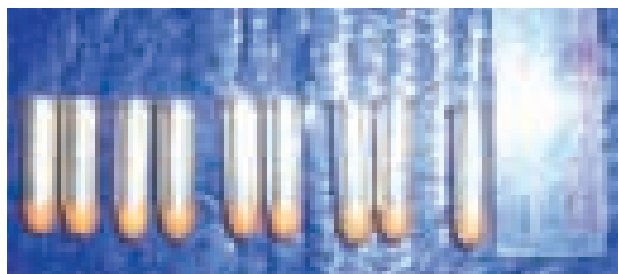
According to a tip-off to the police that La Lu, alias Yaw Hee Yamoud and Babugyo, alias Aya Dullah of Layyin Kwin village were arriving at the house of Maha Regina, daughter

tance for electrification in off-grid regions with the use of renewable energy.

The workshop was jointly organized by Ministry of Electric Power and Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Rural Development.—MNA

of La Lu, Maungtown police accompanied by village administration members carried out a search of the house on 19 March. One .38 revolver, one bullet and one pistol bag that were unearthed at the backyard of the house. Police investigation is ongoing to expose and arrest those who are running away, it is learnt.

Police Information





## NATIONAL

## Exports discussed with European Union officials

NAY PYI TAW, 20 March—President U Thein Sein held talks with Mr. Karel De Gucht, EU Trade Commissioner of the Bangkok-based EU Office in Thailand, at the Credentials Hall of the Presidential Palace on Thursday.

Their talks focused on an increase of export volume to the European Union, trade promotion, improvement of the social economy, signing of trade agreement, technical assistance for export goods,

meeting EU standards and more investments of entrepreneurs from the EU.

At 11 a.m., the President also received Mr. Paul Polman, Chief Executive Officer of Thailand-based Unilever PLC Global to discuss export of value-added agricultural and livestock breeding products, extension of production on a basis of long-term bilateral interest and the creation of job opportunities for Myanmar people.

MNA



*President U Thein Sein shaking hands with Mr. Karel De Gucht, EU Trade Commissioner of the Bangkok-based EU Office in Thailand.—MNA*

## Myanmar, Thai armies discuss anti-narcotic drugs, anti-human trafficking

NAY PYI TAW, 20 March—A Myanmar delegation led by Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Soe Win arrived back in Yangon after paying a goodwill visit to Thailand on Thursday. During the visit, the Vice-Senior made several meetings with senior military officers for peace and stability in border regions.

The Vice-Senior was decorated with honorary Army Parachutist Badge by Lt-Gen Chatchalerm Chalermsook, Commanding General of Special Warfare Command at Wing-2 in Lopburi of Thailand on March 20.

At Wing-46 of Phitsanulok, the Vice-Senior held a meeting with Lt-Gen Preecha Jan-o-cha, Commander of 3rd Army Area Command. They exchanged views on prevention of unusual attacks, anti-narcotic drugs and anti-human trafficking, cooperation in natural disaster rescue operations with international community and two countries, stability of border regions and sustainable development of villages between the two countries.

The Myanmar delegation visited Wing-41 in Chiang Mai. They paid a homage to the pagodas where they made several donations to the pagodas.—MNA



*President U Thein Sein poses for documentary photo with Mr. Paul Polman, Chief Executive Officer of Thailand-based Unilever PLC Global.—MNA*

## Women cadets have to pour out relentless efforts in training: Commander-in-Chief

NAY PYI TAW, 20 March—Women cadets of the 1st intake of women's officer training course have to pour out relentless efforts in the training to be able to efficiently discharge the duty, said Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior

General Min Aung Hlaing on Thursday at the Defence Services (Army) Officers Training School of Hmawby Station in Yangon.

Afterwards, the Commander-in-Chief inspected the Steel Plant No.2 of Myanmar Economic

Cooperation and urged the staff to strive for manufacturing high quality products and sales promotion.

In Ahlon Township, he also inspected progress of Ahlon International Wharf Projects No.1, 2 and 3 being implemented

by MEC, Nawngton Co Ltd and Eden Group of Companies respectively.

The projects will provide more benefits including smooth transportation and development of the country's economy.

Myawady



*Senior General Min Aung Hlaing views training of women cadets of the 1st intake of women's officer training course.—MNA*

## NLM prepares move to Yangon...

(from page 1)

On a positive note, the Deputy Minister noted that the NLM journalists—once more staff has been hired and equipment has been pro-

vided—can start reporting on a wide range of topics, including land grabs, ethnic conflicts and the peace process, albeit stressing that “the reports must be balanced”. The NLM will

in future also be allowed to report on Muslims and Bengalis, but must refrain from using the word Rohingya. Once the joint venture is up and running successfully, NLM reporters will also be given access to areas that require special permission, e.g.

areas in Kachin State.

During the moving period, the newspaper will close all operations until the move is completed, with stakeholders estimating a closure of about seven days from around mid April.

NLM

## EU, Myanmar to sign investment protection agreement

NAY PYI TAW, 20 March—EU and Myanmar discussed potentials to sign an investment protection agreement at the Ministry of National Planning and Economic Development on Thursday.

Union Minister Dr Kan Zaw expressed words of thanks to EU Investment Bank for lending loans to Myanmar in 2014, calling for more EU investments.

Commissioner of External Trade Mr. Karel De Gucht cited that EU is of huge interest in making investment in Myanmar, saying that EU hopes to complete drawing of an investment protection agreement in time.

The investment protection agreement to be signed between EU and Myanmar brings about ac-



**Union Minister for NPED Dr Kan Zaw delivers address at Launching Event of Investment Agreement Negotiation.**—MNA

countability in sustainable investment. It also attracts more investors for the

agreement protects investors fully.

MNA

## Heavy squall hits Bhamo

BHAMO, 20 March—A vicious squall with thunder and lightning occurred in Bhamo in Kachin State on 20 March.

Hailstones fell from the sky and big trees fell onto the roads during the

squall.

After the heavy rains, roads were blocked by the fallen trees and electricity shortage occurred in the town. Ward Administrator U Tin Maung Aye and residents were clearing debris

while the township electrical engineer and staff were attempting to resume electricity supply.

Due to their efforts, the dwellers are resuming electricity supply.

Si Mi Khon-Nan Yi



**Photo shows damages and parts of branches destroyed by squall in Bhamo.**

## GOLD PRICE, FE RATE

### Yangon Gold Price

Buying K 679,000 per tical: Selling K 680,000 per tical

### Mandalay Gold Price

Buying K 678,600 per tical: Selling K 679,000 per tical

### Foreign Exchange Rate

USD Buying K 962: Selling K 967

SGD Buying K 756: Selling K 764

Euro Buying K 1315: Selling K 1335

## Trawler sinks, no casualty

YANGON, 20 March—A trawler sank in Twantay Canal as its sail hit the light-house due to white blanket of thick fog on Thursday.

'Htoo Myat Anna-war' steered by Than Htike Aung pulled 'Htarwara Myat Aung-7'

trawler to the dockyard at Twantay canal at 5 am on that day.

## High Level Task Force meeting held in Yangon

NAY PYI TAW, 20 March—The First Meeting of the High Level Task Force (HLTF) on Strengthening the ASEAN Secretariat and Reviewing the ASEAN Organs was held at Sedona Hotel in Yangon from 18<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> March.

The representatives discussed drafting the Rules of Procedure (ROP) and Work Plan for the HLTF, identifying the ASEAN Organs to be prioritized in the review process and reexamined the role and functions of ASEAN Organs.

A series of HLTF meetings will be held in other ASEAN Member States with the aim of exploring ways and means to strengthen the ASEAN Secretariat and to review the ASEAN Organs.

The meeting was chaired by U Aung Bwa, Retired Director-General, as Myanmar Representative to HLTF. The meeting was attended by HLTF representatives and delegates from ASEAN Member States and the ASEAN Secretariat.

MNA

## Special weather news

NAY PYI TAW, 20 March—According to the observations at 11:30 hrs M.S.T on Thursday, under the influence of West-

ern disturbances, rain or thundershowers are likely to be scattered in Sagaing, Mandalay and Taninthayi Regions, Kachin, Shan and

Mon States and isolated in the remaining Regions and States within next five days commencing on Thursday afternoon.—MNA

## Slight earthquake jolts inside Myanmar

NAY PYI TAW, 20 March—A slight earthquake of magnitude 4.5 Richter Scale with its epicenter inside Myanmar,

(about 35 mile east-south-east of Mawlaik), about 135 miles north west of Mandalay seismological observatory was recorded

at 10 hrs 28 min 54 sec M.S.T on Thursday, announced the Meteorology and Hydrology Department.—MNA

## Carpenter, masonry, mechanic course kicks off

FALAM, 20 March—Falam Township Rural Development Department conducted the training course for carpenter, masonry and me-

chanic subjects at the hall of Varlon Village Basic Education High School in Falam Township on Monday. Altogether 50 trainees from Varlon and its nearby

villages are attending the 12-day course.

The training was aimed at generating job opportunities for local people.—District IPRD



**A trawler seen in sinking at Twantay Canal, Yangon Region.**

Htarwara Myat Aung-7 sank in the water as it hit the part of light-

house. No casualty was reported due to the incident.—Soe Win-MLA



## LOCAL NEWS

## Thriving cow pea plantations help increase farmer's income in Pantanaw Township

PANTANAW, 20 March—Due to favorable climate pattern, cow pea is cultivated in Kalasu Village in Pantanaw Township in Ayeyawady Region with good results, according to local authorities.

There are two methods for growing cow pea. After two months, cow pea saplings are required to weed for the first time. They are grown in October without the use of fertilizer and harvested in late January. They can, however, not be cultivated in rainy season, said a farmer.

Most of the farmers in Kalasu Village cultivate cow pea, black bean, green gram and corn in winter season.—Soe Win (SP)



Photo shows thriving cow pea plantation in Pantanaw Township.

## Staff proficiency uplifted in Rakhine State

SITTWAY, 20 March—A staff proficiency course, conducted by the Agriculture Department, was opened at the hall of the Rakhine State Agriculture Department in Sittway on 18 March.

Rakhine State Minister for Agriculture and Livestock Breeding U Tha Lu Chay, in his address, said that staff from various fields have a wide knowl-

edge of the development of agricultural technology. The staff are to give training to local farmers at agricultural centres, he added.

Head of the State Agriculture Department U Khin Maung Win explained the purpose of the training course. The two-day course was attended by 50 trainees from townships of the state.

Rakhine State IPRD

## Singu Township to get new school building

SINGU, 20 March—Rays Construction Co is constructing a new school building at the Basic Education High School (Branch) in Htongyi Village, Singu

Township in Mandalay Region.

Under the supervision of Headmistress Daw Cho Cho Myint, the school is being constructed with over K 48 million funded by the State and people and is expected to be completed by June.

“Construction work of the school started on 6 February and the estimated cost is over K 55 million” said Managing Director U Tun Tun Oo of the company.—Win Maung (Singu)

## Meiktila war veterans receive cash donation



An official presents cash assistance to war veterans in Meiktila Township.

MEIKTILA, 20 March—To mark the 69<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Armed Forces Day, the Meiktila War Veterans Organizing Committee provided K 2.765 million to its 160 members on Thursday at the hall of its committee in Meiktila Township, Mandalay Region.

At the ceremony, officials of the committee presented K 20,000 each to over 60 elderly persons, and 12 disabled veterans who lost parts of their body in wars. K 15,000 each went to another 89 disabled men with amputations.

Thein Myint Kyaw (Meiktila)

## CCTVs to be installed in Meiktila Market to prevent crimes



MEIKTILA, 20 March—Four closed-circuit television camera (CCTV) will be installed in Meiktila market, with one already installed in front of Zaygyi market—a crowded part of

the market, according to an official from the Market Office of the Meiktila Township Development Affairs Committee.

It is aimed at preventing or at least recording

crimes, giving a sense of security for both buyers and sellers.

The 13.198-acre Meiktila Market is divided into three main parts—Zaygyi market with 1,443 booths, the Central market with 464 booths and Padaukmyine market with 354 booths.

Meiktila is one of the most developed towns in Mandalay Region.

Chan Tha (Meiktila)

## People of Mohnyin District hope for electrification

MOHNYIN, 20 March—Spending the rural development and poverty alleviation fund, Mohnyin District of Kachin State plans to implement electrification in rural areas in the 2014-15 fiscal year, according to Deputy Commissioner of the district U Aung Soe Moe.

In a meeting with local people on tour of Mohnyin, Kachin State Chief Minister U La John Ngai Seng said that arrangements are being made for the supply of electricity in the whole of Kachin State. Plans are underway to electrify the villages nearby the power grid for the first phase, to

supply hydropower to the regions which are far from power grids for the second phase and to supply electricity to other regions with solar power for the third phase.

In 2014-15 FY, small sub-power stations will be built in Mohnyin and Mogaung townships to supply electricity to 102 villages on a priority basis.

Some village-tracts of Mohnyin District are striving for electrification on a self-reliant basis to get power from the national grids but some village-tracts face difficulties for such works.

Kyaw Soe Lay



Photo shows people in groups and individuals taking relaxation at Nammeisai Creek near Punthun Ward, near Tachilek-Monghsat Road in Tachilek on Thursday as temperature is higher and higher as of mid-March this year.—MYANMA ALINN

## Possible debris off Australia a 'credible lead' for missing Malaysia jet

SYDNEY/KUALA LUMPUR, 20 March — Aircraft and ships ploughed through bad weather on Thursday in search of floating objects in remote seas off Australia that Malaysia's government called a "credible lead" in the trans-continental hunt for a jetliner missing for 12 days. The large objects, which Australian officials said were spotted by satellite four days ago in one of the remotest parts of the globe, are the most promising lead in days as searchers scour a vast area for the lost plane with 239 people on board.

Officials cautioned it could take several days to confirm if they were parts of the Malaysia Airlines Boeing 777, and Malaysia's government said the search would continue elsewhere despite the possible sighting in the southern Indian Ocean.

The area where the objects were spotted is around 2,500 km (1,500 miles) southwest of Perth in western Australia. "Yesterday I said that we wanted to reduce the area of the search. We now have a credible lead," Malaysian Transport Minister Hishammuddin Hussein told reporters

in Kuala Lumpur. "There remains much work to be done to deploy the assets. This work will continue overnight."

Hishammuddin said the information on the objects received from Australia had been "corroborated to a certain extent" by other satellites, making it more credible than previous leads.

The larger of the objects measured up to 24 metres (79 ft), long and appeared to be floating in water several thousand meters deep, Australian officials said. The second object was about five meters (16 feet) long. Arrows on the images pointed to two distinct objects apparently bobbing in the water. "It's credible enough to divert the research to this area on the basis it provides a promising lead to what might be wreckage from the debris field," Royal Australian Air Force Air Commodore John McGarry told a news conference in Canberra.

No confirmed wreckage from Flight MH370 has been found since it vanished from air traffic control screens off Malaysia's east coast early on 8 March, less than an hour after taking

off from Kuala Lumpur for Beijing.

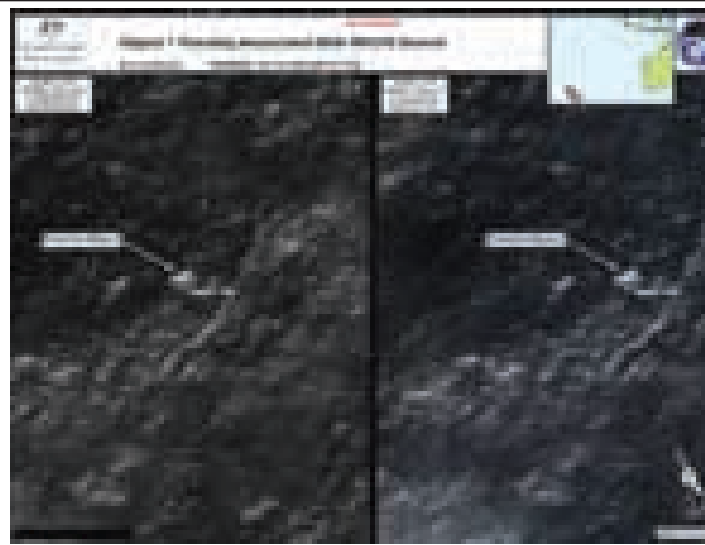
Another official in Malaysia said investigators were "hopeful but cautious" about the Australian discovery.

The satellite images, provided by US company DigitalGlobe, are stamped with a record date of 16 March, meaning that the possible debris could by now have drifted far from the original site.

Australian officials said an aircraft had dropped a series of marker buoys in the area, which will provide information about currents to assist in calculating the latest location.

The captain of the first Australian air force AP-3C Orion plane to return from the search area described the weather conditions as "extremely bad" with rough seas and high winds, and said there was no sign of any objects.

"The weather conditions were such that we were unable to see for very much of the flight today but the other aircraft that are searching, they may have better conditions," Royal Australian Air Force Flight Lieutenant Chris Birrer told reporters.—Reuters



Satellite imagery provided to Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) of objects that may be possible debris of the missing Malaysia Airlines Flight MH370 in a revised area 185 km (115 miles) to the south east of the original search area in this picture released by AMSA on 20 March, 2014.

REUTERS

## Four men found guilty of gang-raping photojournalist in Mumbai

MUMBAI, 20 March — Four men were found guilty on Thursday of the gang-rape of a photojournalist last year in Mumbai, an attack that sparked street protests in the city and raised fresh questions about attitudes to women in the world's largest democracy.

Women's safety in India has been under the spotlight since the gang-rape and murder of a student on a bus in Delhi in 2012, which provoked nationwide protests and the introduction of tougher sexual assault laws, yet an ongoing stream of high-profile attacks has raised concerns that little has changed.

The four men convicted of gang-rape are due to be sentenced on Friday, prosecution lawyer Ujjwal Nikam told reporters outside the Mumbai court where the case was heard.

Under the stricter laws brought in last year, the men face a life sentence. It was not immediately clear whether they would appeal against the verdict. "Today's verdict will send a strong message to criminals," R. R. Patil, home minister for Maharashtra, the state where Mumbai is located, told reporters outside the court. A juvenile charged for his involvement in the case is being tried separately.—Reuters

## Ukraine crisis not affecting Japan-Russia trade ties so far

TOKYO, 20 March — The Japanese government has so far not seen its trade with Russia affected by the ongoing Ukraine crisis, industry minister Toshimitsu Motegi said on Thursday, although global tension has heightened over Moscow's move to annex the Crimea region. Noting that Russia is a key supplier of resources to Japan, the minister told a press conference, "At this point, we do not see any impact on bilateral trade and specific projects. But we will pay close attention to the international situation."

According to the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, Russia supplies about 10 percent of liquefied natural gas imported annually to Japan. The value of bilateral trade, meanwhile, has hit new record highs for three years in a row, with the sum reaching \$34.8 billion in 2013.

Finance Minister Taro Aso said at a separate news conference on Thursday that he does not expect Japan's economy to be affected by the sanctions against Russia's intervention in the Crimea peninsula imposed by Western countries.

Kyodo News

## Japan, N Korea to restart gov't dialogue at early

SHENYANG, 20 March — Japanese and North Korean diplomats have agreed to work toward the resumption of formal intergovernmental talks for the first time since November 2012 "as soon as possible," a Japanese official said on Thursday.

The agreement was reached during informal talks between the diplomats on the sidelines of a two-day meeting of the two countries' Red Cross societies in the northeastern Chinese city Shenyang, according to the

official, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

The Red Cross meeting just ended. The informal talks on Wednesday and Thursday between Keiichi Ono, director of the Northeast Asia Division of the Japanese Foreign Ministry, and Ryu Song Il, chief of the Japanese affairs section at the North Korean Foreign Ministry, were "sincere and constructive" the official said.

Formal intergovernmental negotiations between

Japan and North Korea were suspended in the wake of Pyongyang's launch in December 2012 of what it says was a satellite. Other countries condemned the launch as a covert test of long-range missile technology in violation of UN Security Council resolutions.

If government-to-government negotiations were resumed, they would likely be at a director-general level. The issue of Japanese nationals North Korean agents abducted in the 1970s and

1980s would be a major agenda item for the two governments.

For Japan, the abduction issue remains a major obstacle to normalizing bilateral relations with North Korea.

The agreement between the diplomats in the Chinese city was made after the parents of a Japanese woman who was abducted by North Korea more than three decades ago were able to see their granddaughter for the first time last week.

The parents of Megumi Yokota, seen as a symbol of the long-unresolved abduction issue, were allowed by North Korea to secretly meet her daughter, Kim Eun Gyong, in the Mongolian capital of Ulan Bator. Megumi went missing on her way home from school in 1977, when she was 13. No information regarding her whereabouts was given while her parents spent time with their 26-year-old granddaughter and her family for five days.—Kyodo News

## Tokyo subway station commemorates 19th anniversary of nerve gas attack

TOKYO, 20 March — Tokyo subway officials commemorated the 19th anniversary on Thursday morning of the AUM Shinrikyo cult's deadly sarin nerve gas attack that killed 13 and injured over 6,000 people at subway stations in central Tokyo.

Some 20 employees of Tokyo Metro Co observed a moment of silence at Kasumigaseki station to mourn victims of the

attack on 20 March, 1995. Two company employees were killed by the attack at the station.

"Our duty is to protect safety every day and we need to ensure people can commute with peace of mind," said area manager Mitsuaki Ota.

The subway operator set up a stand at Kasumigaseki and five other stations where lives were lost to allow people to offer

flowers.

A total of 13 members of the cult, including Chizuo Matsumoto, the 59-year-old founder more commonly known as Shoko Asahara, have been sentenced to death over the gas attack and a series of other crimes.

Criminal trials for three others who had been on the run until recently are awaiting judgments.

Kyodo News



Employees of Tokyo Metro Co observe a moment of silence at Kasumigaseki station in Tokyo on 20 March, 2014, the 19th anniversary of the AUM Shinrikyo cult's deadly sarin nerve gas attack that killed 13 and injured over 6,000 people at subway stations in central Tokyo, including Kasumigaseki.—KYODO NEWS



## UNSG'S message on The International Day of Forests

21 March 2014

Forests are the lungs of our planet. They cover one-third of all land area, and are home to 80 per cent of terrestrial biodiversity. They are crucial for addressing a multitude of sustainable development imperatives, from poverty eradication to food security, from mitigating and adapting to climate change to reducing disaster risk.

It is estimated that 1.6 billion people depend on forests for food, fuel, shelter and income. The World Health Organization estimates that between 65 and 80 per cent of people rely on medicines derived from forests as their primary form of health care.

Not only do forests provide essential economic safety nets for a significant number of the world's poor, they underpin economies at all levels. Round wood production, wood processing and the pulp and paper industries account for nearly 1 per cent of global Gross Domestic Product. Non-monetary benefits from forests, such as water, energy, shelter and medicine, are estimated to be two to three times as great. Forested catchments supply three-quarters of freshwater, which is essential for agriculture, industry, energy supply and domestic use.

The International Day of Forests is dedicated to raising awareness about the importance of all types of forests and trees to our economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being. However awareness must be coupled with concrete action. As we deliberate on the post-2015 development agenda, let us acknowledge the vital role of forests and pledge to work together to protect and sustainably manage these vital ecosystems.

UNIC/Yangon

## Taleban suicide bombers attack police station in Afghanistan

JALALABAD, (Afghanistan), 20 March — Taleban fighters killed at least four people and wounded 20 in a suicide car bomb attack and gunbattle at a police station in Afghanistan's eastern Jalalabad city early on Thursday morning, according to police and health officials.

The attack started just before dawn, and a fire-fight raged for more than three hours after the initial explosion. Police reckoned around half a dozen fighters were involved in the assault. Most had been killed, but the police were unsure exactly how many fighters were still holding out.

"Five suicide bombers have been killed so far and a clearance operation is ongoing," said police spokesman Hazrat Hussain Mashriqiwal.

The Taleban sent a text message to media claiming responsibility for the attack on the police station, located close to compounds used by international agencies, including the United Nations, security officials said.

Reuters

## Iran, six powers lock horns over nuclear reactor that could yield plutonium

VIENNA, 20 March — Iran and world powers locked horns on Wednesday over the future of a planned Iranian nuclear reactor that could yield plutonium for bombs as the United States warned "hard work" will be needed to overcome differences when the sides reconvene in April.

The meeting in Vienna was the second in a series that the six nations — the United States, China, Russia, Germany, France, Britain — hope will produce a verifiable settlement on the scope of Iran's nuclear programme, ensuring it is oriented to peaceful ends only, and put to rest the risk of a new Middle East war.

This week the two sides endeavored to iron out their positions on two of the thorniest issues: the level of uranium enrichment conducted in Iran, and its Arak heavy-water reactor that the West sees as a possible source of plutonium for bombs.

They appeared to reach no agreements and said only that they would meet again



European Union foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton (L) and Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif smile at the start of a conference in Vienna on 19 March, 2014. — REUTERS

on 7-9 April, also in the Austrian capital. However, Teheran's foreign minister voiced optimism that their 20 July deadline for a final agreement was within reach.

The broad goal is to transcend ingrained mutual mistrust and give the West confidence that Iran will not be able to produce atomic bombs while Teheran — in return — would win full relief from economic

sanctions hamstringing the OPEC state's economy.

Iran denies that its declared civilian atomic energy programme is a front for developing the means to make nuclear weapons, but its restrictions on UN inspections and Western intelligence about bomb-relevant research have raised concerns. "We had substantive and useful discussions, covering a set of issues, including en-

richment, the Arak reactor, civil nuclear cooperation and sanctions," European Union foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton told reporters after the two-day session. The United States has called on Iran to scrap or radically alter the as yet-uncompleted reactor, but Teheran has so far rejected that idea while hinting it could modify the plant.

Reuters



File photo taken in October 2013 shows the Tokyo headquarters of the General Association of Korean Residents in Japan, a pro-Pyongyang Korean residents' group known as Chongryon, in central Tokyo's Chiyoda Ward. KYODO NEWS

## Runner-up bidder given right to acquire pro-N Korea group's Tokyo HQ

TOKYO, 20 March — The Tokyo District Court said on Thursday the runner-up bidder in an auction has been awarded the right to acquire the building and land of the Tokyo headquarters of a pro-Pyongyang Korean residents' group.

The court will now examine the documents submitted by Marunaka Holdings to decide whether to formally approve the sale of the property owned by the General Association of Korean Residents in Japan, known as Chongryon, in central Tokyo's Chiyoda Ward, to the Japanese real estate company based in Takamatsu, Kagawa Prefecture. The court will announce the decision on

Monday. Marunaka Holdings has offered 2.21 billion yen to buy the property against the minimum sale price of about 2.13 billion yen.

In January, the court invalidated an offer by Avar Limited Liability Co of Mongolia, which won the auction held last October, as some of the documents submitted by the company were copies rather than originals. It offered 5.01 billion yen for the properties.

Marunaka Holdings was the only other competitor in the auction. The Japanese company is expected to demand Chongryon to vacate the property. "We absolutely cannot accept this unjust procedure," Chongryon

said in a statement issued after the court decision.

Chongryon said the decision is quite disadvantageous for the group as the amount to be used to repay debts will go down 2.8 billion yen as the result of the latest outcome.

The group said it will file an appeal should the court formally approve the sale. In 2012, the court decided to auction Chongryon's headquarters as demanded by the Japanese government-backed Resolution and Collection Corp, which is owed about 62.7 billion yen by Chongryon following the collapse of financial institutions in Japan for pro-North Korean residents.—Kyodo News

## Japan, US, S Korea look to hold summit next week in Netherlands

TOKYO, 20 March — The governments of Japan, the United States and South Korea are planning a possible summit next week in the Netherlands, where their leaders will join an international conference, Japanese sources said on Thursday.

It would provide an opportunity for Prime Minister Shinzo Abe to hold his first such meeting with South Korean President Park Geun Hye amid bilateral tensions over some historical issues, signaling a chance for the two neighbours to improve their relations, as hoped for by the United States, which has strategic interests in East Asia.

Abe, Park and US President Barack Obama are widely expected to hold talks on the sidelines of the Nuclear Security Summit scheduled for Monday and Tuesday in The Hague, where participants, also including some European leaders, may gather on the margins to discuss countermeasures against Russia over its intervention in Ukraine. The Japanese government announced Abe will attend the summit.

"We have issues to be addressed between Japan

and South Korea," Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida told reporters. "But we have also said that high-level political dialogues are necessary only because we are in a difficult situation."

Kishida declined to elaborate the possible trilateral summit in The Hague but said, "We hope South Korea will accept" such dialogues. A Japanese government source said South Korea has yet to inform Tokyo of its intention to participate in the summit.

Tokyo and Seoul have been at odds over a South-Korean-held, Japan-claimed islets and their differing perceptions of history, including issues stemming from Japan's wartime aggression in the area.

Abe has yet to meet with South Korean leaders since he took office in December 2012. Park assumed the presidency in February 2013. In its relations with South Korea, Japan earlier fueled tensions by indicating it could retract its 1993 apology for forcing Korean women into sexual slavery in military brothels during World War II.

Kyodo News

Length from east to west .....	35 feet [to the end of the staircases]	
Length from east to west .....	298 feet [to the end of the floor]	
Breadth from north to south .....	165 feet [to the end of the staircases]	
Breadth from north to south .....	112 feet [to the end of the floor]	
Height of the floor .....	14 feet [above ground]	
(a) The main hall.....	length .....	102 feet      6 inches
	breadth .....	75 feet      6 inches
	height .....	72 feet      4 inches
(b) The Image house with		
a 7 tier spire .....	length .....	36 feet      6 inches
	breadth .....	36 feet      6 inches
	height .....	94 feet      3 inches
(c) Sanu Saung .....	length .....	18 feet
	breadth .....	22 feet
	height.....	35 feet      4 inches
(d) Bawga Saung		
[meal room and stores]	length.....	54 feet      9 inches
	breadth .....	36 feet      6 inches
	height .....	35 feet      4 inches
Total Nos of Brick staircases.....	8	
Total Nos of teak columns .....	346	
Sand stone sockets under the teak columns .....	346	
Diameter of each teak column .....	22 inches	



## LOCAL NEWS

## Yangon East General Hospital cleaned with efforts by social organizations



Welfare Supervisory Committee carried out sanitation at Yangon East General Hospital in Botahtaung Township, Yangon East District, on 18 March. Officials of Yangon Region WAO and MCWSC other donors have K 1.27 million and hospital equipment worth K 6.37 million to Medical Superintendent Dr Daw Hla Hla Kyi.

YANGON, 20 March— Yangon Region Women's Affairs Organization and Maternal and Child

Aung Than (Mingala Taungnyunt)

## NGOs, social organizations emphasize child protection



YANGON, 20 March— The Yangon Region Committee of the Child Rights held a coordination meeting of social organizations at the hall of Mingun Tipitaka Nikaya in Dagon Township on 18 March.

U Tin Zaw Moe, Secretary of the committee, Head of Yangon Region Social Welfare Department, said that the government is carrying out courses on health and nutrition, availability of safe water, sanitation, development of education and child protection by laying down the child right national plan (2006-2015). Responsible persons of NGOs and social organizations such as UNICEF, Save the Children, TDHL, Good Neighbour, AAR (Japan), Yadana

Myityta recounted their experiences and challenges and discussed future tasks.

Myanmar joined The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1991. The government enacted the Child Law in 1993 and Child Rules in 2001 for protecting the rights of the child.

Aung Than (Mingala Taungnyunt)

## Health workers in Hpa-an Tsp, Kayin State to teach about hygiene



HPA-AN, 20 March— Health workers who have just completed a medical course are to provide health care for local people in their respective regions and give educational talks on personal hygiene, said Chief Minister for Kayin State U Zaw Min at the

concluding ceremony of the training course at Tay-okhla Station Hospital in Hpa-an Township, Kayin State, on 13 March.

The trainees must continue research on medical science, he added.

The head of the Kayin State Health Department

and a representative of the Malteser International Jill Mololeny explained health matters to the trainees.

The course was attended by 10 female and male trainees from 13 February to 13 March.

Tun Tun Htwe (Hpa-an)

## Taxi transport service launched in Loikaw

LOIKAW, 20 March— Shwe Yati taxi stand was launched in front of the war veterans organization office on Lawpita Road in Lawdhamma Ward of Loikaw, Kayah State, on 15 March. Ten taxis provide passenger and commodity transport services to locals.

Aimed at enabling the local visitors and globe-trotters to enjoy the natural scenic beauty of Kayah State and traditional culture, the taxis run the services at respective rates as decided by the authorities concerned, said in-charge



of the taxi stand U Khin Maung Kyaw.

Peace has been restored in Kayah State, as growing number of visitors

arrive in Kayah State day by day. Therefore transport services are being run for travellers.—Kye Myint Naing (Loikaw)

## Girls of Sittway Tsp get tailoring training

SITTWAY, 20 March—A basic tailoring course was opened at the hall of Rakhine State General Administration Department in Sittway on 18 March.

Speaker of Rakhine State Hluttaw U Htein Lin explained the purpose of conducting the training course for girls.

The Speaker presented K 1 million donated by State Hluttaw to Patron of Rakhine State Women's Affairs Organization Daw Nu Nu Zan and Chairperson of Rakhine State Ma-

ternal and Child Welfare Supervisory Committee Daw Nyo Nyo Wai Lwin and party.

Course instructor Daw San Nu Khaing discussed matters related to the training course. Program Manager U Ko Ko Lwin of Myanmar Resource Foundation donated six sewing machines to officials of State WAO and MCWSC.

Altogether 50 trainees are attending the one-month course.

Rakhine State IPRD



## Venezuela arrests one opposition mayor, jails another

CARACAS, 20 March — Venezuelan intelligence agents on Wednesday arrested one opposition mayor accused of stoking violent protests, while another was jailed for 10 months in the latest moves against rivals of President Nicolas Maduro.

The steps follow court orders instructing mayors of opposition-run municipalities to dismantle street barricades set up by demonstrators, which have become flashpoints for more than a month of unrest that has killed 31 people.

Daniel Ceballos, mayor of the hard-hit city of San Cristobal near the Colombian border, was detained by the national intelligence service Sebin and accused of “civil rebellion.”

Interior Minister Miguel Rodriguez Torres, who also heads Sebin, told state TV that Ceballos was detained by agents acting

on an order from court in western Tachira state.

“This is an act of justice for a mayor who not only failed to meet his obligations under the law, but also facilitated and supported all the irrational violence in this city,” he said.

“In the coming hours he will be presented before the corresponding tribunals to begin the judgment process.”

An aide to Ceballos said he was arrested in Caracas, where he had been attending a meeting of opposition mayors.

San Cristobal, home to some 250,000 people, has been the focus of the most sustained fights between hooded demonstrators barricading roads, armed pro-government radicals, and the security forces.

Torres said a member of the National Guard was shot dead in the city on Wednesday during what he called “vandalistic acts”



*Anti-government protesters shout during a protest against Nicolas Maduro's government at Altamira square in Caracas on 19 March, 2014.—REUTERS*

by protesters targeting a national armed forces university.

Later on Wednesday, the Supreme Court jailed another opposition mayor, Enzo Scarano of San Diego in central Carabobo state, for 10 months and 15 days

for failing to comply with a previous order to take down barricades there.

In a statement, the court said Scarano would be stopped from exercising his functions as mayor.

“All our solidarity with Enzo Scarano

before this indescribable aggression,” tweeted Ramon Muchacho, mayor of the staunchly pro-opposition Chacao municipality in eastern Caracas, which has been the site of near-nightly street clashes.

*Reuters*

## Fukushima school marks graduation of only remaining pupil

FUKUSHIMA, (Japan), 20 March — An elementary school in Fukushima Prefecture on Thursday held a graduation ceremony for its only pupil left after the 2011 disasters.

Onami Elementary School invited local community members to the ceremony held for the graduation of Takashi Sato, 12. The school will close in April with no newcomers to enroll.

“I made a lot of memories, especially this year in sixth grade, such as studying one on one with the teacher,” Sato said.

In the 2010 school year, 41 pupils attended the school. But the nuclear crisis that occurred about 50 kilometres away from the school after the March 2011 earthquake and tsunami forced many residents to evacuate, causing the number of pupils at the school to decline to 30 in 2011, 10 in 2012 and one in 2013.

Meanwhile, Mano Elementary School in Minamisoma, another school in the prefecture that will close next month, also held a graduation ceremony on Thursday for 10 pupils.

According to the local education board, 477 public elementary schools in Fukushima Prefecture held graduation ceremonies on the same day for some 18,000 pupils.

*Kyodo News*

## Russian forces seize two Ukrainian bases in Crimea



*Armed men stand at the entrance of the naval headquarters in Sevastopol, on 19 March, 2014.—REUTERS*

SEVASTOPOL, 20 March — The United States warned Moscow it was on a “dark path” to isolation on Wednesday as Russian troops seized two Ukrainian naval bases, including a headquarters in the Crimean port of Sevastopol where they raised their flag.

The dramatic seizure came as Russia and the West dug in for a long confrontation over Moscow's annexation of Crimea, with the United States and

Europe groping for ways to increase pressure on a defiant Russian President Vladimir Putin.

“As long as Russia continues on this dark path, they will face increasing political and economic isolation,” said US Vice President Joe Biden, referring to reports of armed attacks against Ukrainian military personnel in Crimea.

Biden was in the Lithuanian capital, Vilnius, as part of a quick trip to

reassure Baltic allies worried about what an emboldened Russia might mean for their nations. Lithuania, along with Estonia and Latvia, are NATO members. “There is an attempt, using brutal force, to redraw borders of the European states and to destroy the postwar architecture of Europe,” Lithuanian President Dalia Grybauskaitė said.

The head of NATO warned that Putin may not stop with the annexation of Crimea and urged Europe to step up defence spending in response to the crisis. “Crimea is one example. But I see Crimea as an element in a greater pattern, in a more long-term Russian, or at least Putin, strategy,” Secretary-General Anders Fogh Rasmussen told a Washington think tank. “So of course our major concern now is whether he will go beyond Crimea.—Reuters

## US searching aircraft picks up radar signature of large object

CANBERRA, 20 March — A reporter on board a US P-8 aircraft searching for Malaysia Airlines Flight MH370 said on Thursday that the crew have picked up radar signals of a large object in the Indian Ocean possibly linked to the missing plane.

The radar is getting “hits of significant size” and the crew are trying to get visuals on hits, US

broadcaster ABC said in a tweet quoting correspondent David Wright.

“All indications something down there,” added the tweet.

The post came shortly after Australian authorities said two objects have been spotted in the southern Indian Ocean on satellite imagery that might be related to the missing Boeing 777 aircraft.—Xinhua

## Portrait of 16th century Japanese Christian emissary to Rome found

ROME, 20 March — A portrait believed to be that of Ito Mancio, one of the four young emissaries sent to Rome by a feudal lord in Japan in the 16th Century, has been found in Italy, according to an official of a Milan foundation who conducted research and published a paper.

The portrait is owned by a person who lives in northern Italy and is affiliated with the Trivulzio foundation, and the artwork carries an inscription “Mansio” (sic) on the back, according to Paola Di Rico, the author of the paper who is in charge of



*Supplied photo shows a portrait believed to be that of Ito Mancio, one of the four young emissaries sent to Rome by a feudal lord in Japan in the 16th century. The artwork, which has been found in Italy, carries an inscription “Mansio” (sic) on the back.—KYODO NEWS*

archive management at the foundation.

Based on documentary evidence about the Tensho mission and appraisal by experts, Di Rico concluded that it was painted by Domenico Tintoretto when the Japanese envoys visited the northern city of Venice in 1585. Domenico is the son of Tintoretto, a noted Italian Renaissance painter.

The four-boy mission was sent to seek support for Christian missionary work in Japan and had an audience with Pope Gregory XIII in 1585 and returned to Japan in 1590.

*Kyodo News*

## French FM says to pay first visit to Cuba

PARIS, 20 March — French Foreign Affairs Minister Laurent Fabius on Wednesday said he would soon travel to Cuba, the first such visit in three decades in a move to improve diplomatic and economic links with Havana. “I will soon go to Cuba, which is something new,” the daily *Le Figaro* quoted Fabius as saying during a news conference with his Brazilian counterpart Luiz Alberto Figueiredo.

The report added that the due visit would take place before the summer in a bid to assess the Caribbean island nation's market-oriented reforms and pledges to improve human rights and to give impetus to bilateral economic ties.

France and its European partners suspended partnership links with Cuba in 2003 but resumed relations five years later.

According to the daily report, about 60 French firms were in Cuba including Accor, Bouygues and Total.—Xinhua



## WORLD

## Digital radio network set up for G20 summit in Australia's Brisbane

BRISBANE, (Australia), 20 March — A new digital radio communications network has been established for emergency workers and police for the G20 summit in Brisbane, Australia, the Queensland government announced on Thursday.

Queensland IT Minister Ian Walker said earlier the government wireless network allows emergency services to share information instantly and coordinate between multiple agencies during the G20 Summit in November.

"The first mobile radios have been installed in two fire service vehicles, 80 police vehicles have the new equipment and the Queensland Police Service has received 100 portable radios in preparation for G20," he said in a statement.

The minister said 700 fire, ambulance and police vehicles will have the new equipment installed by August.—Xinhua

## Textbooks to improve children's English speaking

BEIJING, 20 March — A new series of English textbooks for primary school students from the third grade to the fifth grade was published in Beijing on Wednesday.

The new textbooks, named Hello Learner's English, were jointly published by the Cambridge University Press and Lejiale English Teaching, which is affiliated with TAL Education Group, one of the most popular private education companies in Beijing.

Wu Xiaowei, director of Lejiale English Teaching, said the new textbooks were published as a result of China's English testing policy changes that began last year. Ren Zhen, an English professor from Capital Normal University in Beijing, said students will find the new textbooks more interesting. There is also an app that students can use to improve their pronunciation.—Xinhua

## Colombian president confirms ouster of Bogota mayor



*Bogota's Mayor Gustavo Petro gives a speech during a protest at Mayor building in Bogota city on 28 Feb, 2014 file photo. —REUTERS*

BOGOTA, 20 March — The mayor of Colombia's capital city Bogota was ousted from his post on Wednesday, President Juan Manuel Santos said in a controversial decision that could affect May presidential elections and a peace

process with left-wing rebels.

Gustavo Petro, 53, a former guerrilla, was dismissed from his post by

the inspector general in December last year over mismanagement but stayed pending a run of judicial appeals, the last of which ended on Tuesday and did not reverse the decision.

His dismissal and a 15-year ban from holding public office was viewed as too harsh, even among those who did not support Petro. The case has become a political hot potato amid perceptions the decision may have sought to undermine leftists.

The Inter-American Commission of Human Rights called late on Tuesday for the decision by Colombia's highest judicial authority judging cases involving government bodies to suspend its decision and allow Petro to serve the rest of his mandate.

But in a declaration naming Labour Minister Rafael Pardo Rueda interim mayor, Santos said that request was not legally binding, that Petro's appeal process had been exhaustive and his dismissal was now unavoidable.

"I have received official communication from the inspector general in which he solicits the dismissal by decree of the mayor of Bogota, Gustavo Petro Urrego, and I have to proceed in conformity with the constitution and the laws," Santos said.

Santos said the Council of State, the last entity to hear the judicial appeal, had informed Petro that he still had other mechanisms of judicial defence to which he could turn, without giving further detail.—Reuters

## Two army officers, teenager killed in violence in Egypt

CAIRO, 20 March — Ten people were killed in violence across Egypt on Wednesday, months ahead of a presidential vote meant to put Egypt back on a democratic path after last July's army takeover.

In Qalubiya Province, north of Cairo, two soldiers were killed in a shootout with Islamist militants, the Interior Ministry said, adding that six militants were killed and eight arrested in a raid on a weapons storage facility. A 13-year-old boy was shot dead in southern Egypt and one man was killed in Cairo, both in clashes between police and supporters of deposed elected President Mohamed Mursi of the Muslim Brotherhood, the health ministry said.

Violence, which has dogged Egypt since a popular uprising toppled autocrat Hosni Mubarak in 2011, is expected to intensify as the country prepares

for a presidential vote that army chief Field Marshal Abdel Fattah al-Sisi is expected to win easily.

The Interior Ministry said the two soldiers were killed in a raid on members of Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis, Egypt's most active militant group. The Sinai-based group has claimed responsibility for several high-profile attacks, including an assassination attempt on the interior minister last year.

A health official said a 13-year-old boy was shot dead in clashes between police and pro-Mursi protesters in the city of Beni Suef, south of Cairo. The Interior Ministry said 12 protesters were arrested.

Demonstrations also took place in several places in the capital. Medical sources said around 40 pro-Mursi demonstrators were wounded by birdshot or tear gas near Cairo University.—Reuters



*A riot policeman holds his weapon during clashes with al-Azhar University students, who are supporting the Muslim Brotherhood and deposed President Mohamed Mursi, on the university campus in Cairo's Nasr City District, on 19 March, 2014.—REUTERS*



*US Vice President Joe Biden (R) meets the press along with Lithuanian President Dalia Grybauskaitė (C) and Latvian President Andris Berzins in Vilnius, Lithuania, on 19 March, 2014. Biden reaffirmed US military protection of the Baltic region during a meeting on Wednesday with the presidents of Lithuania and Latvia.—XINHUA*

## Nigerian gov't gives automatic employment to families of stampede incidents victims

ABUJA, 20 March — Families whose loved ones died in stampede incidents across Nigeria last week-end will get automatic employment into the Nigeria Immigration Service, the government announced on Wednesday. More than 18 deaths were reported in Nigeria's capital city Abuja last Saturday and other states where recruitment exercises were held by the immigration department. The exercises in different states were marred by stampedes, resulting in the deaths and injuries of job seekers, thereby causing public outcry over the avoidable incidents.

But respite came the way of bereaved families

when the government considered automatic employment into the paramilitary organization for relatives of the dead. The decision came after Wednesday's Federal Executive Council (FEC) meeting, a weekly assembly of President Goodluck Jonathan and members of his cabinet.

The government also announced the indefinite cancellation of all ongoing recruitment exercises by ministries, departments and agencies in the oil rich country. Only the police and military of Africa's most populous country were exempted from this directive, the government announced in a statement.

Meanwhile, the Nige-

ria Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has commenced a thorough investigation into the recruitment tragedy of the immigration department. Apparently, the wide condemnation of the incident by Nigerians spurred the investigation by the body.

Irrked by the incident, many citizens of the West African country and human rights organizations called for the immediate removal of the Minister of Interior, Abba Moro, whose ministry supervises the activities of the Nigeria Immigration Service. The Comptroller General of the immigration department David Parradang is also under fire over the tragic incident.—Xinhua

## China launches pilot university placement courses

BEIJING, 20 March — A pilot project to improve placement courses in around 100 high schools nationwide began on Tuesday.

Dai Jiagan, deputy director of the Chinese Society of Education (CSE), said the Chinese Advance Placement courses (CAP) will give more choice to gifted and talented children. The courses cover calculus, linear algebra, probability and statistics, writing, english, physics and economics.

“The CAP will bridge the gap between university and high school,” said Wang Dianjun, president of the middle school affiliated to Tsinghua University.

According to Wang, Chinese high schools have not connected well with higher education. As a result, universities select candidates only through college entrance exams, rather than through students’ real academic performance and personal interests.

“Under the current system, excellent students, who account for 20 percent of the total, have to slow down their learning to that of the other 80 percent, and many even have to repeat what they’ve already learned,” Dai stressed. “We should give gifted students more choice.”

Dai said in China a dozen elite high schools and universities have hands together to develop CAP courses, but still lack unified standards on courses, teachers training and evaluation of students.

“We will organize a team to develop a CAP standard while launching the courses in 100 pilot schools,” he said, adding that relevant textbooks would be ready by August.

The 100 chosen high schools will be announced later this year.

Xinhua



*A girl of Uygur ethnic group dances to celebrate the Noruz Festival marking the start of spring plowing in Wupu Township, Hami, northwest China's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, on 19 March, 2014. The Noruz Festival is one of the most significant festivals shared by various ethnic groups in Xinjiang, including Kazakh, Uygur, Uzbek, and so on.—XINHUA*

## TEPCO says 15,000 tons of toxic water may need to be cleaned again

FUKUSHIMA, (Japan), 20 March — The operator of the crippled Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant said on Wednesday that it may have to clean some 15,000 tons of radioactive water all over again, as it has found its water treatment system was not working properly.

The Advanced Liquid Processing System, or ALPS, has been developed to drastically reduce the radiation level of highly contaminated water that is

accumulating at the plant. But it has been plagued with trouble and its test-run period has been prolonged.

In the latest glitch, plant operator Tokyo Electric Power Co said on Tuesday that one of the three ALPS lines was not removing radioactive substances to the level it should achieve.

A treated water sample extracted on Monday contained around 10 million becquerels per liter of beta ray-emitting

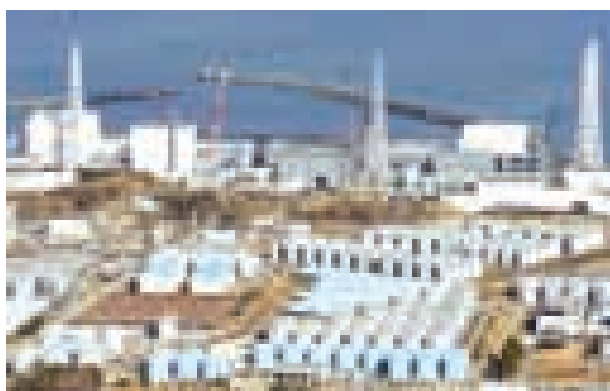
radioactive substances, such as strontium. Usually the radiation level is said to drop to around several hundred becquerels.

TEPCO suspended all three lines on Tuesday, but it said Wednesday that water that was not adequately treated may have flowed into a total of 21 tanks, each with room to store 1,000 tons, at the site. The tanks are all connected.

The 21 tanks keep about 15,000 tons of water, so workers may have to put them through the system again to reduce their radiation level, TEPCO said.

The latest incident is another blow to TEPCO as it struggles to manage enormous volumes of toxic water. The amount is increasing daily because groundwater is seeping into reactor buildings and mixing with water used to cool three reactors that melted down during the nuclear crisis that began in March 2011. TEPCO wants to reduce the radiation level of the toxic water kept in tanks by using ALPS to minimize the impact of leak incidents.

Kyodo News



*Photo taken from a Kyodo News helicopter shows the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station (back) in Fukushima Prefecture, northeastern Japan, on 11 March, 2014, the third anniversary of the Great East Japan Earthquake and tsunami that triggered a nuclear crisis at the plant. Tanks to store radioactive water can be seen in the foreground.—KYODO NEWS*

## Japan extends \$850,000 for new aid projects in Philippines

MANILA, 20 March—Japan formally awarded on Thursday eight grant projects worth more than \$850,000 for conflict-affected areas in the southern Philippine island of Mindanao.

Japanese Ambassador Toshinao Urabe signed grants amounting to \$855,325 for the construction of 18 classrooms, an agricultural training centre and four vocational training centres, mostly for youth and women.

The projects, to be spread in the Provinces of Bukidnon, Maguindanao, Davao Oriental, Sarangani and North Cotabato, are part of the Japan-Bangsamoro Initiatives for Reconstruction and Development (J-BIRD), Japan’s assistance package in support of peace and development in conflict-affected areas of Mindanao.

“These facilities will certainly empower the local youth and give them a better chance for a better life...If the community is prosperous, people will be less belligerent and inclined to seek peaceful solution,” Urabe said.

Joining the signing were Presidential Advisor on the Peace Process Undersecretary Luisito Montalbo and peace process International Monitoring Team head Maj. Gen. Abdul Samad Yaakub, among others.

The awarding of the new project grants came a week ahead of the formal signing of a final peace agreement between the Philippine government and the country’s largest rebel group the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, which is concentrated in central and southwestern Mindanao.—Kyodo News

## No of stalking cases in Japan in 2013 tops 20,000 for first time

TOKYO, 20 March — The number of recorded stalking cases hit an all-time high for the second straight year in 2013 at 21,089, topping 20,000 for the first time, the National Police Agency said in a report released on Thursday.

The total included 43 stalking cases involving the sending of e-mails to victims, a new category covered under a revision in July last year to the 2000 anti-stalking law. Police issued warnings to e-mail senders in 143 cases.

Police forces across the country have taken a tougher stance on stalkers after a senior high school girl was killed by a stalker in Mitaka in Tokyo in October 2013.

In the November-December period, the number of stalkers arrested increased 20.6 percent from a year earlier.

By gender, the number of women stalked reached 19,053, or 90.3 percent of all the victims. The largest

number of victims were in their 20s, at 34.8 percent, followed by those in their 30s at 27.5 percent, those in their 40s at 18.2 percent, and teens at 9.4 percent.

Partners and friends accounted for some 60 percent of the stalkers.

The police arrested or questioned stalkers in 1,889 cases, up 6.5 percent from a year earlier.

By charge, stalkers were arrested or questioned on suspicion of violating the anti-stalking law, blackmailing and home invasion.

The police issued warnings to stalkers in 2,452 cases, up 7.4 percent from a year earlier, and issued orders to stop stalking in 103 cases, both record highs.

Meanwhile, the police recorded an all-time high of 49,533 domestic violence cases last year, up 12.7 percent from a year earlier, hitting a record high for the 10th straight year, the report said.—Kyodo News



*A woman reads a leaflet at a job fair in the Helan County of Yinchuan City, capital of northwest China's Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, on 19 March, 2014. Job fairs were recently held in the rural areas in Ningxia where workforce are abundant. Over 70 employers took part in the job fair on Wednesday.*

XINHUA

## Toyota's Indian unit resume some operations with non-union members

MUMBAI, 20 March — Toyota Motor Corp.’s Indian unit resumed running part of the production lines at its two factories in a suburb of Bangalore on Wednesday with the help of contractors and other non-unionized workers after it was suspended due to labour problems, a company official said. With negotiations with unionized workers having hit a snag, it may take more time before the factories restart full operations.

The Japanese automaker locked up the plants on Sunday, citing the safety of workers, after almost a month of production interruption due to some labor union members’ sabotage amid a wage dispute, the company said.

Talks have been held among representatives of management, labor and the local labor office but no immediate agreement appears in sight at this moment.

A local Toyota official expressed a hope that the factories reopen by 1 April when wages are scheduled to be revised. The two plants, with combined annual capacity of 310,000 units, produce the Fortuner sport utility vehicle and other models.—Kyodo News



## ADVERTISEMENT &amp; GENERAL

**CLAIMS DAY NOTICE****MV SINAR BIAK VOY NO (390)**

Consignees of cargo carried on MV SINAR BIAK VOY NO (390) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 21.3.2014 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of H.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to 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:  
M/S SAMUDERA SHIPPING LINE**  
Phone No: 256908/378316/376797

**CLAIMS DAY NOTICE****MV OEL FREEDOM VOY NO (1403)**

Consignees of cargo carried on MV OEL FREEDOM VOY NO (1403) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 21.3.2014 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to 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: M/S BLPL SHIPPING LINE**  
Phone No: 256908/378316/376797

**CLAIMS DAY NOTICE****MV PACIFIC TRADER VOY NO (022)**

Consignees of cargo carried on MV PACIFIC TRADER VOY NO (022) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 21.3.2014 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to 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: M/S ORINET OVERSEAS  
CONTAINER LINES**  
Phone No: 256908/378316/376797

**CLAIMS DAY NOTICE****MV NOBLE BREEZE VOY NO (039)**

Consignees of cargo carried on MV NOBLE BREEZE VOY NO (039) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 21.3.2014 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.W.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to 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: M/S INTERASIA LINES**  
Phone No: 256908/378316/376797

**CLAIMS DAY NOTICE****MV PAC AQUILA VOY NO (006)**

Consignees of cargo carried on MV PAC AQUILA VOY NO (006) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 21.3.2014 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of B.S.W where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to 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  
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AGENT FOR: M/S VISA SHIPPING LINE PTE**  
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## Moroccan police seizes 75 kg of cocaine in airport

RABAT, 20 March — Moroccan police services at Casablanca airport arrested two sub-Saharan nationals and seized 75 kg of cocaine from them, the official news agency MAP reported on Wednesday.

The hard drug catch is the largest one over the past years in the Moroccan border posts, chief of the judiciary police at the airport Abdelhadi Siba told MAP.

The cocaine was hidden in car spare parts, bags and decoration items, he said.—Xinhua



*Chinese acrobats perform at the Academy Hall of Kathmandu, Nepal, on 18 March, 2014. The programme was organized by the Embassy of China in Nepal and the Department of Culture of Hebei Province.*

XINHUA

## S African political parties pledge to refrain from violence during elections

JOHANNESBURG, 20 March — South African political parties on Wednesday pledged to refrain from hostile rhetoric and all acts of violence before and during the 7 May elections.

Thirty-two parties signed the Code of Conduct in Midrand outside Johannesburg to vindicate their commitment to a free and fair election.

"We value the elections and as always, we will never intimidate, harass or be involved in any form of violence," ruling African National Congress (ANC) Secretary-General Gwede Mantashe said.

Democratic Alliance (DA) leader Helen Zille said that as the country's main opposition party, they unconditionally and wholeheartedly commit to abide by the Code of Conduct set by the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC).

Leaders of political parties should tell their members to refrain from

declaring certain areas "no go areas", said Mpho Ramakatsa, representative of the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) which advocates radical reforms.

The Code of Conduct commits the political parties to tolerance during election campaigns and prohibits them from inciting their members or the public.

There have been reports of several incidents of political intolerance in Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal provinces.

Last week, live ammunition was fired, allegedly by an ANC member in Bekkersdal west of Johannesburg, when protestors tried to disrupt the party's door to door campaign in the volatile township.

In KwaZulu-Natal, several local political party leaders were killed in KwaMashu hostel, according to the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC).

Xinhua

## Protests erupt in Israel against arrest of seminary student

JERUSALEM, 20 March — Thousands of ultra-Orthodox demonstrators rallied Wednesday night in Israel's Jerusalem and other cities across the country, protesting the arrest of a yeshiva student who refused to report to the Israeli army for conscription processing.

The protest erupted a week after the Knesset (parliament) approved a controversial new law to conscript ultra-Orthodox Jews into the military.

In central Jerusalem, dozens protesters hurled stones at buses and set fire to trash bins, eye witnesses told Xinhua, adding that the police used water canon to disperse them.

Some 500 ultra-Orthodox protesters gathered under the Cord Bridge near the entrance to Jerusalem, a spokesperson for the police told Xinhua.

Israeli law obliges all Israeli Jewish citizens to enlist into the military at the age of 18. However, ultra-Orthodox were traditionally exempted from service in order to allow them to pursue religious studies in yeshivas (seminaries).

The new law cancels those exemptions and put criminal sanctions, including incarceration, on draft dodgers.—Xinhua



*Howard Schultz (L), CEO of Starbucks, applauds on stage next to surprise guest Oprah Winfrey during the company's annual shareholders meeting in Seattle, Washington on 19 March, 2014.*

## Oprah gives Starbucks tea push a celebrity shot with chai drink

SEATTLE, 20 March — Starbucks Corp (SBUX.O) will add a celebrity blend to its big tea push when it debuts “Oprah Chai,” a tea-based drink created by media mogul Oprah Winfrey. Winfrey and Starbucks’ chief Howard Schultz clinked tea cups on Wednesday at the company’s annual meeting as they announced the new brew, which will go on sale at Starbucks and Teavana stores in the United States and Canada on 29 April.

The world’s biggest coffee chain is looking to tea as a way to keep expanding its sales as competition grows in the coffee market.

Starbucks said Winfrey developed the tea with Teavana’s leading teaologist Naoko Tsunoda. It is a blend of tea infused with cinnamon, ginger, cardamom and cloves, and will be sold in tins or as prepared tea lattes.

For each Teavana Oprah Chai product sold, Starbucks will make a donation to the Oprah Winfrey Leadership Academy Foundation to benefit youth education.

According to The Tea Association of the USA, tea is the most widely consumed beverage in the world next to water. While tea is the more popular beverage, coffee is king when it comes to sales.—Reuters

## Adele’s songs accused of making people gay

LONDON, 20 March — Oscar-winning singer Adele is accused of turning people gay with her music in a TV documentary. The 25-year-old singer is on a list of things that “men should avoid if they want to be straight”, reported *Daily Star*.

Doctor Christian Jessen, 37, made the bizarre discovery in Channel 4’s *Cure Me I’m Gay*, which sees him visiting the United States to test several therapies.

Retired doctor John Smid from Texas offers rehab and orders him to strip his life of things that encourage him to be gay.

In the documentary, Jessen said, “Adele is very popular within the gay community. You have to listen to Christian music.”

Christian Jessen also said that he is shocked that people still think that being gay is a curable condition and that it’s a load of utter rubbish.

*Adele won an Oscar in 2013 for her song Skyfall.—PTI*

PTI

## ‘Frozen’ princesses reclaim throne on top of Billboard album chart

LOS ANGELES, 20 March — The animated princesses of Disney hit “Frozen” reclaimed the top of the Billboard 200 album chart on Wednesday as the soundtrack to the juggernaut film beat new entries to No 1. “Frozen,” which features the Oscar-winning track “Let It Go,” sold 99,000 copies in its 16th week on the chart and climbed from No 3 last week, according to data from Nielsen SoundScan. “Frozen” was only one of four soundtracks to have clocked six weeks or more on the Billboard 200 chart since SoundScan began tracking sales in 1991. The film, about a pair of Nordic princesses forced to save their kingdom from a never-ending winter, surpassed \$1 billion at the worldwide box office. Country singer Luke Bryan came in at No. 2 with his new extended play album “Spring Break 6 - Like We Ain’t Never,” which sold 74,000 copies. Last week’s chart topper, “Master Mind” by rapper Rick Ross, dropped to No. 3 this week. Other new entries in the top 10 of this week’s best-selling 200 albums according to Billboard include soul singer Aloe Blacc’s “Lift Your Spirit,” which came in at No 4. The singer gained prominence after lending his vocals to Swedish DJ Avicii’s hit dance anthem, “Wake Me Up.”—Reuters



## Singer Audra McDonald returns to Broadway as Billie Holiday

NEW YORK, 20 March — Five-time Tony Award-winning singer Audra McDonald, just finishing a 30-city tour, is heading back to Broadway next week as legendary American jazz singer Billie Holiday in “Lady Day at Emerson’s Bar & Grill.”

The musical is based on one of Holiday’s last performances, when she was in poor health, singing in a small, intimate Philadelphia bar before a handful of people just a month before she died in 1959.

The show debuted off-Broadway nearly 30 years ago. It begins a 10-week run at the Circle in the Square theatre with previews on 25 March and opening night on 13 April.

With her sultry voice and distinctive style, Holiday is considered one of the greatest jazz singers ever. She was nicknamed “Lady Day” by saxophonist Lester Young.

“Lady Day at Emerson’s Bar & Grill” depicts Holiday’s life through more than a dozen songs such as “God Bless the Child,” “Crazy He Calls Me,” “Strange Fruit” and “What a Little Moonlight Can Do,” and reminiscences with the audience.

“With Billie Holiday, everybody has a close personal relationship with her music, her artistry,” said McDonald, 43, who is returning to Broadway for the first time since winning a best actress Tony in 2012 for “The Gershwins’ Porgy and Bess.”—Reuters



*Actress Audra McDonald poses for a photograph while promoting the play “Lady Day at Emerson’s Bar and Grill” in New York on 17 March, 2014.*

REUTERS

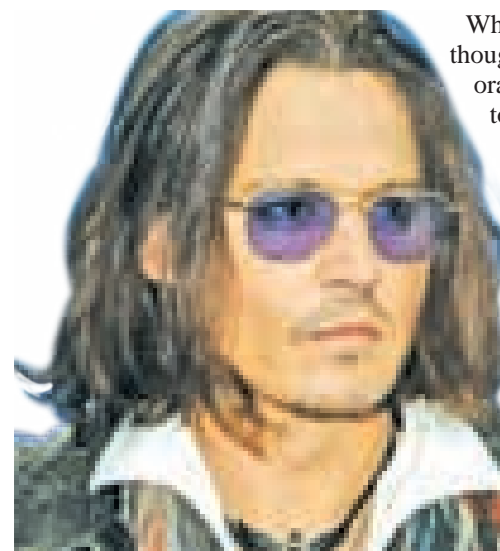
## Johnny Depp’s thinking about early retirement

LOS ANGELES, 20 March — Actor Johnny Depp, who recently turned 50, says that he doesn’t see himself continuing acting in the future.

Johnny’s next is *Transcendence* where he will be seen playing Dr Will Caster, a scientist, in the field of Artificial Intelligence in the sci-fi movie which is Wally Pfister’s directorial debut, said a statement.

Wally has been the cinematographer of all previous Christopher Nolan movies, including *The Dark Knight* trilogy and *Inception*.

In a recent interview with *Rolling Stones* magazine, the actor who is looking to settle down with fiancée Amber Heard, said: “I’m kicking 50 right up the arse. I can’t say that I’d want to be doing this for another 10 years.”



When asked about what prompted his thoughts on an early retirement, the actor elaborated, “At a certain point, just take it down to the bare minimum and concentrate on, I guess, living life; really living life. And going somewhere where you don’t have to be on the run, or sneak in through the kitchen or the underground labyrinth of the hotel.”

The actor, who will be seen with Morgan Freeman, Rebecca Hall and Kate Mara in *Transcendence*, is yet to sign any new projects.—PTI

*The actor, who will next be seen in Wally Pfister’s Transcendence, is yet to sign any new projects.*



## GENERAL

## More than 100 people found in Texas human smuggling raid

HOUSTON, 20 March — Police found more than 100 foreign nationals from Central America and Mexico being warehoused in a rundown Houston-area residence during a raid on Wednesday into a suspected human smuggling operation.

Five people were arrested on suspicion of running the smuggling ring, while almost all of the group of 93 males and 15 females were also taken into custody on suspicion of entering the country illegally.

Many of the people came from Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador. There were also five children in the group, one as young as 5 years old, official said.

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement spokesman Greg Palmore said this was one of the largest groups of people suspected of entering the country illegally discovered in a raid in several years in the border state of Texas.

"It's safe to assume



*The fence along the international border between Mexico and the United States is seen in Penitas, Texas on 2 April, 2013 file photo.—REUTERS*

it's an alleged smuggling investigation, but the extent hasn't been ascertained," Palmore said.

The group was being held in a 2,200 square-foot (204 square-meter) building with one bathroom, surrounded by land where pigs, geese and chickens were being kept, Palmore said.

Houston police found

the group on the compound in south Houston while investigating a complaint of someone being held hostage, police spokesman John Cannon said.

The building's windows were covered with plywood, and the doors had locks on them that could only be opened from outside, Cannon said.

Many people were

being held in trash-filled rooms that were so cramped, it looked like "a sea of people," Cannon said.

Several hundred chickens were also found on the premises, which police believed were used in illegal cockfighting. The chickens were turned over to the Houston SPCA, he said.

Reuters

## Longtime Washington power broker Robert Strauss dies at 95

WASHINGTON, 20 March— Robert Strauss, who once headed the Democratic National Committee, served as US trade representative and ambassador to Moscow, and advised presidents from both parties, died in Washington on Wednesday at age 95.

"We can confirm that Robert Strauss passed away peacefully on March 19," the law firm he helped found, Akin Gump Strauss Hauer and Feld, said in a statement.

Strauss died of natural causes at his home in Washington, the Dallas Morning News reported.

Considered one of Washington's master power brokers, the colorful Texas-born Strauss was known as "Mr. Democrat." But in an era when Washington was less polarized, Strauss easily crossed partisan lines and wielded influence in law, government and politics under a succession of presidential administrations.

"Bob was one of the greatest leaders the Democratic Party ever had, yet presidents of both parties relied on his advice, his instincts, and his passion for public service - not to mention his well-honed sense of humor," President Barack Obama said in a statement.

"As President Carter's trade representative, he helped open new markets for American exports," Obama said. "As President Bush's last ambassador to

the Soviet Union and first ambassador to the Russian Federation, he stood up for our interests and values at a moment of immense change."

Born on October 19, 1918 in Lockhart, Texas, the son of a dry-goods merchant, Strauss went to the University of Texas where he befriended future Texas Governor John Connally and worked on Lyndon Johnson's first run for Congress in 1937.

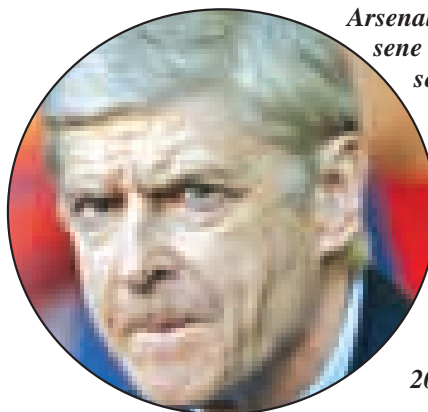
Reuters

## Wenger reaches milestone in London title showdown

LONDON, 20 March — Arsene Wenger has the chance to ram Jose Mourinho's words down his throat on Saturday when his Arsenal side travel to Stamford Bridge looking to snatch control of the Premier League title race from Chelsea.

There would be no better way for Wenger to mark his 1,000th game in charge of Arsenal than to ruin Mourinho's unblemished home league record as Chelsea boss after the Portuguese dismissed him as a "specialist in failure" last month.

The mind games in this season's engrossing Premier League title battle



*Arsenal's manager Arsene Wenger takes his seat on the bench before their English Premier League football match against Tottenham Hotspur at White Hart Lane in London, on 16 March, 2014.—REUTERS*

have been simmering in the background but it is on the pitch where points are won and lost and the outcome of this Saturday's lunchtime derby could prove pivotal come 11 May.

Chelsea appeared to have taken a vice-like grip

in the title race until last weekend's controversial 1-0 defeat at Aston Villa and wins for chasers Liverpool, Arsenal and Manchester City squeezed things up at the top of the table.

Mourinho's side still

have a four-point lead over Arsenal and Liverpool, although they both have a game more to play, while fourth-placed City are six points back with three games in hand of Chelsea.

City are at home to bottom club Fulham on Saturday while surging Liverpool will be looking for a sixth consecutive victory when they go to a Cardiff City side fighting for survival.

Wenger branded Mourinho's comments "silly" and "disrespectful" last month after the Portuguese coach had mocked the Frenchman's eight-season trophy drought.

Reuters

## MYANMAR TV

(21-3-2014, Friday)

- 6:00 am
- 1.Paritta By Venerable Mingun Sayadaw
- 6:30 am
- 2.Physical Exercise
- 7:00 am
- 3.News/Weather Report
- 7:20 am
- 4.Hyper Sports
- 8:30 am
- 5.India Drama Series
- 9:00 am
- 6.News/International News
- 10:20 am
- 7.TV Drama Series
- 11:15 am
- 8.Clever
- 12:00 pm
- 9.News/International News/Weather Report
- 12:30 pm
- 10. Myanmar Movie
- 3:00 pm
- 11. News
- 3:20 pm
- 12. Documentary
- 4:00 pm
- 13. News
- 4:25 pm
- 14. University of Distance Education (TV Lectures) - Third Year (Law)
- 5:00 pm
- 15. News
- 5:30 pm
- 16. India Drama Series
- 6:00 pm
- 17. News/Weather Report
- 6:50 pm
- 18. TV Drama Series
- 7:00 pm
- 19. News
- 8:00 pm
- 20. News/International News/Weather Report
- 8:35 pm
- 21. People Talks
- 9:00 pm
- 22. News
- 23. Documentary
- 24. Hyper Sports
- 25. Tradition Boxing
- 26. Teleplay

## MYANMAR INTERNATIONAL

(21-3-14 07:00am~  
22-3-14 07:00am) MST

- \* Local News
- \* A Visit To Kayah State (Part-I)
- \* World News
- \* Sticky Shan Snack
- \* Local News
- \* A Day Out With Sarah (EP-5)
- \* World News
- \* Myanmar Puppet
- \* Local News
- \* Myanmar Traditional Wedding Ceremony
- \* World News
- \* Myanmar Harpist
- \* Local News
- \* Lucrative Myanmar Rattan Industry
- \* World News
- \* Kyeikhteeoye: Welcome All
- \* Local News
- \* Hiker's Journey (Yangon City) (EP-6) (Part-1)
- \* World News
- \* Porcelain and Glass
- \* Local News
- \* A Visit To Ye
- \* World News
- \* Myanmar Masterclass Class "Contemporary Art"
- \* Local News
- \* Products of Myanmar - Mya Setkyar Pure Silk Fabric From Inlay Lake
- \* World News
- \* Writer
- \* Local News
- \* A Highland with Peace and Charm
- \* World News
- \* Distinguished Myanmar Ladies "Ma Myint Zu"

## Italy Series A Standing Table

POS	TEAM	PLD	W	D	L	PTS
1	Juventus	28	24	3	1	75
2	Roma	27	18	7	2	61
3	Napoli	28	17	7	4	58
4	Fiorentina	28	14	6	8	48
5	Inter Milan	28	12	11	5	47
6	Parma	27	12	10	5	46
7	Lazio	28	11	8	9	41
8	Verona	28	12	4	12	40
9	Atalanta	28	11	4	13	37
10	Torino	28	9	9	10	36
11	AC Milan	28	9	8	11	35
12	Genoa	28	9	8	11	35
13	Sampdoria	28	9	7	12	34
14	Udinese	28	9	4	15	31
15	Cagliari	28	6	11	11	29
16	Chievo	28	6	6	16	24
17	Livorno	28	6	6	16	24
18	Bologna	28	4	11	13	23
19	Sassuolo	28	5	6	17	21
20	Catania	28	4	8	16	20

## Myanmar Futsal team clinches victory for second time



Myanmar stormed to a victory in a second warm-up match playing against the Jyu Jyu Futsal club of Japan.

As part of the preparations for the international Futsal tournaments the Myanmar national men's Futsal team played again with Japan's Jyu Jyu at National Indoor Stadium-1 in Thuwunna, Yangon, on Thursday afternoon.

Despite intense effort to secure a win in the second warm-up, Japan's Jyu Jyu could not totally edge out Myanmar team.

The head coach of the Myanmar team deployed its reliable players a similar team that played in the

first match.

In the 6th minute, Jyu Jyu unexpectedly won the first goal through an own goal of Myanmar player Tin Win Ko Ko. In reply Myanmar raised its attacking tempo with a 17th minute equalizer provided by Kyaw Soe Moe.

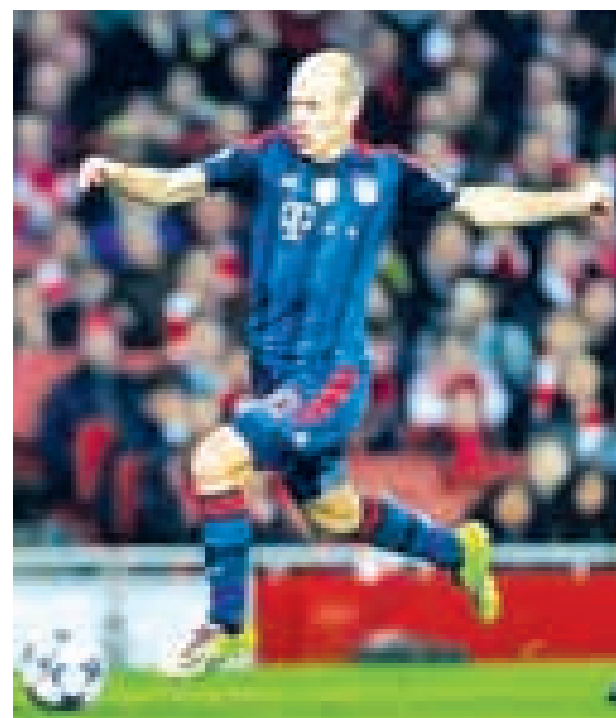
In the second half, Myanmar showed off its skills and bagged two more goals from Cho The Maung in the 27th and 39th minutes. Before final whistle, Sato slotted the ball into the Myanmar's net as the second for Jyu Jyu.

Myanmar and Jyu Jyu will play the final warm-up on Saturday.

By Nyi Myat Thawda

*Myanmar and Jyu Jyu Futsal players trying to pass each other in controlling the ball with utmost efforts.*

SOE NYUNT



Bayern Munich's Arjen Robben

## Dutch winger Robben extends Bayern deal to 2017

BERLIN, 20 March—Bayern Munich's Netherlands winger Arjen Robben has extended his contract with last season's treble winners by two years to 2017, the Bundesliga club said on Wednesday.

Robben, who moved to Munich from Real Madrid in 2009, has enjoyed success at Bayern, winning domestic and European trophies. He scored the late winner in last season's Champions League final against Borussia Dortmund at Wembley.

The new deal is a seal of approval with the 30-year-old instantly becoming a key piece in coach

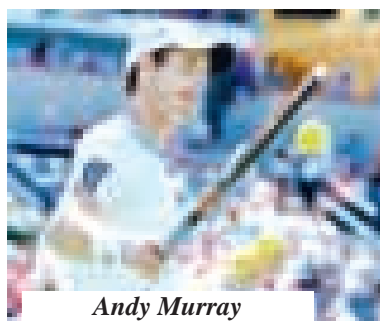
Pep Guardiola's attacking game this season after initial fears Robben would have trouble adapting his style to the Spaniard's game plans.

"I am in my fifth year at Bayern and three more to come," Robben said in a club statement. I look forward to the coming years and a lot more titles with Bayern."

Robben, who has also played for PSV Eindhoven and Chelsea, was a key player in Bayern's treble run under coach Jupp Heynckes and has made a seamless transition to Guardiola's quick passing game.

Reuters

## Britain's Murray splits with coach Lendl



Andy Murray

LONDON, 20 March—Wimbledon champion Andy Murray has split with

coach Ivan Lendl after two years, the British world number six said on Wednesday. A statement on his Twitter page said they had mutually agreed to end a partnership that saw Murray win two grand slam titles

and a gold medal at the 2012 London Olympics.

Reuters

## Del Potro withdraws from Miami with wrist injury



Juan Martin Del Potro

MIAMI, 20 March—World number eight Juan Martin del Potro has

withdrawn from the Sony Open due to a nagging wrist injury, the ATP Tour said on Wednesday.

The injury also forced the 25-year-old Argentine to pull out of the BNP

Paribas Open two weeks ago at Indian Wells.

Reuters

## Van Persie hat-trick salvages United's season

MANCHESTER, 20 March — Robin van Persie's hat-trick lifted the gloom surrounding Manchester United and manager David Moyes as the English side beat Olympiakos Piraeus 3-0 to overturn a 2-0 first-leg deficit and reach the Champions League quarter-finals on Wednesday.

United, mounting a dismal defence of their Premier League title in Moyes's first campaign since replacing Alex Ferguson, kept alive their last remaining hope of lifting a trophy this season.

Asked to show character by their manager, United responded with Van Persie showing a clinical edge that has been missing of late while the recalled

Ryan Giggs was also instrumental on his first start since late January.

Van Persie began the Old Trafford comeback with a 25th-minute penalty, awarded after he had been shoved in the back by Jose Holebas.

The Dutchman levelled the tie on aggregate in first-half stoppage time, steering in Wayne Rooney's cross and Van Persie completed his hat-trick with a free kick six minutes after the break that left Olympiakos keeper Robert rooted to the spot.

Moyes, who cut a defiant figure this week despite his troubled start, praised a "magnificent team performance".

"There were no passengers tonight, everyone

fought their corner and we played some really good football," the Scot told a news conference after United joined Premier League leaders Chelsea as the only English representatives in the last eight.

"It's especially pleasing as we did not play well in the first leg in Greece but came back strongly tonight.

"We might not be favourites to win the



Champions League this season but if we go into the quarter-finals as underdogs that's fine by me.

"With this squad this club can be more

than

a match for anyone." Giggs provided the passes for two of the goals on his 140th appearance in the competition, just two off the record held by Raul.—Reuters

*Manchester United's Robin van Persie scores a penalty against Olympiakos during their Champions League soccer match at Old Trafford in Manchester, northern England, on 19 March, 2014.—REUTERS*



Chelsea's manager Jose Mourinho

## Mourinho charged with improper conduct

LONDON, 20 March—Chelsea manager Jose Mourinho has been charged with improper conduct by the FA following his side's 1-0 Premier League defeat at Aston Villa on Saturday. Mourinho was sent to the stands by referee Chris Foy for encroaching on the turf after Chelsea's Brazilian midfielder Ramires had been shown a straight red card for a tackle on Aston Villa's Moroccan international Karim El Ahmadi.

Reuters