

To be able to enjoy Thingyan holiday happily and peacefully, this is the time for us to showcase cultural habits through sympathy based on national unity, balance, negotiation and society's prominent brethren relationship to each other



NAY PYI TAW, 13 April—President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Agga Maha Thayay Sithu, Agga Maha Thiri Thudhamma U Thein Sein delivered a New Year's speech to the entire people on the occasion of the Maha Thingyan Festival. The translation of the speech is as follows:-

My fellow citizens,

First of all, I would like to wish all citizens happiness and health during the Myanmar New Year

Thingyan Festival. May you celebrate the Thingyan holiday blissfully and after taking a rest and relaxation for the tiredness of the past year, make the utmost efforts for the welfares of your families and the State.

Our society customarily initiates New Year with a fresh mind and body after clearing all the physical and mental impurities of last year.

Throughout Myanmar history, people from various ethnic and religious groups have been coexisting here. With thousands of years of history and peaceful coexistence of civilized people, Myanmar has proved a glorious country among the international community. Thingyan Festival is a traditional culture which people from various ethnic groups and religions are enjoying.

All of us have responsibility to preserve this culture. To be able to enjoy Thingyan holiday happily and peacefully, this is the time for us to showcase our cultural habits through sympathy based on

national unity, balance, negotiation and our society's prominent brethren relationship to each other. I hereby seriously request that all the dutiful and dignified citizens are to prevent and wipe out all the incitements rooted from racial and religious bias.

Moreover, I want to urge to abstain from the misbehaviors which can interrupt peace and delight of people during the Water Festival.

While 1375 ME changes into 1376 ME through Thingyan Festival, my wishes are that all government employees, private employees, senior citizens and the young generations start the New Year well. As a conclusion, I hope that the 1376 Myanmar Era could bring peace to Myanmar, and that the country could become a Union with the perpetuation of justice, freedom and equality.

May this Myanmar New Year Festival be a peace-making Thingyan, and all the citizens be happy and healthy.

Thank you.

IMF's growth rate forecast brightens economic outlook for Myanmar in 2014

By Ye Myint in Washington, DC

Myanmar described as the new frontier economy in Asia will be able to see a pickup in growth to 7.8 percent this year and growth is expected to reach a certain level more than 7 per cent, said Mr. Changyong Rhee, Director of the Asia and Pacific Department of IMF at 2014 Asia and Pacific Regional Economic Outlook press briefing on Friday.

While expressing his views on Myanmar prospects to the NLM correspondent, Mr. Rhee said he

the main growth drivers for Myanmar will be new capital inflows and accelerated investments from abroad. He suggested how to handle the capital inflows wisely for infrastructure development together with microeconomic stability and avoid the so-called natural resources curse and not to repeat the same mistakes many Asian economies have experienced are more important than growth rate.

He continued IMF has a close contact with the Central Bank of Myanmar in exchange rate reform, market liberalization and market-oriented economic policy and IMF and Myanmar will continue their works.

Shortly after taking the Myanmar journalist's question, he had to respond to an online question: what impact does the loosening of sanction has on Myanmar's economic forecast of 7.8 per cent and IMF thinks continuing political tension about a community in the western Myanmar given that the IMF just have noticed political tension in

Thailand and will have any impact in Myanmar as the moderator took an online question related to Myanmar.

He voiced IMF has forecast more investment will come in as long as the government's reforms continue. He expressed his view that the government will be able to tackle the problem of political uncertainty about the ethnic groups wisely as it is very important for long-term growth. IMF has had a good study about the impact of economic inequality on the long-term growth. He shared the view that inequality is a kind of negative factors in securing long-term growth. He revealed his hope that Myanmar does not go the same patterns of Asia.

In his remarks on economic prospects about Asia-Pacific for 2014 at the press briefing, Mr. Changyong Rhee left three key messages that Asia-Pacific will remain the world's most dynamic region and continue to

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Mr Markus Rodlauer and Mr. Changyong Rhee seen at press briefing in Washington, DC.—PHOTO: YE MYINT

NLM moving to Yangon, no publication from April 15-21

The New Light of Myanmar is moving to Yangon, with the last issue before the move to be published on April 14. The first issue after the break will be published on April 22.

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President Office Minister opens new school building, inspects regional development tasks

NAY PYI TAW, 12 April—Union Minister at the President Office U Hla Tun together with Sitagu International Buddhist Academy Chancellor Venerable Sayadaw Bhaddanta Ñanissara attended a merit sharing ceremony for new school building and new religious building in Lahe Township in Naga Self-Administered Zone on Thursday.

During the ceremony, Sitagu Missionary Group donated 500 sets of uniforms for the students from No.1

Basic Education High School in Lahe Township, K 100 million for construction of Shwedagon Replica Pagoda in Nanyun and K 7.3 million for the Monasteries in the region through the officials while Krislite Co., Ltd donated K 10 million for upgrading the People's Hospital in the township.

The school was constructed at a cost of K 100 million donated by Yangon Transformer & Electrical Co., Ltd and the association contributed K 50 million worth equipments in-

cluding transformer, computers, related accessories and uniforms.

The officials and the Sayadaw formally opened these buildings.

Union Minister U Hla Tun, Union Minister for Border Affairs Lt-Gen Thet Naing Win and party provided cash assistance to Border Regions National Races Youth Development Training School. He then inspected the progress of the development tasks in the region.

The Union govern-



Sitagu Sayadaw Bhaddanta Ñanissara, Union Minister U Hla Tun and Union Minister Lt-Gen Thet Naing Win pose for documentary photo with students from No 1 Basic Education High School in Lahe Township.—MNA

Myanmar to implement people-centered development plan in fifteen townships

NAY PYI TAW, 12 April—Three-year people-centered development plan will be carried out in fifteen townships in states and regions across the country with the assistance of World Bank and it is currently implementing in three townships, said Union Minister for Livestock, Fisheries and Rural Development U Ohn Myint at the meeting with state ministers and members of state Development Supportive Committee in Haka, Chin State on 10 April.

The Union minister together with Chin State Chief Minister U Hong Ngai and the state Finance Minister met the staff from the Rural Development Department, students and locals at No (1) Basic Education High school in Falam, urging them to participate



Union Minister for Livestock, Fisheries and Rural Development U Ohn Myint meets local people on his inspection tour of 15 townships.—MNA

in rural development task.

They then held a meeting with departmental officials at the hall of deputy superintending engineer's

office of Public Works and presented cash assistance for reconstruction of school in Zalai Village that has been relocated due to land-

slide in August 2013.

They also met with members of development supportive committee and locals from Tiddim and Kalay townships and provided necessary fund for rural area development and livestock breeding.—MNA

Recruitment notice for post of AIBD programme manager

NAY PYI TAW, 12 April—Kuala Lumpur based Asia-Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development (AIBD) invites applications for the recruitment of the post of Programme Manager.

AIBD limits applicants who must get a university degree preferably in broadcast journalism, professional qualifications in TV production, content creation, documentary or a related subject area and skills and experience in conducting and organizing training and consultancy

activities.

The applicants must also be good in English written and spoken skills, analytical, organizational, interpersonal communication and personnel management skills and motivated team player who can work independently.

The applicants of under 45 who have minimum 10-year working experience in TV programme production in any relevant field in television broadcasting may join the AIBD not later than 16 May.

The curriculum Vitae

with copies of the latest degree/s, passport sized photograph taken within last six months, number of dependants and details of dependants who will reside in Kuala Lumpur if the applicant is appointed and letters of recommendation may be included with the application.

For further information, contact the Director of Asia-Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Department at PO Box 12066 in 50766 Kuala Lumpur of Malaysia and admin@aibd.org.my.

NLM

12 dead, 4 injured after passenger bus, car collides, engulfed in flames

PYU, 12 April — A passenger bus and a car collided on the Yangon-Mandalay expressway near milepost No. 116 in Pyu Township before both vehicles erupted in flames, leaving 12 dead and four others wounded.

The accident happened around 2 am on Saturday.

The passenger bus travelling from Mandalay to Yangon slammed into a super saloon carrying six people when it was trying to pass the saloon car, and both vehicles erupted in flames.

All six people on the super saloon and six passengers, out of 44 passengers on the bus, died in the fiery crash.

The investigators are trying to identify the deceased.

Police have found two gold chains, one platinum chain, one gold hand chain, three gold bracelets, burnt

K 1.44 million on the saloon car and one gold chain and two burnt watches on the bus.

The 19 passengers including five with injuries were provided with K 100,000 each and clothes by the Myanmar Police Force at Pyu Expressway Police Station.

While receiving treatment at Pyu People's Hospital, one man was transferred to Toungoo People's Hospital and remaining one man and three women were rushed to Yangon General Hospital.

The fiery crash has caused total losses of about K 90 million.

The passenger bus is identified as the one of the Taungpyadan Bus Line. After the accident, Aung Zay Ya, the driver of the passenger bus, fled the scene with police in hot pursuit.

Police Information



A collision of passenger bus and private car seen in an incident.

MNA

NATIONAL

Gov't committed to providing sufficient health care to rural population



NAY PYI TAW, 12 April — The government is committed to producing more health assistants to be able to provide health care services sufficiently to rural population which makes up 70% of the country's total population, Vice-President Dr Sai Mauk Kham said.

At the meeting with professors, head of departments and staff of the Magway Public Health University on Saturday, the Vice-President has pledged

to fulfill the needs of the faculty members and students of medical universities as part of efforts for producing health assistants.

Myanmar's rural population live in 60,000 villages.

Magway Public Health University in Yangon was upgraded from the Public Health Institute in 1995 and was moved to Magway in May, 2000.

After the meeting with the faculty members of the university, the Vice-President visited the 200-bed hospital in Magway and assisted in health care services of the hospital.

The hospital was upgraded from the 100-bed hospital to 200-bed teaching hospital in February, 2008.—MNA

Vice-President

Dr Sai Mauk Kham

encourages a patient

at 200-bed Hospital in

Magway.

MNA

IMF's growth rate forecast brightens...

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keep its steady growth this fiscal year; strong macroeconomic fundamentals and swift actions to address financial vulnerabilities have helped the emerging Asia see a situation in which external risks have been receding; and continued structural reform effort is needed to continue its growth momentum in the medium term and it will thereby reducing vulnerabilities, maintaining investor confidence and financial instability in the short term and sustaining growth leadership in the medium term.

Turning to recent development and outlook, he voiced the GDP growth is forecast to grow to 5.4 % this year and 5.5 % next

year, slightly up from 5.2 % in 2013. Increasing exports, healthy labour market and high credit growth play as key drivers for growth.

Talking about the economic powerhouses in the region, he predicted China's growth is forecast to still reach around 7.5 % this year while Japan remains above 1.4 %, India improves to 5.4 % and Korea continue with growth forecast of 3.7 % in 2014.

Regarding the growth forecast of ASEAN, he said most countries in the region is doing well with increased growth but Indonesia and Thailand will see downward growth rates of under five.

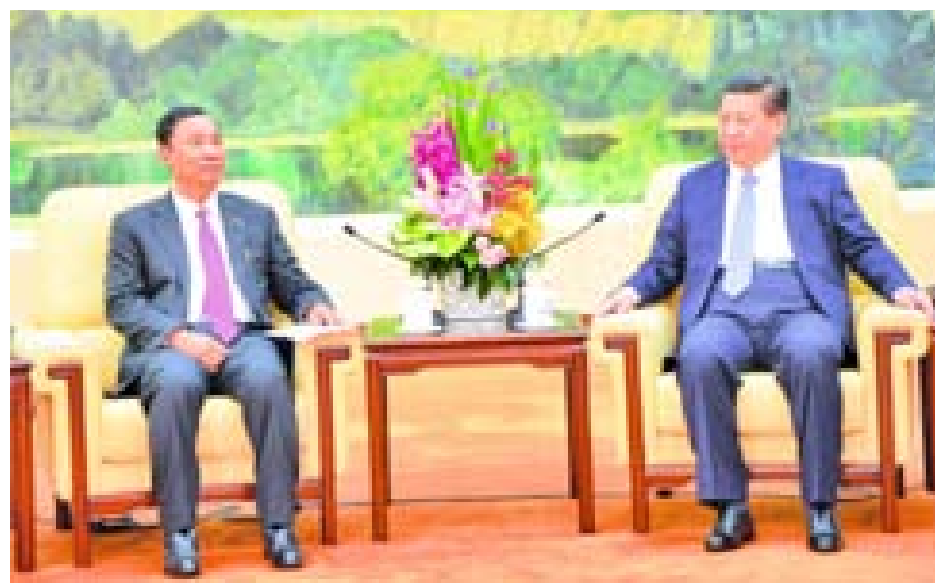
NLM

Union Parliament Speaker vows Myanmar-Sino ties

NAY PYI TAW, 12 April—Union Parliament and People's Parliament Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and the President of the People's Republic of China have pledged on Friday to strengthen bilateral relations between the two countries.

Thura U Shwe Mann and Myanmar delegation are making an official visit to China at the invitation of Mr. Zhang Dejiang, Chairman of China's National People's Congress.

Myanmar Parliament Speaker and Chinese President Mr. Xi Jinping met at VIP Meeting Room of the Great Hall of the People in Beijing.



Union Parliament Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann holds talks with Chinese President Mr. Xi Jinping in Beijing.—MNA

Speaker of Union Parliament said Myanmar attaches great importance to promote bilateral relations with China under the Five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence, and China is a country which never inter-

vened in the internal affairs of Myanmar.

He also said Myanmar will absolutely promote comprehensive strategic relationships with China due to China's supports on serious challenges of Myanmar.

Relief supplies go to victims in Thantlang Tsp

HTANTLANG, 12 April — A cash and kind presentation ceremony to the fire victims who lost their property in the fire that occurred on 30 March in Ward-2 of Thantlang Township, Chin State, took place on Friday at Township Administrative Office in the town.

Responsible persons from township churches, of-

ficials from the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement and Myanmar Red Cross Society donated over K 3 million and relief supplies to the victims.

"We feel please for the wellwishers' contributions. They have donated both cash and kind for us since 30 March," a victim said.

MMAL

Mr. Xi Jinping said that he believes the visit of Union Parliament Speaker could advance mutual understandings between the two countries. He also reaffirmed his expectations on the potentials for widening economic relations. Union Parliament Speaker and delegation then visited CITIC Group Company.

Myanmar delegation flew to Mongolia at 8 a.m. on Saturday, and they were seen off by Mr. Cao Wei Zhou, Vice-Chairman of China's National People's Congress, and responsible persons of Myanmar embassy in China at the Beijing Capital International Airport.—MNA

UN agencies, INGOs emphasize further cooperation in health care service in Rakhine State

YANGON, 12 April — The delegations from the UN agencies and INGOs and Dr Soe Lwin Nyein, Deputy Director-General (Disease Control) of Ministry of Health held talks on providing continuous health care service to the victims in Rakhine State on Tuesday.

At WHO office in Yangon, the meeting also focused on plans on assis-

tance of medicines, medical equipment and vehicles by the UN agencies, INGOs and Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) Holland.

On Thursday, the Deputy Director-General met with Dr. Carmenza Galvez, Deputy Medical Coordinator of (MSF) Holland at the Health Department of Rakhine State.

They discussed cooperation between staff from

Rapid Response Team under the Ministry of Health and those of MSF-Holland in medical treatment to be provided to Rakhine State. They plan to take advices from Emergency Coordination Center for accommodation of the staff in Rakhine State.

This Center was founded with Rakhine State Government and town's elders of the State.—MNA



Summer course on drawing cartoon, paintings concludes in Toungoo

TOUNGOO, 12 April—Summer course on drawing cartoon and paintings was concluded at Pabedan Basic Education Middle School in Toungoo, Bago Region on 10 April.

The five-week course

attended by 32 students from the schools in the township was given lecture by famous cartoonist from Toungoo Cartoonist Mimamlay and Israel's international logo contest award winner Cartoonist D J.—MMAL

35 Myanmar citizens handed over at No (1) Friendship Bridge in Tachilek

TACHILEK, 12 April—An anti-human trafficking squad comprising the deputy township administrator and members of Myanmar Police Force accepted 35 illegal Myanmar migrant workers handed over by the officials from Mae Sai District Immigration Bureau from Thailand at No (1) Friendship Bridge in Tachilek, Shan State (East) on 11 April.

According to the interrogation by combined team in the compound of Maha Myatmuni Monastery in Macaokham Ward in Tachilek, they were arrested due to illegal entry without living-cards and overdue temporary border pass that allow only seven-day stay and have not been trafficked. They were handed over to their relatives with the arrangement

of the township administrator.

It is learnt that a total of 7001 Myanmar migrant workers have been handed over by Thai officials from 3 December 2008 to 11 April 2014 so far.—Myint Mo (Tachilek)

Hail stones hit Magway Township

MAGWAY, 12 April—A heavy rain together with hail stones fell in Magway of Magway Region on Thursday evening.

After the rain, the roofs of the houses and signboards

were blown off in the squall. Roads were blocked by the fallen trees and electricity cutout occurred in the town.

Dwellers and officials cleared debris.

Kaung Thuta (Minbu)

Prevention against erosion needs for bridge before monsoon

NAY PYI TAW, 12 April—A wooden bridge namely “Myittapoungku” is located in Wegyi Village of Pobbathiri Township in Nay Pyi Taw Council Area.

The bridge lies across the “Sinthay Creek”. All of people in Wegyi and nearby villages rely on the bridge for their daily transportation.

In every rainy season, villagers face flooding and they rebuild the bridge yearly through concerted efforts of the wellwishers and locals' contribution.



Locals are now taking preventive measures against erosion in this rainy season. The people wish to

upgrade the bridge in coming year and hope for the government's contribution.

Myint Than (Oxygen)

Vocational training course concludes in Hpa-an

HPA-AN, 12 April—Concluding of vocational training for mason, carpenter and steel fixing workers conducted by the Rural Development Department took place at No (12) Basic Education Primary School in Hpa-an,

Kayin State on 11 April. On the occasion, the Kayin State chief minister made a concluding remark and the State Minister for Agriculture and Livestock Breeding presented outstanding awards to the prize winning trainees. Then, the head of

state Rural Development Department presented K 300,000 for the fund of No (12) BEPS and conclusion certificates to the trainees.

The five-week course was attended by 45 national race youths.

Nay Myo Lwin (IPRD)

Fire victims in Mongphyat Tsp get relief supplies



MONGPHYAT, 10 April—Shan State Government and wellwishers donated cash and relief supplies to the victims who lost property in the fire that broke on Wednesday in Ngahay Village in Nampan

Village-tract, Mongphyat Township of Shan State (East).

The fire victims accepted over K 16 million, 77 bags of rice, foodstuff, clothes, solar panels and other equipment from the

State Government, servicemen from regiments and units, and other wellwishers. Up to now, wellwishers have provided relief supplies worth over K 26 million to the victims.

District IPRD



Census participants honoured in Mongphyat

MONGPHYAT, 11 April—A ceremony to honour census auditors and enumerators who participated in the 12-day nationwide population and census taking process took place on Thursday at the town hall of Mongphyat District in Eastern Shan State.

District Deputy Commissioner U Kyaw Kyaw Ohn presented certificates of honour to 105 participants in Mongphyat, 83 in Mongyawng and 20 in Mongyu Sub-townships.

District Census Committee hosted a dinner to the attendees.—Wai Yan Lin



WORLD

Washington, Manila inch closer to enhanced defence pact

MANILA, 12 April — Washington and Manila inched closer Friday to a new defence agreement that will grant the US military greater access to Philippine military bases *amid China's increasing aggressiveness in the South China Sea*.

Defence Undersecretary Pio Lorenzo Batino, chair of the Philippine negotiating panel, said in a statement issued at the end of the eighth round of negotiations that both sides found “consensus on key

points of a draft agreement.”

“This round brought us much closer to finding a full consensus, and the draft provisions on key points of an enhanced defence cooperation will be submitted to the president for his review,” said Batino, referring to Philippine President Benigno Aquino.

A source told *Kyodo News* that it will be up to Aquino to approve the draft agreement, adding the Philippine panel has wrapped up its tasks.

Since the removal of US military forces based in the Philippines in 1991 and 1992, the US military's presence has been limited to short-term visits and rotations under the Visiting Forces Agreement reached in 1998.

“After 15 years of the visiting forces agreement and given the current realities, challenges and opportunities,” Batino opined, “the Philippines is ready for a heightened level of defence cooperation.”

“This agreement,

which should stand on mutual trust, is an idea whose time has come,” Batino said.

Both sides hope to sign the new agreement when US President Barack Obama visits the Philippines on 28 and 29 April.

The US side did not issue a statement after the latest round.

Batino described the latest round of discussions as “very productive.” He cited a “consensus on key provisions and modalities” that would reflect,

among others, “full respect for Philippine sovereignty, nonpermanence of US troops and no US military basing in the Philippines and a prohibition against weapons of mass destruction.”

Aquino earlier instructed the Philippine panel to comply with and keep within relevant provisions of the Philippine Constitution and laws, particularly the provision that bans permanent basing by a foreign country on Philippine soil.

Kyodo News

Britain unveils digital criminal justice scheme for Wi-Fi era

LONDON, 12 April — Britain unveiled a digitized criminal justice system to allow its courts to handle criminal cases digitally from the moment a crime is committed, British Ministry of Justice (MoJ) announced on Friday.

The new scheme will also allow police officers to capture evidence digitally at the scene of a crime, take statements and upload digital case information via mobile devices without having to return to the police station. This “Digital Business Model” is designed to help every magistrate's court in England and Wales operate completely digitally, with increased use of remote video links, digitized legal files and Wi-Fi connections, the ministry said.—*Xinhua*

Darfur rebel says peacekeepers turning blind eye to new violence

PARIS, 12 April — A veteran rebel leader from Sudan's Darfur region accused international peacekeepers on Friday of turning a blind eye to what he called a renewed campaign of ethnic cleansing by government-backed Arab militias.

The joint UN/African Union UNAMID peacekeeping force told *Reuters* it was doing as much as it could policing the vast western territory — and Sudan's government dismissed rebel leader Minni Minnawi's account of a fresh offensive. International efforts have failed to end clashes in Darfur, more than 10 years after Khartoum unleashed militias to try and crush a rebellion by mostly non-Arab insurgents.—*Xinhua*

Police raid Rome restaurants, cafes in anti-mafia operation

ROME, 12 April — Italian police carried out a new anti-mafia operation in Rome on Friday, with several well-known cafes and restaurants seized in the historical heart of Rome.

All assets seized belonged to the brothers Luigi, Antonio and Salvatore Righi, allegedly connected with the powerful Contini clan belonging to Naples-based Camorra syndicate, police said. The three men had already been arrested in January, along with the seizure of some 25 properties and restaurants. The latest raid was carried out by military police and involved assets worth 7 million euros (9.7 million US dollars), police explained in a statement. Among those was one ice-cream shop in the central Via del Tritone, and four pizzerias in the most famous area of the historic centre of Rome. Anti-mafia prosecutors also ordered the seizure of some properties in Naples and a farm vehicles rental company in Reggio Calabria city in South Italy.—*Xinhua*



People evacuate the Metropolitan Cathedral after a 6.6 magnitude earthquake in Managua on 11 April, 2014.

REUTERS

Two strong quakes shake Nicaragua, nation on alert

MANAGUA, 12 April — Two strong earthquakes, measuring 6.2 and 6.6 on the Richter scale respectively, have rattled western Nicaragua since Thursday, killing one and injuring dozens of others.

The latest 6.6-magnitude quake struck at 3:29 pm local time (2029 GMT), and was centered about 12 km south of the

southwest town of Nandaime. A *Xinhua* reporter in the capital Managua, 61 km from Nandaime, said the quake was felt very strongly there. There were no reports of casualties or damage caused by the latest quake yet. Thursday's 6.2-magnitude quake was centered around 18 km southeast of the northwest city of Larreynaga.

It damaged hundreds of homes, left some 33 people slightly injured, and indirectly led to the death of a woman who suffered a heart attack.

The power supply has been cut off in Managua, with thousands of panic-stricken residents choosing to sleep in streets to avoid new quakes. Large-scale commercial facilities

such as restaurants and supermarkets have all been shut down in Managua and schools in several strongly-hit western cities have also been suspended.

Earlier on Friday, the Nicaraguan government announced extending a red alert in its entire Pacific coast due to powerful aftershocks.

Xinhua

Lebanon in vaccination drive against polio spreading from Syria

BEIRUT, 12 April — Lebanon launched a fourth round of polio immunisation on Friday, trying to prevent the disease spreading from neighbouring Syria along with the tide of refugees fleeing the three-year conflict.

Protection against

polio requires several vaccinations but aid workers are concerned that coverage in Lebanon has been falling off because parents were unaware of the need for multiple inoculation.

The announcement earlier this week that polio had been detected in Iraq,

the first of Syria's neighbours to be hit by the virus, has added to fears that it could spread further.

The campaign in Lebanon targets around 600,000 Syrian, Lebanese and Palestinian infants aged up to five.

“The first three rounds

were very successful, but there have been diminishing returns,” said Luciano Caestini, deputy representative in Lebanon for the UN children's agency UNICEF, which is carrying out the campaigns with Lebanese officials.

Reuters



Annamaria Laurini, UNICEF Representative in Lebanon, administers a polio vaccine to a baby at a Syrian refugee camp near Zahle town in the Bekaa Valley on 8 Nov, 2013.—REUTERS

Foreign ministers discuss nuclear disarmament in Hiroshima

HIROSHIMA, 12 April—Japanese Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida pledged his country's efforts toward nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament on Saturday at a meeting of non-nuclear weapon countries in the city of Hiroshima.

At the ministerial meeting, the 12-member Non-proliferation and Disarmament Initiative is expected to call on nuclear powers to scale back their arsenals and for world leaders to visit Hiroshima and Nagasaki, two Japanese cities devastated by US atomic bombings in World War II.

Representatives from the member states visited a memorial monument and a museum at Hiroshima's Peace Memorial Park before entering the eighth meeting of the NPDI, which was launched in 2010 and is being held in Japan for the first time.



Japanese Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida, Dutch Foreign Minister Frans Timmermans and Australian Foreign Minister Julie Bishop attend a meeting with atomic bombing survivors after a two-day event to discuss nuclear arms reduction began in Hiroshima, western Japan, on 11 April, 2014.—KYODO NEWS

"Japan will lead international efforts based on an awareness of the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons use and a calm awareness of the diversification of nuclear

arms-related risks we are faced with," Kishida, who chairs the talks, said in his opening remarks.

The meeting takes place in the run-up to a session of the preparatory

committee for a review of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, the cornerstone international treaty on nuclear arms reduction, to be held in New York from 28 April.—Kyodo News

Iran's oil exports surge above West's sanctions cap

LONDON/WASHINGTON, 12 April—Iran's crude oil exports have surged to their highest in 20 months, far exceeding a 1 million barrel-per-day limit set by the West under an interim deal on curbing Teheran's nuclear programme. The International Energy Agency's monthly report revised February's global crude imports from Iran upwards by 240,000 bpd to 1.65 million barrels per day, the highest since June 2012.

Under an interim deal signed in November between Iran and six world powers — known as the P5+1 — that came into effect on 20 January, Iran's exports are supposed to be held to an average 1 million bpd through 20 July.

Tough international sanctions over the past two years have cut Iran's oil exports by about half.

"The question is whether they are going to continue to test the sanctions," said Antoine Halff, head of the IEA's oil industry and markets division.

China accounted for 168,000 bpd of the rise in imports in February, India for 93,000 bpd and South Korea for 83,000 bpd.

On the other hand, Japanese imports of Iranian oil were revised lower by 103,000 bpd, according to the IEA.

"Imports of Iranian oil are running well above 2013 levels for the third consecutive month," the report said.

The Obama administration believes that Iran's oil sales will fall in coming months and average 1 million bpd over the entire six-month period.

"We expect, we still expect, and anticipate that this will average over a six month period ... to meeting the bar that was set," in a White House fact sheet issued at the time of the November deal, State Department spokeswoman Jen Psaki told reporters.—Reuters

Amid 'gas war' talk, Russia reassures Europe on supply

KIEV/MOSCOW, 12 April — Russian President Vladimir Putin tried to ease European fears of gas supply cuts on Friday after Brussels said it would stand with the new authorities in Kiev if the Kremlin carries out a threat to turn off the tap to Ukraine.

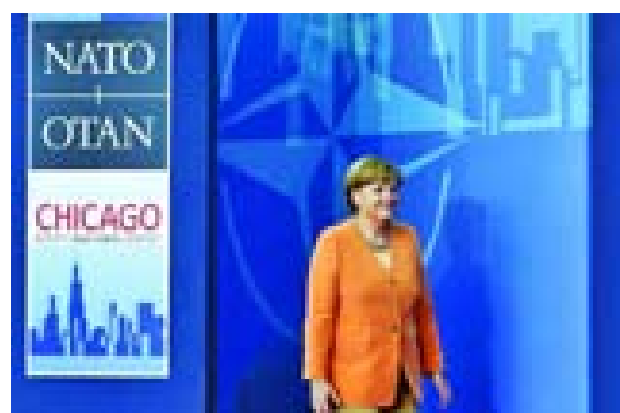
Russia, which last month angered Western powers by annexing Ukraine's Crimea peninsula, has raised the price it charges Kiev for gas and said it owes Moscow \$2.2 billion in unpaid bills.

That has raised the specter of previous "gas wars", when rows between the two former Soviet states led to problems with onward supplies to western Europe. A repeat of that scenario could hurt Russia as well as EU customers for its gas because Moscow depends for its

public revenues on selling gas in Europe. "I want to say again: We do not intend and do not plan to shut off the gas for Ukraine," Putin said in televised comments at a meeting of his advisory Security Council. "We guarantee fulfillment of all our obligations to our European consumers."

The stand-off, precipitated by the overthrow of the Moscow-backed Ukrainian president after he rejected closer ties to the European Union, has brought Russia's relations with the West to their most fraught since the end of the Cold War in 1991.

In a sign of efforts to calm tempers, aides to EU foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton confirmed a meeting next Thursday involving Russia and Ukraine with Ashton and US officials.—Reuters



German Chancellor Angela Merkel arrives at the NATO Summit in Chicago, on 20 May, 2012.—REUTERS

ATHENS, 12 April—German Chancellor Angela Merkel pledged on Friday to continue backing Greece, one day after the debt-laden country tapped bond markets for the first time since its international bailout began four years ago.

Greek reforms are paying off, Merkel said in a symbolic visit to mark the

economic rehabilitation of a nation that over the past four years has threatened the stability of Europe and its single currency. "We see that Greece is fulfilling its pledges... We will continue to support Greece in the future," Merkel said in a joint Press conference with Samaras, adding that Athens was meeting its budget

targets, opening the way to discuss further debt relief measures in the months to come.

In a sign that the focus of Greece's bailout programme is gradually shifting towards less austerity and more growth, Merkel and Samaras met startup businesses and said they would accelerate the creation of a 500-million euro fund for small and medium enterprises, sponsored by Greece, the EU and Germany. Hundreds of angry Greeks gathered in an uneventful rally to protest Merkel's visit in central Athens, a far cry from the tens of thousands which had rallied the last time she arrived in the city back in October 2012.

"We want her out! Raus! And when she goes she should also take the

Greek government with her because they betrayed us. They sold us out to Germany," said Roula Darzakou, a 48-year old housewife. "We want our country back, we don't want her money."

More than 7,000 officers were deployed on the streets of Athens to keep watch on the rallies. Athens has seen a number of violent demonstrations in recent years, and public protests were banned in the areas in which she will move. Her visit caps a watershed week for Greece. Strong investor interest in Athens' first bond sale in four years is seen as a vindication of the wrenching spending cuts and other austerity measures that Greece has undergone in exchange for the 237 billion euro international bailout.

Reuters

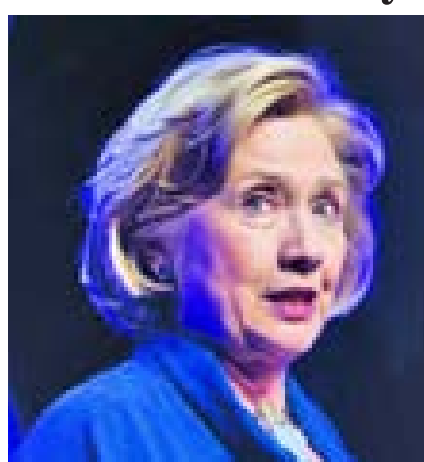
Woman who threw shoe at Hillary Clinton released from jail

NEW YORK, 12 April —A woman who threw a shoe at Hillary Clinton as the former US secretary of state was delivering a speech in Las Vegas has been released from jail, and faces possible charges after her arrest for disorderly conduct, officials said on Friday.

Alison Michelle Ernst, 36, was released on her own recognizance just before midnight on Thursday, said

Tess Driver, a spokeswoman for the Clark County District Attorney's Office. Ernst has not been formally charged but is scheduled to appear in court on 24 June, Driver said.

Clinton was giving a speech on Thursday at the Mandalay Bay hotel in Las Vegas when a protester who was not a ticketed guest and was being approached by Secret Service agents threw a shoe at her,



Former US Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton speaks to members of the Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries during their annual convention in Las Vegas, Nevada, on 10 April, 2014.—REUTERS

said Secret Service spokesman George Ogilvie.

Video news footage showed Clinton, 66, a potential 2016 Democratic presidential candidate, move to crouch as a flying object flew past her on stage. The former secretary of state later joked about the incident, asking if it was part of a Las Vegas Cirque du Soleil show.

Las Vegas police arrested Ernst on suspicion

of disorderly conduct, said police spokesman Officer Jose Hernandez. Prosecutors have not decided whether to charge Ernst in the incident, Driver said.

In many parts of the world, throwing a shoe at a political figure is a form of protest. In 2008, a shoe was hurled at then-President George W Bush when he appeared at a Baghdad news conference with the Iraqi prime minister.—Reuters

HEALTH & BUSINESS

Ex-adviser says Indian PM was hobbled by Sonia Gandhi

NEW DELHI, 12 April — A former media adviser to India's prime minister has alleged in a new book that Manmohan Singh allowed his authority to be undermined by Sonia Gandhi, president of the Congress party and standard-bearer of the Nehru-Gandhi dynasty. Sanjaya Baru's book, "The Accidental Prime Minister", was published on Friday, days after India began a five-week election that is expected to oust Singh's Congress-led coalition from power after two successive terms.

Singh's spokesman dismissed the book as an incorrect interpretation of the prime minister's 10 years in power.

But the memoirs, which show the prime minister as subservient to a woman without an official government position, are likely to hand the

opposition Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) a stick with which to beat the Congress party in an increasingly acrimonious campaign.

"You must understand one thing. I have come to terms with this," Baru recalled the prime minister telling him in 2009.

"There cannot be two centres of power. That creates confusion. I have to accept that the party president is the centre of power. The government is answerable to the party."

Singh's spokesman Pankaj Pachauri described the book as "an attempt to misuse a privileged position and access to high office to gain credibility".

"The commentary smacks of fiction and (the) coloured views of a former adviser," Pachauri told reporters. Baru was not immediately available to comment.

His book portrays



India's Prime Minister Manmohan Singh (L) and Chief of India's ruling Congress party Sonia Gandhi hold their party's manifesto for the April/May general election in New Delhi on 26 March, 2014.—REUTERS

Singh, 81, as an admirable man who held every important position in economic policymaking — including as finance minister when India embraced radical reforms in 1991 — before he became prime minister

in 2004. Singh also made history, becoming India's first prime minister from a minority community — he is a Sikh — and serving for longer than anyone other than a Nehru-Gandhi.

"On the other hand, the

public perception that he accomplished this feat through unquestioning submissiveness lies at the heart of the image problem that came to haunt Dr Singh," Baru said in his book.

Reuters

N Korea slams US, warns of "self-defence" countermeasures

BEIJING, 12 April — North Korea on Friday accused the United States taking a "double-dealing attitude" and threatened to carry out undefined "self-defence" countermeasures.

North Korea's powerful National Defence Commission released a statement criticizing the United States for treating it and South Korea "in sharp contrast" with respect to missile tests that the two Asian countries both conducted recently.

The statement of the commission's policy section, carried by the North's official *Korean Central News Agency*, said North Korea will "push ahead with the countermeasures for self-defence" if the United States continues its "hostile policy" toward Pyongyang.

On 23 March, South Korea test-fired a ballistic missile capable of reaching all areas of North Korea.

The statement claimed it is unfair that the United States, as well as the UN Security Council, say nothing about the test firing, while only denouncing North Korea's missile launches.

UN Security Council resolutions prohibit North Korea from using any missile technology. South Korea is not subject to such a ban.

On 30 March, North Korea threatened to carry out a "new form of nuclear test" following a UN condemnation of its launch of medium-range ballistic missiles into the Sea of Japan.—Kyodo News

Ukraine PM offers more powers for regions to end eastern standoff

DONETSK/LUHANSK, (Ukraine), 12 April — Ukraine's prime minister offered on Friday to boost local powers in the regions in an effort to undercut pro-Russia separatists who have occupied official buildings in Russian-speaking cities in eastern Ukraine.

But separatists still occupied the main regional offices in Donetsk, while in Luhansk armed rebels were refusing an offer of non-prosecution by the Kiev authorities in exchange for them laying down their weapons and quitting the regional offices of the state security service.

The new pro-Europe leadership in Kiev says the separatists are acting out a plan drawn up by the



Ukraine's Prime Minister Arseny Yatseniuk (R) delivers a speech as he attends a meeting in Donetsk on 11 April, 2014.—REUTERS

Kremlin to dismember Ukraine and follows the scenario under which Russia annexed Crimea. The protesters in Luhansk, who like Moscow are critical

of the Euromaidan revolution that ousted the Kremlin-backed Viktor Yanukovich as president, have taken guns from an armory inside the building and are

pressing for a referendum on the future of the region.

The separatists in Donetsk appear to be still sticking to demands for some form of self-rule despite negotiations with local officials and Ukraine's richest man, multi-billionaire Rinat Akhmetov.

Touring Donetsk and the eastern city of Dnipropetrovsk, Prime Minister Arseny Yatseniuk said under a blueprint for a new constitution "a significant number" of powers would devolve away from the Kiev government to Ukraine's regions. These would allow regions to plough back a portion of state taxes into the local economy and infrastructure. These 'de-centralization'

proposals appeared in part designed to meet separatists demands for self-rule, though they differ for calls by Russia for Ukraine to adopt a "federalized" model. Kiev see federalization, as proposed by Moscow, as part of a deeper Kremlin plan which would be manipulated by Russia in vulnerable Russian-speaking areas like Donetsk and Luhansk to bring about the break-up of Ukraine.

Yatseniuk made new appeals to separatists to lay down their arms. The authorities have already let one ultimatum pass without using force to end the separatists' occupations, but Yatseniuk suggested patience was not boundless.

Reuters

US not to issue visa to Iran's new UN envoy

WASHINGTON, 12 April — The United States has informed Iran that it will not issue a visa to Hamid Aboutalebi, Teheran's newly appointed ambassador to the United Nations, the White House said on Friday. "We have informed the United Nations and Iran that we will not issue a visa to Mr Aboutalebi," White House spokesman Jay Carney told a press briefing.

US House of Representatives on Thursday passed legislation by unanimous consent that would ban Aboutalebi from

entering the United States. The vote came after the Senate passed a companion bill on Monday.

Lawmakers sponsoring the bill said that Aboutalebi should be banned from entry to the United States because he was a member of a militant group that held 52 Americans hostage when it seized the US embassy in Teheran in 1979. Carney said the Obama administration shares the intent of the bill passed by Congress and is reviewing the legislation.

Xinhua

Renzi says Italy will propose new EU rules on budgets

MILAN, 12 April — Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi on Friday stepped up his calls for new rules on budget limits in the euro zone, saying the current framework is hurting growth and costing jobs.

"Having rules that are all centred on austerity and rigour is a waste of time if unemployment doubles," Renzi told a conference in Milan, adding that Italy would use its six-month presidency of the European Union from July to push for changes.

"We need rules that link together reforms and growth."

In recent days Renzi has repeated that Italy will keep a lid on its budget deficit and adopt reforms to make its economy more competitive. Then once it has convinced its partners of its credibility it expects to obtain greater budget flexibility.

"We will explain to our EU friends that we who respect all the rules are asking to change the rules," he said on Friday.

Italy's budget deficit has come in bang on the EU's 3 percent of gross domestic product limit in each of the last two years but its public debt, the

second highest in the euro zone after Greece's, has risen steadily.

The debt reached a

record of almost 133 percent of output in 2013 and is forecast to rise further this year.—Reuters



Italy's Prime Minister Matteo Renzi (L) talks with Finance Minister Pier Carlo Padoan during a confidence vote at the Senate in Rome in this file photo taken on 24 Feb, 2014.—REUTERS

Forces in Sudan could attack South Sudan refugee camp

GENEVA, 12 April — The United Nations warned on Friday that forces in Sudan could attack a refugee camp in South Sudan because it was being used by armed groups, an assault that would rekindle tensions between the oil-producing neighbours.

An unidentified aircraft circled Yida camp, in South Sudan's border state Unity, this week, raising fears of a strike, Melissa Fleming, spokeswoman for the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), told journalists in Geneva.

South Sudanese fighters ended decades of

conflict with the Sudanese government with a peace deal in 2005 that paved the way for South Sudan to split away as an independent country six years later.

But sporadic clashes over disputed territory have continued and Sudan has regularly accused its neighbour of harboring and arming rebels along their long border. South Sudan dismisses the allegation.

South Sudan's Yida camp shelters tens of thousands of people who have fled bombings and clashes between rebels and Khartoum government forces in South Kordofan region,

on the Sudanese side of the border.

But it was proving hard to make sure all the camp residents were civilians, the UNHCR said, and the appearance of the aircraft on Wednesday had heightened tensions.

"The sighting raised fears that the refugees' settlement may soon come under direct or indirect military attack," said Fleming.

Pressed on whether the aircraft was a Sudanese government plane, she declined to speculate, adding: "Having a refugee camp with 70,000 people, where you have elements that



Refugee children copy notes from a chalkboard during an open-air English lesson under a tree at the Yida camp in South Sudan's Unity State, on 20 April, 2013.

REUTERS

should not be in a refugee camp, could draw this kind of attack from across the border."

"If we see military elements in a refugee camp, the danger is that these elements can draw conflict

into the camp, that they can turn the refugee camp into a target," Fleming added.

Reuters

Scottish leader urges voters to put aside politics for independence

ABERDEEN, 12 April — Scotland's leader Alex Salmond will on Saturday urge Scots to put aside party politics in the vote on independence, as he tries to win support from Labour rivals for his bid to leave the United Kingdom.

In an address to the Scottish National Party's (SNP) last conference before a 18 September referendum, Salmond will stress that a vote for independence is not a vote for him or his party but a way to put Scotland's future in its own hands.

His appeal comes after a narrowing in opinion polls that has for the first time made a vote for independence look a possibility, with both sides trying to persuade the up to 15 percent of voters who remain undecided.

Salmond will promise to set up an all-party "Team Scotland" group after any "Yes" vote, to negotiate the



Scotland's First Minister Alex Salmond speaks at the SNP Spring Conference in Aberdeen, Scotland on 11 April, 2014.—REUTERS

terms of independence by 24 March, 2016.

His promise is an appeal to Scottish Labour voters, many of whom bitterly oppose the SNP, which won the first majority government of Scotland's devolved parliament in a landslide victory in 2011.

"A Yes vote in September is not a vote for me, or for an SNP government

in 2016 (at the next Scottish election)," Salmond is expected to tell 1,200 party faithful gathered in Aberdeen, the oil capital of Scotland, for the two-day conference.

"It's a vote for a government in Scotland that the people of Scotland choose, pursuing policies the people of Scotland support."

Salmond will stress

that the reason to vote for independence and end the 307-year-old tie to England is so that oil-rich Scotland can decide its own policies and not have its fate determined by politicians in London.

He will say that any government of an independent Scotland would be in control of tax, the economy, social security, employment, immigration, oil and gas revenues, European policy and a range of other areas now under Westminster's control.

"That may be the SNP. It may be Labour. It may be a coalition," he will say.

"I tell you what it won't be. It won't be a government led by a party with just a single MP in Scotland," he will add, referring to the Conservative Party which is unpopular in Scotland but the major partner of Britain's ruling coalition.

Reuters

Palestinian FM rejects Israeli economic sanctions

RAMALLAH, 12 April — Palestinian Foreign Minister Riyad al-Malki criticized Friday Israel's decision to impose economic sanctions on the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) as peace talks falter between the two sides.

"We utterly condemn this move. Israel should stop violating the international law," al-Malki told Xinhua.

Israeli officials announced Thursday that tax revenues Israel collects from goods imports on behalf of the Palestinians, which exceeds one billion US dollars each year, would be frozen in response to the PNA's request to join 15 international UN conventions.

Israel has also decided to suspend its participation with the Palestinians in developing a gas field off the Gaza Strip.

On Wednesday, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin

Netanyahu ordered government offices to halt cooperation with the PNA. The decision pertains to economic and civilian cooperation with the Palestinians, and does not pertain to the activity of Israeli Justice Minister and chief negotiator Tzipi Livni, as well as the security-related coordination.

For his part, al-Malki said Israel has not officially informed the PNA with these sanctions.

The Palestinian foreign minister stressed that the PNA would continue its efforts to join the UN agencies and treaties.

The Israeli sanctions come one day after the UN announced it had accepted the Palestinian's request to join a number of its agencies and treaties.

The PNA's requests came amid wavering peace negotiations, with US efforts to save the peace process it sponsors.—Xinhua

Snowden ready to testify in Germany

BERLIN, 12 April — Whistleblower Edward Snowden has expressed his willingness to testify before a German parliamentary committee investigating surveillance activities of the US National Security Agency (NSA), media reported on Friday.

The former NSA contractor said he was ready for a detailed testimony in Germany without any conditions, German media reported, citing a letter from Snowden's attorney in Berlin to the inquiry committee of the Bundestag,

lower house of German parliament.

Snowden's words came amid a dispute in Berlin about whether the German NSA panel should seek testimony from him in its investigative process.

Glenn Greenwald, who had published leaks that exposed the NSA monitoring programme "Prism" on the basis of classified documents from Snowden, showed support for calling him as a witness, German media said.

In a recent interview, the NSA-leak reporter

said the US spying scandal cannot be fully clarified without a testimony from Snowden, adding that there would be huge loopholes in their inquiry if German investigators don't question Snowden personally.

The German parliamentary committee, formed less than a month ago, is charged with the task of investigating spying on German communications by the NSA and other intelligence services.

Xinhua

Belarusian president says ready to receive Ukrainians fleeing Ukraine

MINSK, 12 April — Belarus is ready to take all Ukrainians who want to leave Ukraine and also welcomes those who have fled Ukraine due to the current crisis, Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko said on Friday.

"The Ukrainian people are asking us for shelter. We need to think about that. Perhaps, we will have to take in some of our brothers and sisters and we will do that if necessary," Lukashenko said at a

meeting with the workers of the Slutsk Belts factory.

He also accused the Ukrainian authorities of raising prices at home, making it impossible for people to live.

"It would be better if things over there were calm and peaceful for these good people to live a calm life there," the president said.

The Ukrainian embassy in Moscow said on Friday that Ukrainian ambassador to Belarus Mykhailo Yezhel has returned to

Minsk after consultations in Kiev, the capital of Ukraine.

On 24 March, Ukraine recalled ambassador Yezhel back and sent a diplomatic note to Belarus to protest against remarks by Lukashenko saying that Belarus accepted that Crimea was de-facto a part of Russia.

Minsk said that Belarus was not going to recall its ambassador from Ukraine.

Xinhua

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

India successfully testfires Agni I missile at night

NEW DELHI, 12 April— India successfully testfired Agni-I ballistic missile from a military base in the eastern state of Odisha late Friday night, sources said on Saturday.

“The surface-to-surface missile was testfired from the Wheeler Island off Odisha coast at night. The maiden night trial of the missile was successful,” the sources said.

The Agni-I, with a range of 700 to 1,250 km, is a single stage, solid fuel, road and rail mobile, medium-range ballistic missile for use by the Indian Army.

Xinhua



Agni-I ballistic missile

NASA gets go-ahead to build spacecraft set to visit asteroid

WASHINGTON, 12 April — US space agency NASA said on Thursday it has been given the permission to build a spacecraft designed to collect samples from an asteroid back to Earth.

The announcement of building the spacecraft, called Origins Spectral Interpretation Resource Identification Security Regolith Explorer (OSIRIS-REx), was made on Wednesday after a successful Mission Critical Design Review by an independent review board, comprised of experts from NASA and several external organizations, the space agency said.

“This is the final step for a NASA mission to go from paper to product,” OSIRIS-REx programme executive Gordon Johnston said in a NASA statement. “This confirms that the final design is ready to start the

build-up towards launch.”

OSIRIS-REx is scheduled to launch in the fall of 2016, rendezvous with the asteroid Bennu in 2018. The spacecraft carries five instruments that will remotely evaluate the surface of Bennu. After more than a year of asteroid reconnaissance, the spacecraft will collect samples of at least 2 ounces (60 grams) and return them to Earth for scientific study in 2023.

The mission is aimed at finding answers to basic questions about the composition of the very early solar system and the source of organic materials and water that made life possible on Earth.

Besides, the mission will help achieve US President Barack Obama’s goal of sending humans to an asteroid by 2025, NASA added.—Xinhua

Amazon to unveil smartphone in time for winter holidays

SAN FRANCISCO, 12 April — Amazon.com Inc is preparing to launch its long-rumored smartphone in the second half of the year, *the Wall Street Journal* reported on Friday, citing people briefed on the company’s plans.

The Internet retailer would jump into a crowded market dominated by Apple Inc and Samsung Electronics Co Ltd. The company has recently been demonstrating versions of the handset to developers in San Francisco and Seattle. It intends to announce the device in June and ship to stores around the end of September, the newspaper cited the unidentified sources as saying.

Amazon has made great strides into the hardware arena as it seeks to boost sales of digital content and puts its online store in front of more users. Amazon recently launched its \$99 Fire TV video-streaming box and

its Kindle e-readers and Fire tablets already command respectable US market share after just a few years on the market.

Rumors of an Amazon-designed smartphone have circulated for years, though executives have previously played down ambitions to leap into a heavily competitive and increasingly saturated market.

Apple and Samsung, which once accounted for the lion’s share of the smartphone market, are struggling to maintain margins as new entrants such as Huawei and Lenovo target the lower-income segment. To stand out from the crowd, Amazon intends to equip its phones with screens that display three-dimensional images without a need for special glasses, the Journal said.

Amazon officials were not immediately available for comment.—Reuters



Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos

US government says hackers trying to exploit ‘Heartbleed’ bug

BOSTON, 12 April — The US government warned banks and other businesses on Friday to be on alert for hackers seeking to steal data exposed by the “Heartbleed” bug, as a German programmer took responsibility for the widespread security crisis.

On a website for advising critical infrastructure operators about emerging

cyber threats, the Department of Homeland Security asked organizations to report any Heartbleed-related attacks, adding that hackers were attempting to exploit the bug in widely used OpenSSL code by scanning targeted networks.

Federal regulators also advised financial institutions to patch and test their systems to make sure

they are safe. OpenSSL is technology used to encrypt communications, including access to email, as well as websites of big Internet companies like Facebook Inc, Google Inc and Yahoo Inc.

The bug, which surfaced Monday, allows hackers to steal data without a trace. No organization has identified itself as a victim, yet security firms say they have seen well-known hacking groups scanning the Web in search of vulnerable networks.

“While there have not been any reported attacks or malicious incidents involving this particular vulnerability at this time, it is still possible that malicious actors in cyberspace could exploit unpatched systems,” said Larry Zelvin, director of the Department of Homeland Security’s National Cybersecurity and Communications

Integration Centre, in a blog post on the White House website.

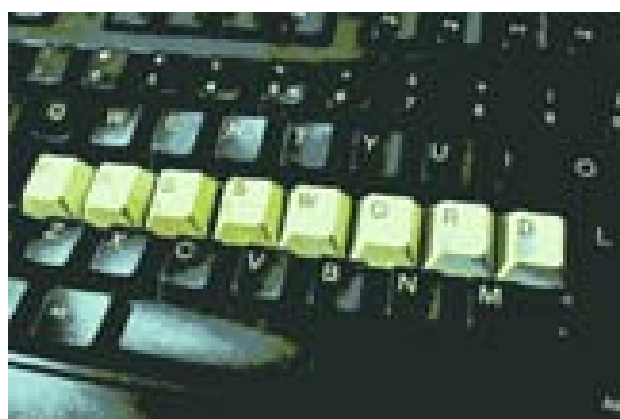
The German government released an advisory that echoed the one by Washington, describing the bug as “critical.”

Technology companies spent the week searching for vulnerable OpenSSL code elsewhere, including email servers, ordinary PCs, phones and even security products.

Companies including Cisco Systems Inc, International Business Machines Corp, Intel Corp, Juniper Networks Inc, Oracle Corp Red Hat Inc have warned customers they may be at risk. Some updates are out, while others are still in the works.

That means some networks are vulnerable to attack, said Kaspersky Lab researcher Kurt Baumgartner.

Reuters



File illustration picture of computer keyboard with letters stacked forming the word ‘password’ taken in Warsaw, on 12 Dec, 2013.—REUTERS

Microsoft sued over browser misuse that led to \$731 million EU fine

SEATTLE, 12 April — Microsoft Corp’s board faces a lawsuit over the way it handled an error with its Internet Explorer browser that ended up costing the company a record-breaking \$731 million fine by European antitrust regulators.

The lawsuit, brought by shareholder Kim Barovic in federal court in Seattle on Friday, charges that directors and executives, including founder Bill Gates and former Chief Executive Officer Steve Ballmer, failed to manage the company properly and that the board’s investigation was

insufficient into how the miscue occurred.

The legal action is the first to emerge from a humiliating episode for Microsoft, which the software company

has never fully explained and has accounted for only as a “technical error.”

In March last year, the European Union levied its largest ever antitrust

fine against Microsoft for breaking a legally binding commitment made in 2009 to ensure that consumers in Europe had a choice of how they access the internet, rather than defaulting to Microsoft’s Internet Explorer browser.

Its investigation found that updated software issued between May 2011 and July 2012 meant that 15 million users were not given a choice. It was the first time the European Commission, the EU’s antitrust authority, handed down a fine to a company for failing to meet its obligations.—Reuters



Bill Gates poses after an interview with Reuters in Singapore April 6, 2014.—REUTERS

Chinese president vows enhanced cooperation with Australia on MH370

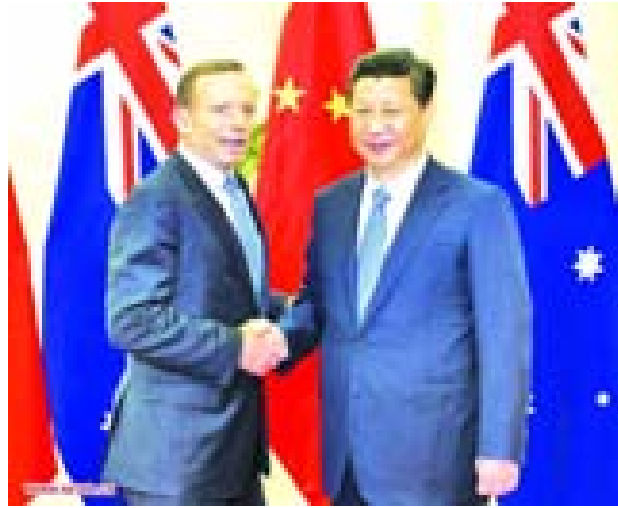
BEIJING, 12 April—Chinese President Xi Jinping met with visiting Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott on Friday afternoon at the Great Hall of the People in downtown Beijing.

Xi expressed gratitude for Australia's search for the missing Malaysia

we've been very grateful for the help," he said.

At a luncheon in Shanghai today, Abbott said he was confident that the signals picked up in the search were from the black box of the missing plane.

The plane disappeared on 8 March en route from Kuala Lumpur to Beijing



Chinese President Xi Jinping (R) meets with visiting Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, capital of China, on 11 April, 2014.—XINHUA

Airlines Flight MH370, adding that China will continue searching for the flight and stay in close communication with the Australian side.

Abbott also expressed gratitude for the immediate assistance that China provided for Australia when the search for MH370 shifted from the northern corridor to the southern corridor in Australia.

"China was the very first country to provide ships for the search, and

with 239 people on board. The flight recorder could help solve the mystery of why the plane veered so far off course. The battery of the black box usually lasts for only a month and is expected to die very soon.

During the meeting, Xi said Abbott's leadership of such a delegation to China showed the great importance and sincerity that the Australian side has attached to developing bilateral ties.

Xinhua

Indonesia's election shows changing political landscape

JAKARTA, 12 April—Brief vote count in the recent parliamentary election in Indonesia has showed a changing political landscape as more emerging forces posed unexpectedly tough challenges to the parties that have long dominated the arena. No major political parties gained a dominating position in the parliamentary election, prompting them to form coalition with other parties to gain significant supports in the parliament needed to nominate their candidates to run in presidential election. "The map of coalition would be hard to be predicted. There was almost equal distribution of votes among middle-class parties. 'New cohesiveness' needs to be conducted to set up coalition," Jusuf Kalla, former vice president and veteran politician at the Golkar party said on Thursday, referring to the results of brief vote tallies, popularly known as "quick count" presented by polling agencies.

He said a map of the party coalition would be different if compared to the party coalitions over the past five years in the parliament, noting that gaining 50 plus 1 percent in the parliament is compulsory for a government in Indonesia to function. The quick count results showed that three political parties had gained above 10 percent of the vote, namely Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (PDI-P), the Golkar Party and the Great Indonesia Movement (Gerindra) Party.—Xinhua

Excessive benzene found in NW China tap water

LANZHOU, 12 April—Excessive levels of benzene in tap water have affected more than 2.4 million people in downtown Lanzhou in northwest China's Gansu Province, provincial authorities said on Friday.

Tests at a water plant at 8:30 am on Friday showed tap water contained 160 micrograms of benzene per liter, far in excess of the 10 micrograms per liter national limit, according to the city's environmental protection office.

The city government warned citizens not to drink tap water for the next 24 hours. Benzene is a colourless carcinogen used to manufacture plastics.

Tests from Thursday evening to early Friday morning found between 118 micrograms and 200 micrograms of benzene per liter at the water plant, according to Veolia Water, a Sino-French joint venture and the sole water supplier for urban Lanzhou, the provincial capital.

The levels at the plant fell to 78 micrograms of benzene per liter on Friday afternoon, according to a statement from the Gansu provincial government's information office.

1-megaton H-bomb would kill 370,000 instantly

NAGASAKI, 12 April—An estimated 370,000 people would die instantly if a one-megaton hydrogen bomb were dropped on a city with one million residents, according to a report compiled by a Japanese research group.

The report was



Citizen buy bottled water at a supermarket in Lanzhou, capital of northwest China's Gansu Province, on 11 April, 2014. Tap water in downtown Lanzhou has been found to contain excessive levels of benzene, provincial authorities said on Friday.—REUTERS

Meanwhile, the tap water at some urban households was also found to contain as much as 78 micrograms of benzene per liter, according to the statement.

Veolia Water began using activated carbon at 3 am on Friday to absorb the organic matter and dilute the pollution.

An initial investigation found problems in a 3 km channel that links the plant that preprocesses the water and the plant that supplies water to Lanzhou. Closure of the channel will cut the city's water supply by half,

said Tian Hong, head of Lanzhou's water quality monitoring station.

Fire engines and water sprinklers will be used to carry water to affected areas.

The local government is investigating the source of the contamination, and sources with Veolia told Xinhua that they believe the benzene came from chemical waste, but refused to single out any particular plant.

They denied any possibility that the Yellow River, the original source of the water, was polluted.

Gansu publicity department reaffirmed on Friday afternoon that the Yellow River, which runs through the city, is not contaminated. Lanzhou residents panicked upon hearing the news, rushing to supermarkets or community grocery stores to stock up on bottled water.

At Hualian Supermarket, one of the largest in downtown Lanzhou, many trolleys or baskets full of cases of bottled water were seen. Latecomers gathered in front of empty shelves, waiting for resupply.

Xinhua

22 still missing after boat capsized in east Indonesia

JAKARTA, 11 April—Twenty two people are still missing after their boat sunk in eastern Indonesia's Papua Province, local media reported on Friday.

The wooden boat with 30 locals on board was hit by huge waves when sailing from Papua's Yapen island to Mamberamo Raya Regency in the Papua mainland on Tuesday, Yapen Police chief Gatot Prasetyo told Indonesian news portal thejakartaglobe.com.

Eight people have been rescued and evacuated by a local search and rescue team, according to thejakartapost.com.

Gatot was quoted as saying that the search efforts was hampered by extreme weather and high waves.

Boat is one of the favorite means of transport in the world's largest archipelago consisting of 17,000 islands. However, the lack of safety standards has often triggered sea accidents.

Xinhua



US Ambassador to Japan Caroline Kennedy (L) and Japanese Prime Minister Shizo Abe ride a magnetically levitated train on the test line of Central Japan Railway Co in Yamanashi Prefecture on 12 April, 2014. Abe, who offered support for the United States to introduce maglev technology in a meeting with President Barack Obama in February last year, invited Kennedy to join the inspection of the train. — Kyodo News

GENERAL

UN-AU report calls on Africa to refocus on industrialization

UNITED NATIONS, 12 April — A new report released on Friday by the United Nations and the African Union (AU) called on the continent of Africa to refocus its economic development strategies on industrialization, particularly on the means for formulating and implementing effective industrial policy.

The Economic Report on Africa 2014, issued here at the UN Headquarters in

New York, said that transforming Africa's industrial landscape has failed partly because countries used industrial blueprints characterized by lack of dynamism and high level coordination, as well as inadequate consultations with stakeholders.

The report, jointly produced by the UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and the AU Commission, builds on the

work of the 2011 edition — on the role of the state in economic transformation — as well as last year's report on leveraging Africa's comparative advantages in commodities to industrialize.

Until now, the report said, an examination of Africa's failure at industrialization had ignored the policy processes and institutions governing industrial policy in Africa or the impact of their inherent

weaknesses on industrialization.

"Indeed, weak institutional structures and poor policy design have been at the root of Africa's industrial policy problem throughout its post-independence history," the report said.

The theme of this year's report is "Dynamic industrial policy in Africa: innovative institutions, effective processes and flexible mechanisms." —Xinhua



Maged Abdelaziz, United Nations Under-Secretary-General and Special Adviser on Africa, speaks during the launch of the 2014 Economic Report on Africa, at the UN headquarters in New York, on 11 April, 2014.—XINHUA

CAR refugees attacked when fleeing to Cameroon

UNITED NATIONS, 12 April — The United Nations refugee agency (UNHCR) on Friday said that it is extremely concerned by reports that anti-Balaka militiamen are blocking and attacking civilians trying to flee violence in the Central African Republic (CAR), a UN spokesman told reporters here.

"Over the past two weeks, the Agency's staff in Cameroon has been seeing refugees arrive with wounds from machetes or gunshots," UN spokesman Stephane Dujarric said at

a daily news briefing here. "New arrivals say that anti-Balaka militias have blocked main roads to Cameroon, forcing them to wade through the bush for two to three months before reaching the border."

The majority of the new arrivals are women, children and elderly people, and all are Muslims. They told UNHCR staff that the men stayed in CAR to create self-defence groups to protect their community and their cattle.

"UNHCR says that an

average of 10,000 people now cross weekly from the Central African Republic into eastern Cameroon," said the spokesman.

"The main entry points into Cameroon are no longer accessible due to anti-Balaka activities, forcing people to use alternative routes," he said. "This has caused the number of entry points into Cameroon to grow from 12 to 27 over last three weeks, making it more challenging for UNHCR to monitor the border."

Xinhua

Spain needs to invest 6 bln euros to repaired roads

MADRID, 12 April — Spain's road network is facing up to an "unprecedented state of deterioration", according to a study published by the National Road Association (AEC).

The study, entitled "Needs for investment in conservation," says the state of Spain's roads is "deficient," and in many cases close to being classified as "very deficient", adding that they are in the worst condition since studies of this kind were begun in 1985.

The AEC calculates around 6.2 billion euros

(8.6 million US dollars) considered to be in an "acceptable" condition. Lighting on Spain's highways needs improvement given that AEC consider 82 percent of that to be "inadequate."

The Spain's road authorities said 94 percent of the amount should be invested on resurfacing, while around 330,000 road signs need to be replaced and 52,000 kilometres of road markings need to be repaired.

The metal crash barriers which run alongside many roads have also deteriorated since the last AEC study in 2011, although they are still

considered to be in an "acceptable" condition. Lighting on Spain's highways needs improvement given that AEC consider 82 percent of that to be "inadequate."

According to the AEC, Spain's poor road conditions lead to several negative consequences, among which are a decline in the safety and comfort of road travel, increased maintenance costs for motor vehicles, higher levels of emissions and a fall in competitiveness with other countries in the region.

Xinhua

Experts urge Latvia to pick up speed on reforms

RIGA, 12 April — Representatives of the European Commission and the European Central Bank upon their visit to Latvia praised country's overall macroeconomic situation, however, noted slow pace of some important reforms.

The head of the delegation Christian Weise said after a meeting with Latvian Prime Minister Laimdota Straujuma that "the macroeconomic situation in Latvia is good, and we are happy that Latvia has made the first repayment in time. We are seeing development in Latvia, but would wish to see even more development in some areas."

Some ongoing reforms, including are higher education, insolvency process legislation, as well as state administration, raised concerns of the experts.

Xinhua



Palestinian men ride their horses as they compete in a local horse race in the southern Gaza Strip city of Khan Younis, on 11 April, 2014.—XINHUA

Egypt army kills leading extremist figure in Sinai

ARISH, (Egypt) 12 April — The Egyptian army killed a prominent extremist figure of notorious al-Qaeda-inspired Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis on Friday in North Sinai Province, a security source told Xinhua.

"The army forces set up an ambush for Nour al-Hamadeen, an extremist involved in terrorist attacks in Rafah, chased and

clashed with him, which led to his death," the source added.

On the other hand, two Muslim Brotherhood supporters were killed after exchanging fire with police on Friday at Gharbiya province, 120 km north of the capital Cairo, official MENA news agency reported. The two attempted to set fire to a traffic checkpoint at a village in

Gharbiya, leading to clashes with security forces that ended up with their death, while a third one managed to run away.

Since the ouster of Islamist president Mohamed Morsi by the military last July, attacks against security personnel and buildings have mounted and Islamist militants are using the peninsula as a stronghold for these assaults.—Xinhua

G20 determined to strengthen recovery, create jobs

WASHINGTON, 12 April — Finance ministers and central bank governors of the G20 nations said on Friday that they are determined to take actions to further strengthen economic recovery, create jobs and improve medium-term growth prospects, according to a communique released after their meeting in Washington.

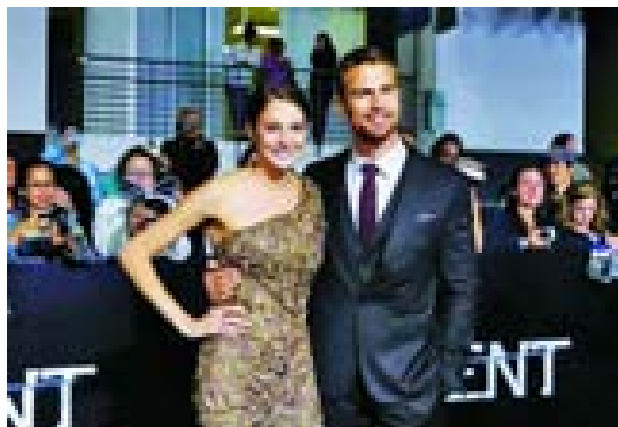
"We welcome the prospects for global economic growth to strengthen in 2014 but remain vigilant in the face of important global risks and vulnerabilities," said the communique.

"To meet our Sydney growth ambition to lift our collective GDP by more than 2 percent above the trajectory implied by current policies over the coming five years, we are committed to developing new actions: build on previous G20 commitments, address identified gaps in our policy settings, lift and rebalance global demand and achieve exchange rate flexibility as well as increase growth potential, and create substantial positive spillovers to each other and the world economy".

Xinhua

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Final book in 'Divergent' trilogy to be split into two films



Cast members Shailene Woodley and Theo James pose at the premiere of 'Divergent' in Los Angeles, California in this file photo taken 18 March, 2014.

REUTERS

LOS ANGELES, 12 April — The final book in the "Divergent" trilogy will be split into two movies, Lions Gate said on Friday, following the same

set to be released on 18 March, 2016, and its second part a year later on 24 March, 2017, the studio said.

"Divergent," a dystopian thriller based on the young adult book series by author Veronica Roth, stars Shailene Woodley and was released last month, grossing \$116.6 million (69.6 million pounds) so far at the US box office.

The series tells the story of a futuristic society that divides people into groups based on personality traits.

Woodley's character, teen heroine Tris Prior, becomes a threat to the government-enforced system as her multiple dominant traits make it difficult for

her to fit into society.

The second film in the franchise, "Insurgent," is set to begin production next month with a release date of 20 March, 2015. Theo James stars alongside Woodley in the films.

Lions Gate will release the final two installments of "The Hunger Games" franchise, "The Hunger Games: Mockingjay Part 1" starring Jennifer Lawrence, in November 2015. "The Hunger Games" series has so far grossed \$1.5 billion in global ticket sales.

Reuters

Rihanna drops bikini bottoms for risqué photo shoot



LOS ANGELES, 12 April — Singer Rihanna exposed her derriere by ditching her bikini bottoms during a photo shoot for an undisclosed French magazine.

The 26-year-old star finished the racy look by wearing her long wavy locks down with a shimmery eye and nude glossy lips, reports eonline.com

The Diamonds star's curves were on full display as she posed for the photo shoot in Hollywood Hills.

A man—likely her assistant—poured some water down the Pour It Up singer's back during the photo shoot.

Reuters

Rihanna was shooting for an unnamed French magazine

Rising artists kick off Coachella ahead of headliners Outkast

INDIO, (California), 12 April — A slew of rising artists and bands kicked off the annual Coachella Valley Music and Arts Festival on Friday, ahead of the much anticipated reunion of hip-hop duo Outkast headlining the first night of the three-day festival.

Grammy-winning Outkast, formed by Atlanta rappers Andre 3000 and Big Boi, last worked together on 2006 album "Idlewild."

But ahead of their headlining set late on Friday, music lovers watched artists such as Ellie Goulding, Grouplove, ZZ Ward and Aloe Blacc perform in the open field of the festival, against the backdrop of the Southern California desert.

Coachella is the first major festival of the summer live music scene, and is often an important stop for an artist on the rise, as the festival has helped launch artists into the US mainstream industry.

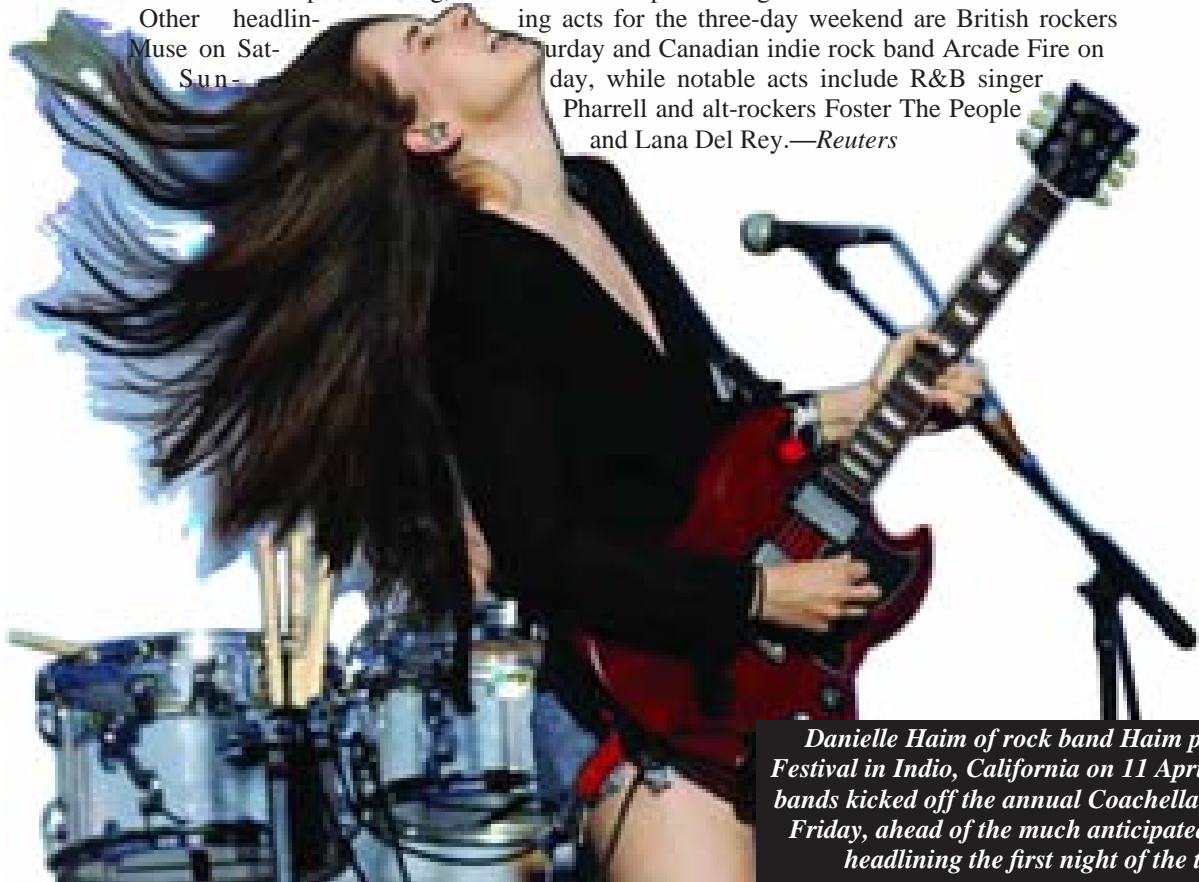
Recent success stories include Florence + The Machine, and electronic music DJs Skrillex and Calvin Harris, the latter two both returning this year.

This year, British singer-songwriter Tom Odell made his Coachella debut, playing the Mojave tent on Friday at midday. The singer said being at the festival was an important stop for an artist on the rise.

"It's one of those festivals that's in the back of people's minds," Odell said. "It's something musicians talk about and know about, it's pretty cool to come over here and play, it's definitely significant."

The 23-year-old singer released his debut album "Long Way Down" last year, and has been touring extensively to promote it, hoping that fans will connect to his songs, such as the piano-led ballad "Another Love," after they watch him live. "It's an energy, I think it's about getting back in the headspace of when you wrote the song, and performing it like that, and putting everything you've got into it, I think that's the most important thing," Odell said about performing live.

Other headlining acts for the three-day weekend are British rockers Muse on Saturday and Canadian indie rock band Arcade Fire on Sunday, while notable acts include R&B singer Pharrell and alt-rockers Foster The People and Lana Del Rey.—Reuters



Danielle Haim of rock band Haim performs at the Coachella Music Festival in Indio, California on 11 April, 2014. A slew of rising artists and bands kicked off the annual Coachella Valley Music and Arts Festival on Friday, ahead of the much anticipated reunion of hip-hop duo Outkast headlining the first night of the three-day festival.—REUTERS

Actress Gillan plays with perceptions in ghostly thriller 'Oculus'

LOS ANGELES, 12 April — A haunted mirror, a murderous father and two siblings seeking revenge form the plot for the new supernatural thriller "Oculus," which blurs perceptions and reality with ghostly scares. "Oculus," out in the United States and Canada on Friday, follows a young woman, Kaylie, who reunites with her brother Tim after his release from an institution where he was held for a decade for killing their father, who had murdered their mother. Kaylie is convinced that a large ornate mirror in their home caused the mental instability and subsequent demise of her parents, and is determined to clear her father's name of murder by proving the mirror is haunted by a manipulative entity.

"Kaylie is not running from the entity, she's running to it, and the worse it gets, the more happy and excited she gets because it's verifying everything that she believed, so it's just counteracting everything that we're used to," said British actress Karen Gillan, discussing her character.

The film flits between past and present, and what is real is constantly called into question as the two siblings try to right a heinous wrong. In one particularly unsettling scene, Kaylie bites into an apple, only to find it's a light bulb.—Reuters



Actress Karen Gillan is seen in Beverly Hills, California in this 28 July, 2011 file photo.—REUTERS

GENERAL

Thai court approves arrest warrant against red-shirt leader

BANGKOK, 12 April—Thailand's Criminal Court on Friday approved an arrest warrant against Wuthipong Kochathamkhun, a leader of the pro-government United Front for Democracy against Dictatorship (UDD), or red shirts, for an alleged lese-majeste offense.

The court gave the approval after the Crime Suppression Division submitted a petition that accused Wuthipong, also known as Ko Tee, of committing lese-majeste by making remarks considered insulting to the monarchy during an interview with foreign press.

The whereabouts of Wuthipong, a red-shirt leader in central Pathum Thani Province, remains unknown and a hunt for him has begun.

From now, coordination would be made with investigative units to bring about the suspect's capture, deputy commander of the Crime Suppression Division Prasopchok Prommoon was quoted by the *National News Bureau of Thailand* as saying. Photos of Wuthipong have reportedly been posted at many border immigration checkpoints in a bid to prevent him from fleeing to other countries.

Army chief Prayuth Chan-ocha on Friday called on Wuthipong to surrender himself to the police, saying otherwise, it will be difficult for him to live in a society where he is now hated by many.—*Xinhua*

Helicopter crash kills three in central Namibia

WINDHOEK, 12 April—A military helicopter crashed Friday on the runway at an air base in central Namibia's Grootfontein, killing three people on board, a source said.

The source confirmed that the accident happened

right after the helicopter had taken off. It then burst into flames on the runway.

There were eight people on board, according to information on facebook. A female pilot died on the spot while two passengers died of serious wounds.

Five survivors have been admitted to local hospitals.

Located about 450 kilometers north of Windhoek in the Otjozondjupa Region, Grootfontein is a small city known to be the main air base of the country's air force.—*Xinhua*



A construction covered by green plants on the top of a residential building is seen in Guangzhou, capital of south China's Guangdong Province, on 10 April, 2014.

XINHUA

37 pct of EU young people complete tertiary education

BRUSSELS, 12 April—The proportion of young persons having completed tertiary education rose to 37 percent in the European Union (EU), Eurostat, the bloc's statistical office said Friday.

There has been a steady increase in the share of persons aged 30 to 34 in the EU who have complet-

ed tertiary education, the educational level following the completion of secondary education, from 24 percent in 2002, when the series started, to 37 percent in 2013.

The Europe 2020 strategy's target is to increase the proportion to at least 40 percent of the EU population in this age group by

2020.

Among EU member states, the highest proportion of those aged 30 to 34 having completed tertiary education was observed in Ireland, at 52.6 percent.

Eleven member states have already met or exceeded their 2020 national targets for this indicator.

Xinhua

Armed men seize police station in eastern Ukraine

DONETSK, 12 April—About a dozen gunmen seized a police station in eastern Ukraine Saturday amid simmering tensions in the country's Russian-speaking regions.

The incident took place early morning in Slavyansk, a town about 100 km north of regional capital Donetsk, where pro-Russian protesters occupied a government building nearly a week ago.

Ukraine Interior Minister Arsen Avakov said on his Facebook account the attack was led by "armed men in camouflage fatigues" and he vowed a severe response.

Ukrainian special forces had been dispatched to the scene, Avakov said, adding there was zero tolerance for armed terrorists.

Casualties and hostages remain unknown.

Meanwhile, Donetsk separatist leader Sergiy Tsyplovskiy claimed responsibility for the raid in a statement issued to Russia's state-run RIA Novosti news agency, but insisted his people were not armed.

A new wave of unrest erupted in Ukraine last weekend, when pro-Moscow activists seized several government buildings in the eastern cities of Donetsk, Lugansk and Kharkov, demanding a referendum on autonomy and closer ties with Russia.

Xinhua

MYANMAR INTERNATIONAL

(13-4-14 07:00am~
14-4-14 07:00am) MST

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- * World News
- * Temple Stalls
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- * Myanmar National Poet and Literary Icon "Min Thu Wun" (Part-II)
- (Student life and early literary career)
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- * Karaweik Palace- A Symbol Of Glorious Myanma Culture
- * World News
- * Myanmar Harpist

Liverpool's Suarez only has eyes for the team prize

LONDON, 12 April—Luis Suarez is only three goals away from setting a new scoring record for a 38-game Premier League season - not bad considering he was still serving a ban for biting when it started.

The Uruguayan says he will not have personal milestones on his mind on Sunday, however, when leaders Liverpool host Manchester City in their most important domestic fixture for several years.

Victory for Liverpool on an emotional day for the club marking 25 years since the Hillsborough tragedy, while not necessarily being decisive, would put them within touching distance of a first English title since 1990.

"For myself, it is more important that Liverpool finish in a good position," 29-goal Suarez, who is two shy of the joint record hauls of Alan Shearer and Cristiano Ronaldo, told the club's website (www.liverpoolfc.com).

"I try in every game to score because I am a striker. I love to make goals, but for me if I could swap being top scorer or winning the Golden Boot for the team finishing in the top four, that would be more important."

Liverpool are almost certain to finish in the top four and return to the Champions League next season, but with five games to go and the title in their own hands, no longer can they be considered outsid-

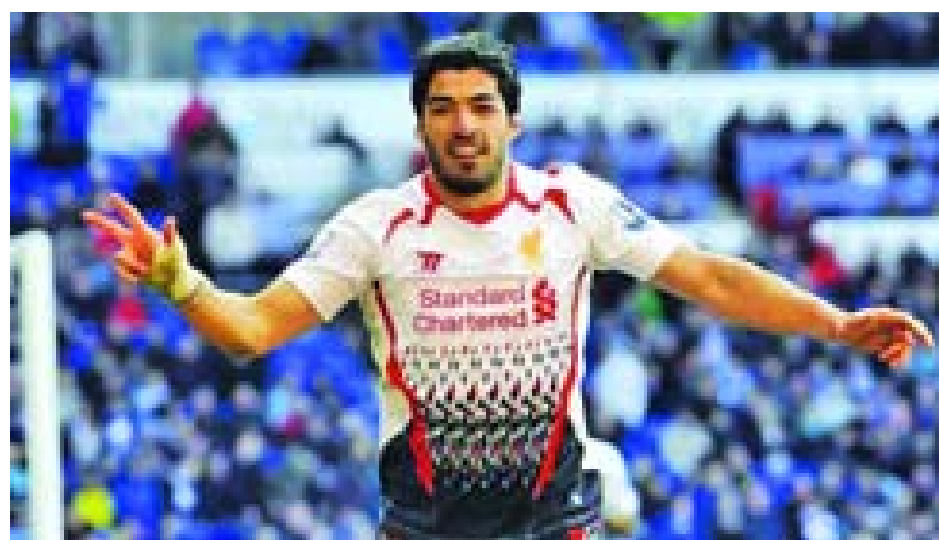
ers to finish the season in first place.

Victory on Sunday, when the game will kick off seven minutes late to commemorate Hillsborough, would leave the Reds seven points clear of City with four games left, although City will still have two games in hand.

Chelsea, the third club vying for the title, also have to visit Anfield in what is likely to become a nerve-jangling finale to the Premier League season.

Liverpool have the momentum, however, having won nine league games on the spin and for Suarez it is just a matter of keeping going until the end.

"For some people, it's a surprise because in the



Liverpool's Luis Suarez celebrates scoring his third goal against Cardiff City's goalkeeper David Marshall (L) during their English Premier League soccer match at Cardiff City Stadium in Cardiff, Wales, on 22 March, 2014.—REUTERS

Premier League it is difficult to win nine games in a row," said Suarez, who on Friday was named joint Premier league Player of

the Month alongside skipper Steven Gerrard.

"With all the games, every week, we work to try and win. We work very

hard. Our target was to finish in the top four and we've won our last few games.

Reuters

Bayern and Real clash in Champions League semis



Luís Figo pulls out Chelsea to play in the second last-four tie with Atlético then confirmed as their opponents

NYON, (Switzerland), 12 April — Holders Bayern Munich and nine-times winners Real Madrid will face each other in a mouthwatering Champions League semi-final this month with Atletico Madrid up against Chelsea.

Friday's draw in Nyon not only paired powerhouses Bayern and Real together but also kept alive the intriguing possibility of an all-Madrid final in Lisbon next month.

The draw also puts At-

letico's goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois up against his parent club Chelsea after UEFA said in a statement on Friday that the on-loan Belgian is eligible to play against the Londoners.

Atletico and Real will be at home in the first legs taking place on 22-23 April with the second legs the week after.

Real have not won the competition since 2002 and will have to end Bayern's hopes of becoming the first back-to-back winners, if

they are to stay on course.

They will also be wary of a poor record against Bayern Munich in the competition, losing to the Bavarian club in four of the five semi-finals they have contested.

"What can I say? Bayern is an extraordinary organisation, one of the most prestigious teams in the world and the current champion," Real director Emilio Butragueno said.

"They have an extraordinary team both collec-

tively and individually and without doubt they will be an extraordinary opponent for us. "But it's the fourth semi-finals in a row for us and we are hopeful of making the final."

They will be sweating on the fitness of Cristiano Ronaldo after the Portuguese forward's knee injury prevented him playing in the second leg of the quarter-final against Borussia Dortmund this week — a match Real lost 2-0.

"We have to wait and

see how he develops," Butragueno said.

"Obviously he and the doctors will do everything to make sure he is back as soon as possible."

Bayern's chairman Karl-Heinz Rummenigge said a meeting with Real would be "incredibly tough".

"All Bayern and Real fans can justifiably look forward to a fantastic clash," he told the club's website (www.fcbayern.de). "We've been drawn to play one of the best clubs in the world and they're a fantastic team."

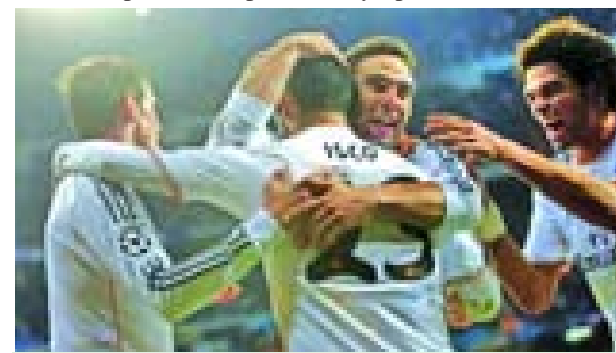
Surprise Spanish league leaders Atletico, who knocked out Barcelona this week, are the only one of the last four not to have won Europe's elite club competition but crushed then European champions

Chelsea 4-1 in the Super Cup final in 2012.

Chelsea, for whom manager Jose Mourinho is seeking to win it with a third different club having triumphed with Porto and Inter Milan, are in the semis for the seventh time in 11 years.

Chelsea chief executive Ron Gourlay played down any controversy surrounding Courtois's availability for the tie, although did not comment on reports that a clause in the agreement between the clubs means Atletico will have to pay up to 5 million pounds if he plays in both legs.

"The loan was arranged back at the start of the season and it's quite simple, Thibaut can play against Chelsea. That was never in doubt," he told Sky Sports.—Reuters



Isco of Real Madrid (C) celebrates his goal against Borussia Dortmund with team mates Gareth Bale (L), Daniel Carvajal (2nd R) and Pepe (R) during their Champions League quarter-final first leg soccer match at Santiago Bernabeu stadium in Madrid on 2 April, 2014.—REUTERS

Honda sprains left ankle in practice: AC Milan



MILAN, 12 April — Japan midfielder Keisuke Honda sprained his left ankle during a practice on Thursday, AC Milan said on their official website on Friday.

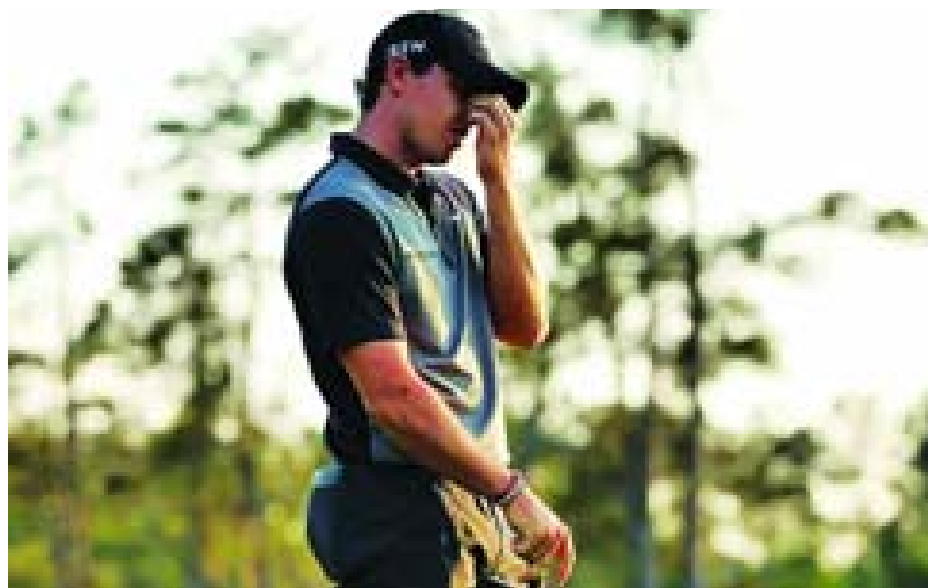
The extent of his injury is not known, but he is unlikely to play in a home match against Catania on Sunday.

Honda scored his first league goal against Genoa on Monday.

Kyodo News

AC Milan forward Keisuke Honda, of Japan, kicks the ball during the Serie A soccer match between AC Milan and Chievo Verona at the San Siro stadium in Milan, Italy, Saturday, on 29 March, 2014.

Six, six, six proves devilishly frustrating for McIlroy



Northern Ireland's Rory McIlroy reacts after a missed putt on the 17th hole during the second round of the Masters golf tournament at the Augusta National Golf Club in Augusta, Georgia on 11 April, 2014.—REUTERS

AUGUSTA, (Georgia), 12 April — Three sixes proved devilishly irritating for Rory McIlroy in the second round as the world number nine survived the halfway cut at the Masters on Friday by the skin of his teeth.

The 24-year-old Northern Irishman had six-

es at the second, 10th and 13th holes and needed to roll in a par-saving six-foot putt at the last for a five-over 77 and a four-under total of 148, qualifying for the weekend by one solitary stroke.

"That was very frustrating," McIlroy told reporters at Augusta Nation-

al. "I really couldn't get anything to go my way."

"I didn't know if it was going to be a 10-shot rule that was going to come into play," he added after winding up 11 strokes adrift of tournament leader Bubba Watson of the United States. "It is a bit of a sigh of relief that I'm here for

the weekend."

Twice major winner McIlroy had to contend with a bad break at the par-five 13th when his ball took a kangaroo-style leap off a sprinkler at the back of the green and finished deep in the azaleas.

"I've seen a lot of this golf course in the last few years," he said, referring to the calamitous 80 he shot in 2011 after going into the last round holding a four-stroke lead. "Yeah, it was a bad shot on 13. I didn't quite deserve that though, hitting the sprinkler."

McIlroy will set off in the first group of the day in Saturday's third round with just a marker for company.

"I want to go out there and try to get off to a fast start," he said. "Eleven shots back with two rounds to play is going to be nearly impossible to make up."

"I'm going to be trying to shoot two really low rounds and see where that puts me at the end of the week.—Reuters

PERSPECTIVES

Sunday, 13 April, 2014

Film tourism

Countries such as the United States, India, Republic of Korea, and Nigeria have large film industries, and their movies are winning the hearts of not only their citizens but also the regional or even global citizens.

Many of the film produced and distributed by these giants are so popular in the world that the locations of their films have become tourists' hotspots. For example New Zealand has become more popular among visitors after *The Lord of the Rings* was filmed there. The same happens

in Tunisia were *Star Wars* movies were filmed. Moreover, Salzburg in Austria has become a wonderful destination as many scenes from the musical *The Sound of the Music* were filmed.

More and more people are interested in ROK because of the recent *Hailyu* phenomenon or the Korean Wave among youths especially in East Asia. *Hailyu* is a neologism referring to the increase in the popularity of South Korea culture since the late 1990s.

In fact, a new frontier like Myanmar has many opportunities for the development of her film tourism. Particularly, a neighbor like India may have interest in filming some of the scenes or parts or the whole movies in Myanmar. If India comes and film movies in Myanmar, other giants may also follow.

We on our part must also take into account

promotion of film tourism in our country through conference presentations and industry talks, script assessment of feature films and other film productions for their tourism attractiveness, location marketing consulting with the help of movie maps, homepage features and classic promotion materials, development of film-related tourism products, creation of film location tours, development of film exhibitions and products for museums, and launching of market research with film-induced tourists.

Write for us

We appreciate your feedback and contributions. If you have any comments or would like to submit editorials, analyses or reports please email wallace.tun@gmail.com with your name and title.

Customer Service

Kyi Mun

- * Customer is business.
-Theodore Levitte
- * A Company's foremost job is to create customers.
-Peter F. Drucker
- * Without customer, there would be no business.
- * A school cannot survive without students.
- * A clinic cannot prosper without patients.
- * Even monks cannot do without lay disciples.
- * So, a business, in order to survive and prosper, must have customers.
- * The importance of customer to a business is high-lighted in the following maxims:
 - Customer is King
 - Customer is Queen
 - Customer is Key
 - Customer is Root
 - Customer is Life-blood
 - Customer is Foundation
 - Customer is the Means to a business End
 - Customer is the Source of business Profit
 - Customer is the Moon bright for the business Night
 - Customer is to Business what Water is to Fish.
- * Inside the company, there are no revenue providers. All are Cost-centers. Only the Customer gives revenue and thus profit.
- * So, for a business to survive and succeed, it must be :
 - Customer - focused
 - Customer - oriented
 - Customer - centered
 - Customer - driven
 - Customer - responsive

- Customer - attentive
- Customer - caring
- * An effective Grand Strategy for business is three-pronged:
 - To Think the Most ABOUT the Customer (Know Your Customer- KYC)
 - To Feel the Closest WITH the Customer (Empathy)
 - To Act the Best FOR the Customer (Providing Best Value to the Customer)
- * A typical Customer Strategy is :
 - To Meet or Exceed Customer Expectations
- * Customer Relationship Management : To Take Care of the following-
 - C = Core Benefits, Cost, Convenience, Communication, Commitment, Comfortability, Confidence. (7-Cs for the Customer)
 - U = Unique Customer Value
 - S = Service
 - T = Targeting
 - O = Offerings
 - M = Mission (Corporate Mission/Purpose)
 - E = Exceeding Expectations
 - R = Responsiveness

Customer Service

Seven Basic Attributes of Customer Service Personnel

- To Be Open-minded
- To Be Kind-hearted
- To Be Friendly
- To Be Helpful
- To Be Proactive
- To Be Cooperative
- To Be Active

Seven Sins of Customer Service

- Ignoring the Customer
- Seeing the Customer Negatively
- Complacency
- Low Sense of Urgency
- Inertia
- Apathy
- Lack of Professional Knowledge and Acumen

Seven Virtues of Customer Service

- To Be Courteous
- To Be Attentive
- To Be Responsive
- To Be Caring
- To Be Prepared
- To Be Accurate
- To Be Speedy

Seven Customer Approaches

- Sweet
- Smile
- Smart
- Sincere
- Spirited
- Savvy
- Sizzling

"Customer service is only as good as the person providing the service."

U Kyi Mun residing in Yangon is a consultant of NAING GROUP CO., LTD.

WHEN PADAUK FLOWERS APPEAR

- * With the air filled with Thingyan songs
Happy dance and chants come around
Impregnated with the scent of padauk
Revellers come out with happy shouts .
- * Padauk blooms once in a year
Thingyan usually brings us good cheer
With all the dousing and merriment
Thingyan has been a happy event.
- * With the sprig of Eugenia as usual
Lads sprinkle scented water on damsels
Some have a nice time in reveling
Others take happiness in merit-making.
- * King of the Celestials visits our abode
Hail Thee Thagyamin with new hope
On the parchment of dog-hide
The bad will surely be inscribed.
- * Mont-lone-ye-paw is fed to all
Charity-feasts for all are within call
Some indulge in revelry as usual
Others do meritorious deeds in festival.
- * Thingyan falls in as merry as possible
Traditional pandals make it enjoyable
Rhythm of Thingyan will ring forever
It comes but once a year.
- * Wishing to be as cool as water
Wash the impurities of the old year
New year will bring peace and prosperity
Water-splashing symbolizes unity and amity
Be ready to cleanse sin and impurity!!

Maung Swe Ngae

Myanmar's oldest English daily newspaper is hiring now!

The Global New Light of Myanmar will relocate to Yangon in mid-April and is now looking for foreign editors and local reporters. Journalists who prefer to work as freelancers or on a part-time basis are also welcome to submit their applications. For further details, please send an email with your resume and samples of your work to the chief editor wallace.tun@gmail.com.

LOCAL NEWS

PYAPON, 12 April—At present, the Union government is giving priority to smooth transport for the people across the nation.

On 9 April, a ceremony to inaugurate Kyundaw Street repaved with concrete was held in Ward 9 of Pyapon, Ayeyawady Region.

The Union government provided K 4 million, Pyapon Township Development Supportive Committee U Aung Khaing Win (U Raju) and family K 2 million and local people K 3.7 million to the fund of the street.

In commemoration of the opening ceremony of the street, local people offered meals to over 70 venerable monks.

Thuza Nwe (Pyapon)

Pyapon gets repaved street



Supplies for natural disaster management provided in Ayeyawady Region

PYAPON, 12 April—Cash and kind donation ceremony of the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement was held on Thursday at the town hall of Pyapon in Ayeyawady Region.

The ceremony is aimed at developing the socio-economy in rural regions and using social equipment in natural disaster management tasks.

Union Minister Dr Daw Myat Myat Ohn Khin

presented a Light Truck worth K 12.5 million and K 300,000 for diesel, 200 corrugated iron sheets and K 10 million for rural development tasks though officials from Township Development Committees in Pyapon, Bogale and Kyauklata townships.

U Soe Aung, Director-General of Relief and Resettlement Department also donated aid to Township Development Committees.—*Tha Byay Tun*

Farmland compensation presented to farmers in Myothit Township

MYOTHIT, 12 April—A ceremony to present compensation for the farmlands that have been confiscated to construct Nay Pyi Taw-Taungnyo-Myothit-Kanbya-Magway Road undertaken by Public Works under the Ministry of Construction was held at the hall of township administrator's office in Myothit Township, Magway Region on 30 March.

First, Chairman of Magway District Land Utilization Management

Committee District Deputy Commissioner U Nay Myo Aung made an opening speech and Senior Engineer U Zaw Moe Lwin of District Public Works and representative of People's Parliament U Myint Thu explained matters related to presentation of farmland compensation.

At the ceremony, over K 222 million of compensation for 264 acres of farmlands was presented to 364 farmers from eleven village-tracts.—*Zaw Zaw*

Union Election Commission, Sub-commission hold meeting

MAWLAMYINE, 12 April—Chairman of Union Election Commission U Tin Aye met those of Mon State, District and Township Election Sub-commissions at the state hall in Mawlamyine on 10 April morning.

Taking lessons from weakness of past events, the UEC Chairman stressed the need of political parties, CSOs, media, authorities and local people to join hands in holding the free and fair elections. Only

when there is no peace and stability, will the nation not develop. As parties are to serve the interest of the people, members of the parties are to give priority to the party than selfishness. All the parties and people are to abide by the law. Chairman of Mon State Election Sub-commission U Thein Tun Aye reported on progress of work, and responsible persons of political parties gave suggestions at the meeting.

Hset Nay Min Aung



Cash donated to fund of Monywa Traditional Medicine Hospital



MONYWA, 12 April—With the aim of providing more health care services

to the rural people, U Tin Maung Kyi-Daw Hla Hnin (Aye Nyein Thida tradi-

tional medicine industry) of Monywa donated K 1 million to the fund of Monywa Traditional Medicine Hospital. Medical Superintendent U Nay Aung accepted the cash donations.

“Wellwishers have donated K 12.5 million to the fund of the hospital for health care of the people. Under the supervision of the region government, better health care will be provided to the people,” said an official of the hospital.—*Region IPRD*

Bamboo products, reliable livelihoods of people in Saw Township

SAW, 12 April—Saw Township of Magway Region is sharing border with Chin State, and it is teeming with forests and mountains.

A large area of bamboo grove is a basic need of production for domestic products that increase family incomes.

Local people are engaged in production of wickerwork such as baskets, trays and other products made of bamboo.

“Most of the people in the village make bamboo mats. One piece of bamboo is sold at K 300. One bamboo mat costs over K 4000. Rough mat is sold at K 6500 persheet and smooth one K 14000,” said a local people.

A group of makers can produce one mat a day. The residents transport their products to Htilin, Kyauktu and Gangaw and Chin State.

Kyaw Than Swe

Duty assigned for achievement of annual plans

KATHA, 12 April—A ceremony to assign duty of annual plans for 2014-15 fiscal year was held at Township General Administration Department in Katha Township, Sagaing Region, on Thursday.

The ceremony was aimed at increasing income of the people.

Katha Township achieved 101 per cent of gross domestic products for 2013-14 fiscal year. The chairman of Township Management Committee and region parliament MP assigned duty to officials of 32 village-tracts.

“It needs to achieve more success from the plans and to maintain the achievements in 2014-15 fiscal years. Local people are to join hands with the authorities for gaining success in the plans,” said Region Parliament MP U Sein Tun.—*District IPRD*

Meiktila traffic police to seize undisciplined motorbikes

MEIKTILA, 12 April—Action will be taken against those who installed noisy exhausts at motorcycles during the Maha Thingyan festival in Meiktila and then it will be issued to the owners after punishing them with fine, according to the No 59 Traffic Police Squad (Meiktila).

After the Maha Thingyan festival, the these motorbikes will be returned to the owners. The seized mo-

torcycles will be temporarily kept at Paukchaung Sports Ground in the township, said an official of Traffic Police Corps.

No 59 Traffic Police Corps and District Traffic Police Squad will take responsibility for Maha Thingyan festival in Meiktila. From 3 April to date, the police squad has seized 21 motorbikes.

Chan Tha (Meiktila)

