

President wishes Myanmar people 'happy, pleasant, safe water festival'

NAY PYI TAW, 14 April— President U Thein Sein celebrated Thingyan at the Presidential Palace here on Tuesday, taking part in the traditional water festival that ushers in the New Year in Myanmar.

The president extended best wishes for “a happy, pleasant and safe festival” to the people of the country, while Daw Khin Khin Win joined her husband in wishing all citizens “peace of mind, health of body and a fulfilling life.”

The president and his wife presented cash awards to entertainment troupes, following their performances.

Two Vice Presidents, Dr Sai Mauk Kham and U Nyan Tun, together with their wives, presented cash awards to dance troupes.

Dr Sai Mauk Kham and wife Daw Nan Shwe Hmon expressed their wish that all people in Myanmar



President U Thein Sein enjoys Maha Thingyan Festival at Presidential Palace.—MNA

could possess a renewed strength of spirit and a new life in the coming

year. Their New Year's wishes also included the (See page 3)

INSIDE

Dr Sai Mauk Kham participates in water festival celebrations in Nay Pyi Taw

PAGE-3

Commander-in-Chief enjoys water festival

PAGE-3

Diplomats enjoy water festival on Maha Thingyan Akyo Day

PAGE-2

Changes should be followed by maturity

PAGE-8

Peace of Mind

PAGE-8

Japan vows to assist peace process in Myanmar



ABE WELCOMES MYANMAR'S CEASE-FIRE AGREEMENT:

Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe (R) shakes hands with U Aung Min, the President Office minister of Myanmar, before their talks in Tokyo on April 14, 2015.—KYODO

Tokyo, 14 April— Japan and Myanmar agreed Tuesday to step up cooperation in advancing a peace process between the government and ethnic rebel groups in the Southeast Asian country.

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe told Myanmar Pres-

ident Office Minister U Aung Min in a meeting in Tokyo that Japan is backing peace talks in Myanmar and hopes to see a cease-fire accord between the two sides at an early date, according to the Japanese Foreign Ministry.

(See page 3)

Myanmar New Year Water Festival revelry continues in Yangon

By Ye Myint

YANGON, 14 April — Celebrations continued apace Tuesday on Akyo Day, the first official day of the Thingyan New Year Water Festival, with hundreds of thousands of revellers dancing and throwing water along Yangon's main roads.

The merriment followed similar scenes on Monday on Akyo Day, officially the eve of the Thingyan Festival.

Kaba-Aye Pagoda Road next to Inya Lake, 7 kilometres from downtown, drew large crowds of merrymakers for the festival which runs until 16 April.

To the beat of music, throngs of Thingyan goers danced on and around water-throwing pandals from Pyay Road to Kaba-Aye Pagoda Road and from Kandawgyi Ring Road to downtown streets.

“We danced freely and happily with the crowd,” a group of four men from India who were drenched

with water told The Global New Light of Myanmar near a pandal opposite the Sedona Hotel.

“Myanmar Thingyan is marvelous,” added a man from the group as they joined a dancing crowd.

“I have not seen yet any brawls until now,” said a street hawker, adding that

all hawkers are expected to do a brisk trade during the Thingyan period.

A taxi-driver said this year's New Year celebration saw more revellers around the city despite there being fewer pavilions than the previous year.

As many major entertainment sites are on

Kandawgyi Ring Road, revellers have to spend almost a whole day there, getting stuck in Yangon Thingyan traffic, he added.

Pyay Road, where there are few entertainment stages with water-throwing pavilions, was also filled with merrymakers in cars.—GNLM



Cheerful Thingyan revelers enjoy Akyo Day, the second day of the Myanmar New Year Water Festival, on Kaba-Aye Pagoda Road in Yangon on Tuesday.—PHOTO: YE MYINT

Diplomats enjoy water festival on Maha Thingyan Akya Day



Union Minister U Wunna Maung Lwin sprinkling fragrant water on a diplomat on Myanmar New Year water festival's Akya Day.—MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 14 April — Diplomats of foreign missions, officials of UN agencies and family members led by Union Minister for Foreign Affairs U Wunna Maung Lwin and wife Tuesday enjoyed water-throwing festival at pandals of Nay Pyi Taw FC, Tawwin Nay Pyi Taw and Shwe Than Lwin Company in Nay Pyi Taw Hotel Zone.

Officials of the water pandals welcomed diplomats and doused them with Eugenia sprigs. The diplomats enjoyed performance of dancing troupes and songs of vocalists and artists. In the afternoon, Nay Pyi Taw Mayor U Thein Nyunt and wife hosted a luncheon to the diplomats, officials of UN agencies and family members led by Union Minister U Wunna Maung Lwin and wife.

MNA

Fire stations in Salin Tsp receive new fire trucks

NAY PYI TAW, 14 April — Union Minister for National Planning and Economic Development Dr. Kan Zaw switched on a 200KVA transformer to supply electricity to Inpok Village, Salin Township, on 12 April.

Departmental officials spoke about efforts of the government for power supply to the entire nation, plans of assignment for one

health staff in each village and repairing of schools.

The union minister attended the ceremony to hand over one fire truck each to Salin, Sinbyukyun and Kanbya village in Salin Township.

He also viewed progress in construction of a three-storey building at Salin Basic Education High School and visited Sinbyukyun hospital.—MNA



Union Minister Dr Kan Zaw presents assistance to a fire service officer in Salin Township.

MNA

Power pole collapses under heavy wind in southern Shan State

NAY PYI TAW, 14 April — Strong wind on Monday destroyed Z2 suspension tower number 144 through which 132 KV national grid number 1 passes Patpin and Kalaw townships near Taunggyi, the capital of Shan State. Collapse of the transmission tower at around 2 p.m. on April 14 cut electricity distribution of Namsang sub-station to Namsang, Kholam, Loilem and Mongnai townships.

After the power line was temporarily substituted with 132 KV national grid number 2 by the 35 staff members of electricity department, power could be re-distributed at around 3 p.m.—MNA



Photo shows damages of Z2 suspension tower number 144 linking Patpin and Kalaw townships near Taunggyi Township.—MNA

Revelers participate in Thingyan festival celebrations in Nay Pyi Taw

NAY PYI TAW, 14 April — The second day of Myanmar's traditional New Year Thingyan festival, also known as the water festival, has attracted more revelers going about in cars and motorcycles in townships here on Tuesday.

Streets in townships in and out of Nay Pyi Taw are lined with water-throwing pavilions, with dance

troupes and famous artistes entertaining revelers who splashed water on one another.

Charities provided traditional foods to all passers-by all day.

Delightful sights were pious people who keep the Sabbath, sit in meditation and donate foods at religious edifices in Nay Pyi Taw.

MNA

Numbers down at Thingyan pandals in first two days, observers say

By Aye Min Soe

YANGON, 14 April — Numbers have been down at water-throwing pandals during the first two days of Thingyan Festival celebrations compared to last year, some participants said Tuesday.

Some people who bought tickets to pandals for Akya Day, the second day of festivities, had been offering to sell them to others, said Hlwan Moe, 32, who attended one of the big water-throwing pandals on Ka-

barAye Pagoda Road.

Celebrations began across the city Monday on the festival eve Akyo Day, with Akya Day marking the first official day of the New Year Water Festival.

Meanwhile, the price of tickets to throw water from the pandals for the final two days is increased compared to the first two days, he said.

A ticket which entitles a participant to throw water at the pandal for four days costs K50,000 at a discount, said Khin Cho Lwin, who bought a ticket one

week ahead of the festivities which began Monday and will end Thursday.

A VIP ticket costs around K100,000, according to a manager of a pandal.

For revelers, a hired car costs around K150,000 per day. The Yangon City Development Committee has allowed the construction of more than 200 pandals of varying sizes to celebrate the traditional Myanmar New Year Water Festival in Yangon. More than 40 big water-throwing pandals are lined up along



Kabar Aye Pagoda Road, Pyay Road and Kandawgyi Road, attracting throngs of revelers.—GNLM

Water pandals crowded with revelers who enjoy water festival for Myanmar New Year on Akya Day in Yangon.—MNA

NATIONAL



President U Thein Sein, Vice Presidents Dr Sai Mauk Kham and U Nyan Tun and their wives express their wishes all citizens possessing “peace of mind, health of body and a fulfilling life”.—MNA

President wishes Myanmar

(from page 1) peace as desired by the restoration of nationwide people.

U Nyan Tun and wife Daw Khin Aye Myint wished all citizens peace and unity across the coun-

try, urging the people to participate in nation building with renewed might. Daw Nwet Nwet San, a veteran actress in the Mothers Dance Troupe, wished all the people of the world long and healthy lives, urging young people to cherish and uphold the tradition, culture and prestige of Myanmar.—MNA

Dr Sai Mauk Kham participates in water festival celebrations in Nay Pyi Taw

NAY PYI TAW, 14 April— Vice President Dr Sai Mauk Kham and wife Daw Nan Shwe Hmon on Tuesday participated in the water festival celebrations at the central water-throwing pavilion of the mayor of Nay Pyi Taw as well as pavilions in Hotel Zone, according to officials.

The vice president, his wife, union ministers, deputy ministers visited the pavilions of the mayor, Shwe Than Lwin Company, Tawwin Nay Pyi Taw Hotel, Hotel Max and Nay Pyi Taw FC, where they enjoyed entertainment per-



formed by famous actors, actresses, vocalists and dance troupes.—MNA

Vice President Dr Sai Mauk Kham and wife Daw Nan Shwe Hmon take part the water festival in Nay Pyi Taw.—MNA

Japan vows to assist peace process in Myanmar...

(from page 1) Handing a letter from Myanmar President U Thein Sein to Abe, U Aung Min was quoted by the ministry as saying his president is “determined to ensure success in the peace talks.”

Myanmar’s government wants to enter political dialogue with ethnic minorities after signing a final ceasefire deal in the near future, U Aung Min was quoted as saying.

The meeting came after Myanmar’s government and 16 ethnic armed groups reached agreement March 31 on a draft ceasefire accord aimed at ending decades of armed conflict in the country.

In Tuesday’s meeting, U Aung Min, the government minister in charge of the peace talks, expressed

hope for Japan’s continued assistance toward achieving national reconciliation in Myanmar.

He and Abe affirmed that 10 billion yen, or \$83.5 million, in aid Japan pledged last year for a five-year period will continue to be used to improve livelihoods in conflict-affected areas, according to the ministry.

U Aung Min said that along with national reconciliation, U Thein Sein attaches importance to promoting democracy in Myanmar.

Abe said Japan expects Myanmar to ensure that it holds a general election slated for November in a “free and fair” manner.

U Aung Min is on a four-day visit to Japan through Friday.

Kyodo

Commander-in-Chief enjoys water festival



Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing enjoys entertainment programmes of water festival in Nay Pyi Taw.—MYAWADY

NAY PYI TAW, 14 April — Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, and wife joined the Thingyan New Year Water Festival of the families of the Office of the Commander-in-Chief on Tuesday, the first official day of the festival.

The senior general and Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army), Vice-Senior General Soe Win, were welcomed by senior military officers and foreign military attachés to Myanmar.

Military personnel and their family members

enjoyed the water-throwing festival, while entertainment was provided by the Myawady Music Band and dance troupes.

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and military personnel visited the pandals of the Directorate of Medical Services and the Defence Services Academy.

The Thingyan New Year Water Festival was also celebrated with entertainment programmes in the compounds of the Office of Commander-in-Chief (Army), Zeyathiri Pandal, Nay Pyi Taw Guest House and Nay Pyi Taw Command Headquarters.

Myawady

Fulltime power supply switched on in Kyaukyan Village, Myingyan Tsp



MYINGYAN, 14 April — A ceremony to launch the fulltime supply of electricity was held in Kyaukyan Village, Myingyan Township, Mandalay Region, on 11 April. Myingyan District's deputy commissioner U Myint ThinAung, District electrical engineer U Kyi Myint and officials launched the transformer to be able to electrify the village.

District engineer U Kyi Myint took price of successfully install power line at the village for sup-

ply of electricity under the supervision of Electricity Supply Enterprise.

Electricians distributed pamphlets on safety of electricity for the public.

Also present on the occasion were Township Administrator U Tun Thein Aung, Township Electrical Engineer U Tun Lin Aung and officials.

Zaw Min Naing
(Myingyan)

Myanaung Tsp commences Maha Thingyan festival

MYANAUNG, 14 April — The central pandal at the people's square in Myanaung Township, Ayeyawady Region, was opened by the Township Management Committee on 13 April.

Township Administrator U Min Min Tun extended greetings to all.

Ayeyawady Region Hluttaw MPs U Aung Win Swe and U Aung Myo Nyunt, Township Adminis-

trator U Min Min Tun and officials cut the ribbon to open the central pandal.

Dance troupes performed a song entitled "Mann Taung Yeik Kho" at the opening of the Maha Thingyan festival.

According to the local authorities, venerable abbots will recite Parittas at the central pandal on Myanmar New Year's Day.

Win Bo
(Myanaung IPRD)



MCDC urges residents to help care for roads, drains



MANDALAY, 14 April — Mandalay City Development Committee has urged local residents to cooperate with the Roads and Bridges Department on maintenance of vital urban infrastructure.

The Roads and Bridges Department has built 15 bridges on 62nd streets, two more bridges on Sein Padeatha Street, Mogaung Creek Bridge in Shwekyetyet village in Amarapura Town-

ship, 16 bridges on 62nd street, one on 72nd street, eight on Sagaing-Mandalay road, 16 on Prince Kanaung Road and culverts in Mandalay City.—*Thiha Ko Ko (Mandalay)*

Outstanding Mandalay bus workers receive prizes

MANDALAY, 14 April— The Mandalay Region Highway Bus Supervisory Committee presented awards to outstanding workers at Shwe Mandalay Hall of the committee on 12 April.

Mandalay Region Transport Minister U Kyaw Hsan presented K40.4 million for outstanding workers from 115 highway bus lines.

Also present were Head of Region Transport Planning Department U Zaw Win Naing, Head of Region Directorate of Road Administration U Nay Lin, Police Major Thein Ko Ko of No 11 Traffic Police



Branch, Chairman of the region highway bus lines committee U Aung Kyaw

Lin and officials.
Maung Pyi Thu
(Mandalay)



Training course helps law enforcement combat spread of HIV

MOHNYIN, 14 April — A training course to help law enforcement bodies combat the spread of HIV recently began in Mohnyin, Kachin State.

Mohnyin District's deputy commissioner U Aung Soe Moe said law officers need to understand their role in control of HIV infection. Some 50 staff, including

police officers and officials of the General Administration Department, attended the course organized by Sao Mon social development association with the assistance of UNAIDS.

The association led by Daw Khin Hla Mon plans to conduct more courses in Myitkyina and Bhamo districts.—*GNLM-001*

MCDC opens photo contest to capture festival spirit

MANDALAY, 14 April —The Mandalay City Maha Thingyan Festival organizing committee is holding a colour photo contest with the theme of "Happy Mandalay Thingyan".

According to the committee, the entries must depict scenes of Mandalay's Maha Thingyan festival in 2015. Handsome prizes will be presented to the winners, the committee said. The photographers must submit

their entries as unmodified jpg files. Every contestant may submit up to four entries of 10 inches by 14 inches. Every contestant is allowed to receive one prize and one consolation prize only for their entries. The photos are to be sent to the office of Information and Public Relations Department on 29th street in Mandalay, not later than 8 am on 16 April.

Thiha Ko Ko (Mandalay)

REGIONAL

Court rejects restart of Takahama nuclear reactors



File photo taken in November 2014 shows the Nos 3 (front) and 4 reactor buildings at Kansai Electric Power Co's Takahama nuclear power plant in the town of Takahama on the Sea of Japan coast. The Fukui District Court issued an injunction on 14 April, 2015, ordering the utility not to restart the reactors at the plant that have cleared safety screening by the nation's nuclear safety regulator.—KYODO NEWS

FUKUI, (Japan), 14 April — A court issued an injunction on Tuesday ordering Kansai Electric Power Co. not to restart two reactors at its Takahama nuclear power plant on the Sea of Japan coast that have cleared safety screening by the nation's nuclear safety regulator.

The Fukui District Court's decision — the first such injunction in Japan forbidding nuclear reactors from resuming operations — concerns the Nos 3 and 4 reactors at the four-unit complex in Fukui Prefecture, located in an area along Wakasa Bay dotted with several nuclear power plants.

The court said it cannot see credible evidence in the utility's assumptions regarding earthquake risk.

The injunction is effective immediately. The utility serving Osaka and its surrounding region is expected to appeal the decision, but will not be able to restart the reactors

unless its arguments are accepted.

The court decision is likely to affect not only the utility's resumption plans but also the government's energy policy, which places nuclear power as a key electricity source despite the crisis at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear plant.

Kansai Electric hoped to restart the two reactors in November after they cleared a Nuclear Regulation Authority screening in February based on what the Japanese government calls "the world's toughest safety standards" introduced after the 2011 Fukushima meltdowns.

Presiding Judge Hideaki Higuchi at the district court also presided over a May 2014 ruling by the same court that ordered the regional utility not to restart two reactors at another nuclear power plant in the same prefecture.

In the latest case filed by residents in Fukui and elsewhere in December,

they claimed that an unexpected earthquake could cause a severe nuclear accident and spread radioactive materials. Kansai Electric argued that the company has taken sufficient safety measures.

All of Japan's 48 commercial reactors had gone offline by the end of September 2013 and remain inactive as none has yet completed all procedures required for a restart. Amid persistent safety concerns, the majority of Japanese remain opposed to restarting nuclear reactors.

Power companies are desperate to restart their nuclear plants amid an increase in imported fuel costs for thermal power generation in the absence of nuclear power. Kansai Electric relied heavily on nuclear power for its power generation before the Fukushima crisis triggered by a huge earthquake and tsunami.

Only two other nucle-



Photo shows Hideaki Higuchi, a judge at the Fukui District Court. In a trial in which Higuchi served as the presiding judge, the court issued an injunction on 14 April, 2015, ordering Kansai Electric Power Co. not to restart two reactors at the Takahama nuclear power plant on the Sea of Japan coast that have cleared safety screening by the nation's nuclear safety regulator.

KYODO NEWS

ar reactors, owned by Kyushu Electric Power Co, have obtained the regulator's safety clearance so far.—Kyodo News

Two-thirds of Australians have little faith in political leaders

SYDNEY, 14 April— Two-thirds of Australians don't trust their political leaders and believe they only serve self-interest, according to a new survey released on Tuesday.

But community leaders are far more highly thought of than other categories of leaders in both trust and competence.

They are also seen as the most concerned about the wider needs of society and to take a long term perspective on problems.

The Swinburne University report into public perceptions of leadership

has also found a lack of faith in union, business and religious leaders.

Swinburne Leadership Institute executive director John Fien said the results showed there was disillusionment with politicians.

"This first survey provides a baseline 'snapshot' of perceptions of leadership in Australia and the results are both surprising and disturbing," he said in a statement.

"Australians have nuanced and sophisticated perceptions of the leadership they experience in Australian society. They

can and do distinguish between the capabilities of leaders in different sectors, and their expectations of these leaders. This gives added weight to the judgments they make about leadership." The study found that trustworthiness was closely linked to caring about the long-term future and the public interest.

Australian Labour Party voters were the most disillusioned, only 24 percent believing politicians were somewhat or very trustworthy, compared with 54 percent for Coalition voters.—Xinhua

S Korea, Japan begin 1st high-level security talks in 5 years

SEOUL, 14 April — South Korea and Japan began their first high-level security talks in more than five years on Tuesday.

Lee Sang Deok, director general of the Northeast Asian Affairs Bureau of South Korea's Foreign Ministry, and Junichi Ihara, director general of its Japanese counterpart's Asian and Oceanian Affairs Bureau, are leading the talks joined by defence officials from each side. How South Korea will deliver its stance to

the Japanese side on the possible revision of defense cooperation guidelines between Japan and the United States is expected to be a major topic at the talks.

The first update since 1997 of the US-Japan defence cooperation guidelines is designed to strengthen cooperation between the US military and the Self-Defence Forces to address security threats without being bound by preset geographical operational limits.

Given that the Korean Peninsula was under Japanese rule from 1910 to 1945, South Korea is generally cautious about any increase in the activities of Japan's SDF.

Tuesday's talks also came at a time when Seoul has stepped up criticism of Tokyo for reasserting its territorial claim to a pair of disputed islets in the Sea of Japan in Japan's annual foreign policy report and newly approved Japanese school textbooks.

Kyodo News

Couple charged for sedition in Singapore

SINGAPORE, 14 April — A Japanese-Australian woman and a Singaporean man were charged for sedition in a Singapore court on Tuesday for allegedly promoting ill-will and hostility between Singaporeans and foreigners on a sociopolitical website.

Ai Takagi, 22, and Yang Kaiheng, 26, were each slapped with seven charges for publishing "seditious" articles on "The Real Singapore" website and its Facebook page between October 2013 and February this year, and an eighth for failing to produce documents ordered by a police officer.

The two have been described in local media reports as the people behind "The Real Singapore" website.

The most recent article on 4 February was in the form of a letter submitted by a reader who commented on a scuffle between police and some Indians during an Indian festival procession earlier this year after the police tried to stop drums from being played during the event.

The article said the incident was sparked by police reacting to a Filipino family's complaint about



Ms Ai Takagi (R) and Mr Yang Kaiheng (L)

the noise caused by the drums.

A copy of the charge involving this article said the publication "has the tendency to promote feelings of ill-will and hostility between different classes of the population of Singapore."

The rest of the seven charges were various articles, mostly in the form of letters apparently submitted by Singaporean readers, who criticized the presence of foreign workers in Singapore, including Filipino and mainland Chinese workers, and how Singaporeans were disadvantaged in the job market due to their presence.

Each of the charges carries a penalty of a fine of up to S\$5,000 and up to three years in jail, if convicted.

The state-run Channel NewsAsia news website said that bail was set at S\$20,000 each and the case will be discussed in court again on 12 May.

The Singapore government has pursued an open door policy toward foreigners who are allowed to work in Singapore, saying it is important for the country's continued economic success to ensure that companies based in Singapore can easily recruit workers that they require at competitive wages, but the influx of foreigners competing for jobs and places at good schools and universities have caused unhappiness among local people.

The city-state has a population of 5.5 million, of which 3.3 million are Singapore citizens and the rest foreigners.—Kyodo News

Supporters scramble for compromise on US Senate Iran bill



US Senator Bob Corker (R-TN) speaks during the National Rifle Association's annual meeting in Nashville, Tennessee on 10 April, 2015.—REUTERS

WASHINGTON, 14 April — US senators scrambled to shore up bipartisan support for a controversial Iran nuclear bill before a committee meeting on Tuesday that could determine whether the legislation will survive President Barack Obama's promised veto.

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee is scheduled to debate and vote on Tuesday afternoon on the measure put forward by Senator Bob Corker, the panel's chairman, that would give Congress a vote on any final nuclear agreement with Iran.

The committee's Democratic and Republican leaders were trying to reach a compromise agreement on roughly 50 amendments to the bill that would change it enough to be passed by the panel with

strong support from both parties.

If the panel of 10 Republicans and nine Democrats approves the legislation, it would be sent for a vote in the 100-member Senate. A close committee vote would dim its prospects in the full chamber.

Senator Ben Cardin, the panel's top Democrat, said he and Corker were trying to work out a compromise.

"I think we can get to a place where we can deal with most of the White House concerns and maintain the purpose of the bill, which is an early congressional review and timely notice if there is a material breach (by Iran of an agreement)," he told reporters.

Corker told reporters it was too soon to know what would happen. "Things are

fluid, but it feels like things are going pretty well right now," he said.

A 2 April framework nuclear deal Iran struck with Britain, China, France, Germany, Russia and the United States seeks to limit the Iranian nuclear programme in exchange for relief from economic sanctions. A final deal is due by 30 June.

Corker's bill would give lawmakers 60 days to review a final agreement, during which the Obama administration would be barred from giving Iran most sanctions relief and members could vote on whether to approve or reject sanctions measures.

Obama promises to veto the bill in its current form. Administration officials have said it impinges on the president's authority and includes provisions that could kill any chance of reaching a final nuclear deal with Teheran.

In a sign of the importance of the issue to the White House Secretary of State John Kerry and other top administration officials were holding classified briefings for the full House and Senate on Monday and Tuesday.

Overriding a veto would require the approval of two-thirds of both the Senate and House of Representatives, meaning it

would need the support of many of Obama's fellow Democrats.

Lawmakers said it was far too early to know whether the bill would pass the Senate and House in the coming weeks, let alone win the backing of the 67 senators and 290 House members to override a veto.

Republicans hold 54 seats in the Senate and 244 in the House.

In particular, opponents want to remove a provision that would force Obama to certify that Iran has not supported any act of terrorism against the United States or any US citizen.

They also want to shorten the 60-day review period. Democratic lawmakers have introduced amendments that would address both concerns.

But Republicans have introduced amendments to make the legislation more restrictive. Senator Marco Rubio, who announced his presidential candidacy on Monday, offered an amendment requiring that Iran acknowledge Israel's right to exist. Passing the Republican amendments could doom the legislation by driving away Democrats willing to break with the White House and support a somewhat watered down version of the bill.

Reuters

German correspondent condemns Abe gov't intervention over critical reporting

TOKYO, 14 April — A German correspondent in Tokyo has condemned the government of Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's control over critical reporting, asking the country to explain more to people.

Carsten Germis, who works for the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* (FAZ), described how he was subjected to insults from Japanese Foreign Ministry (MOFA) due to one of his articles in which he criticized Abe's historical revisionism.

"After the appearance of the article, the paper's (FAZ) senior foreign policy editor was visited by the Japanese consul general of

Frankfurt, who passed on objections from Tokyo," Germis said in the latest issue of "Number 1 Shim-bun," a journal published by Foreign Correspondents Club of Japan.

According to Germis, the diplomat further insulted him, the editor and the entire FAZ by suspecting he was a paid spy for other countries without any evidence.

The MOFA officials now seemed to openly attack critical reporting compared with the government led by the Democratic Party of Japan, Germis said, adding the ministry was using means such as visa to restrict foreign correspondents.—Xinhua

S Korea parliament adopts resolution denouncing Japan's islet claim

SEOUL, 14 April — South Korea's parliament on Tuesday adopted a resolution denouncing Japan for its repeated claim over South Korea-controlled islets in the Sea of Japan and for twisting historical facts in recently approved school textbooks.

"We strongly condemn the Japanese government's encroachment into the territorial sovereignty of the Republic of Korea and twisting the historical facts," according to the resolution, carried by *Yonhap News Agency*.

Last week, Japan reaffirmed its position, both in its annual foreign policy report and also in newly approved school textbooks,

that the islets, known as Dokdo in Korean and Takeshima in Japanese, are Japanese territory based on historical facts and international law.

South Korea's Foreign Ministry subsequently issued statements denouncing Japan for its renewed claim to the islets and summoned Japanese Ambassador Koro Bessho to deliver a protest against Japan's moves. Japan's education ministry said last week that all 18 social studies textbooks authorized for use at Japanese junior high schools from April next year describe the islets as Japanese in line with new government guidelines.—Kyodo News

N Korea's first lady reappears in official media reports

PYONGYANG, 14 April — North Korean first lady Ri Sol Ju's activity was reported on Tuesday by the country's official media for the first time in four months.

She watched a men's soccer match on Monday with leader Kim Jong Un at Kim Il Sung Stadium in Pyongyang, the *Korean Central News Agency* said.

Ri was last seen in official media reports on 17 December when she ac-

companied Kim in a ceremony to mark the third anniversary of the death of North Korea's previous leader and his father, Kim Jong Il.

The football match was held as part of a series of events to celebrate the 103rd birthday of North Korea's late founder Kim Il Sung. The anniversary, known in North Korea as the "Day of the Sun," will take place on Wednesday.

Kyodo News

Kawasaki Heavy train ready for operation in Washington



A new train developed by Japan's Kawasaki Heavy Industries Ltd is introduced at a subway station near Washington on 13 April, 2015, for a test-ride event, prior to the start of service the following day. The operator of the Washington subway system is expected to introduce up to 748 trains from the Japanese manufacturer by the end of 2018.—Kyodo News

Russia opens way to missile deliveries to Iran, starts oil-for-goods swap



Russia's President Vladimir Putin (R) shakes hands with his Iranian counterpart Hassan Rouhani at the welcoming ceremony during a summit of Caspian Sea regional leaders in the southern city of Astrakhan, on 29 Sept, 2014. —REUTERS

Moscow, 14 April — Russia paved the way on Monday for missile system deliveries to Iran and started an oil-for-goods swap, signaling that Moscow may have a head-start in the race to benefit from an eventual lifting of sanctions on Teheran.

The moves come after world powers, including Russia, reached an interim deal with Iran this month on curbing its nuclear programme.

The Kremlin said President Vladimir Putin signed a decree ending a self-imposed ban on deliv-

ering the S-300 anti-missile rocket system to Iran, removing a major irritant between the two countries after Moscow canceled a corresponding contract in 2010 under pressure from the West.

A senior government official said separately that Russia has started supplying grain, equipment and construction materials to Iran in exchange for crude oil under a barter deal.

Sources told *Reuters* more than a year ago that a deal worth up to \$20 billion was being discussed and would involve Russia buying up to 500,000 barrels of Iranian oil a day.

Officials from the two countries have issued contradictory statements since then on whether a deal has been signed, but Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov said on Monday one was already

being implemented.

"I wanted to draw your attention to the rolling out of the oil-for-goods deal, which is on a very significant scale," Ryabkov told a briefing with members of the upper house of parliament on the talks with Iran.

"In exchange for Iranian crude oil supplies, we are delivering certain products. This is not banned or limited under the current sanctions regime."

He declined to give further details. Russia's Agriculture Ministry declined comment and the Energy Ministry did not respond to a request for comment. There was no comment from Iran.

Iran is the third-largest buyer of Russian wheat, and Moscow and Teheran have been discussing the oil-for-goods barter deal for more than a year.

Russia hopes to reap

economic and trade benefits if a final deal is concluded to build on the framework agreement reached in the Swiss city of Lausanne between Iran and Russia, the United States, France, Britain, Germany and China.

They have until 30 June to work out a detailed technical agreement under which Iran would curb its nuclear programme and allow international control in exchange for a lifting of economic sanctions.

US Secretary of State John Kerry on Monday raised concerns about the missile system sale with Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, State Department spokeswoman Marie Harf said.

She said, however, that US officials do not think Russia's actions will hurt unity between the major powers in the nuclear talks.—*Reuters*

UK's Cameron to sell 'Conservative dream' to voters before close election



Britain's Prime Minister David Cameron delivers a speech at St Luke's Church Hall in Cheltenham, England on 12 April, 2015.—REUTERS

LONDON, 14 April — British Prime Minister David Cameron is expected to use the launch of his party's manifesto on Tuesday to promote a "Conservative dream" aimed at seducing low-paid workers as he seeks to make a shift towards more positive campaigning.

With just over three weeks before what is shaping up to be Britain's closest election since the 1970s, Cameron and his Conservatives are under pressure to put clear water between themselves and the opposition Labour Party in opinion polls, most of which have the two neck-and-neck. One poll conducted on the eve of the manifesto launch gave the Conservatives a six-point lead over Labour, boosting party morale. But the overall trend still points to a dead heat. At stake is more than simply who will govern the \$2.8 trillion economy: Cameron has promised a referendum on European Union membership while Scottish nationalists, who want Scotland's independence, are seeking a kingmaker role.

Some Cameron allies fret that the central economic message of his campaign — that the centre-right party need another term to complete the economic recovery it has nurtured - has been too abstract and relied too heavily on dry economic data. On Tuesday, Cameron will try to broaden that message, and, in the spirit of the late Margaret Thatcher, is expected to pledge expanded help for people to buy their own homes and to ensure that more low-paid workers no longer have to pay taxes.—*Reuters*

Foreign ministers call for end to fighting in east Ukraine

BERLIN, 14 April — Foreign ministers from Germany, France, Russia and Ukraine called for an end to the renewed heavy fighting in eastern Ukraine following tough talks in Berlin on Monday.

German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier told reporters the talks had been "at times very controversial" but said all participants agreed there was no alternative to the ceasefire agreement signed in the Belarusian capital Minsk in February.

"We need to ensure that the ceasefire is adhered to far more strongly as fully as possible," Steinmeier said.

The talks took place amid a sharp spike in hostilities in eastern Ukraine over the weekend. On Monday one Ukrainian serviceman was killed and six were



French Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius, Ukrainian Foreign Minister Pavlo Klimkin, German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier and Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov pose for a group photo in Berlin on 13 April, 2015.

REUTERS

wounded in rebel-held territories.

Steinmeier said all parties had agreed to push

ahead with the withdrawal of heavy weapons from the front line and to extend this to other categories of weap-

ons, including tanks, armoured vehicles and heavy weapons smaller than 100 mm calibre.

The foreign ministers were also all willing to support the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), which is monitoring the implementation of the ceasefire deal, further with money and personnel over the next few weeks. They also agreed to continue with an exchange of prisoners in the conflict region and to set up four working groups to deal with the humanitarian, economic and security policy questions in east Ukraine.

Steimeier stressed, however, that the Minsk accord went beyond the ceasefire agreement and must pave the way towards elections in the rebel-held territories. "If this process stalls, then the Minsk agreement risks possibly coming off the rails ... all sides wants to prevent this," he said.—*Reuters*

Sen Marco Rubio announces 2016 US presidential bid

WASHINGTON, 14 April — Marco Rubio, a young senator from Florida, on Monday announced his bid for the US presidency, becoming the third Republican to enter the 2016 election.

At a rally in Miami to launch his campaign, the 43-year-old freshman senator said, "I believe our very identity as an ex-

ceptional nation is at stake, and I can make a difference as president."

Rubio, the youngest of all the official candidates so far, said he represents a new generation as he made his bid official a day after former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton announced her bid for the Democratic nomination.

"Now just yesterday,

a leader from yesterday began a campaign for president by promising to take us back to yesterday," he said. "This election is a generational choice about what kind of country we will be."

On foreign policy, Rubio blasted President Barack Obama's administration for making "dangerous concessions" to Iran and

promised a more muscular approach in which "America once again accepts the mantle of global leadership."

Also calling for "no longer being passive in the face of Chinese and Russian aggression" and reversing the hallowing-out of the military among other steps, he pledged "our nation will be safer, our world

more stable, and our people more prosperous" if he is elected.

Rubio, of Cuban descent, was elected to the Senate in the 2010 mid-term elections.

Besides Clinton, the favorite for the Democrat ticket, Republican senators Ted Cruz and Rand Paul have already announced bids for nomination. Jeb Bush, a former Republican governor from Florida, is also considered a Republican hopeful.

Kyodo News

PERSPECTIVES

Wednesday, 15 April, 2015

Changes should be followed by maturity

By Aung Khin

Change is happening every second, not only over the course of years. Both physical and mental processes arise and disappear continuously. However, these changes should bear maturity if we are to see a better world.

Age is no guarantee of maturity. Maturity can be measured through someone's thinking, speaking and acting on feelings within the

bounds of dignity. French philosopher Henri-Louis Bergson said, "To exist is to change, to change is to mature, to mature is to go on creating oneself endlessly."

Maturity is to understand cause and effect and to avoid harming others. We experience life in all possible ways—good or bad, better or sweet, dark or light, summer or winter. We cannot avoid effects or results from root causes.

We need to solve any problem or confrontation maturely, without resorting to aggression, which can provoke retaliation. Fighting cannot ensure lasting peace. Disputes cannot be settled by power or dominance. Problems and experiences are challenges in life. These can help us develop maturity.

Change over a year or an age does not define maturity. Together with tolerance, maturity is demonstrated by the manner in which we opt to treat those who mistreat or misunderstand us.

Different people have experienced different situations in life. Their actions will be coloured by such experiences. Psychologically, experiences may drive someone's action and behaviour.

Hatred, grudges and insults are signs of immaturity. The lack of maturity will not result in a developing environment. A better future can only be guaranteed when people can develop a mature mindset. The number of years or birth-days we celebrate cannot give us maturity. But we can develop maturity by seeking to understand ourselves and others.

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.

Due to limitation of space we are only able to publish "Letter to the Editor" that do not exceed 500 words. Should you submit a text longer than 500 words please be aware that your letter will be edited.

Peace of Mind

Kyi Mun

* *Peace, here, means :*

- (1) The state of being calm and quiet. *She lay back and enjoyed the peace of the summer evening. I would work better if I had some peace and quiet. He just wants to be left in peace (: not to be disturbed.) I need to check that she is all right, just for my own peace of mind, (=so that I don't have to worry). He never felt really at peace with himself.*
- (2) The state of living in friendship with somebody without arguing. *They simply can't seem to live in peace with each other. She felt at peace with the world.*

-Oxford Dictionary

Let's explore some more meanings of PEACE of MIND as follows:

- P for Placidity
- E for Equanimity
- A for Acceptance
- C for Composure
- E for Enduring Patience & Forbearance
- of
- M for Maturity
- I for Insight
- N for Non-violence
- D for Detachment

PLACIDITY

Placidity means : Being calm, quiet and tranquil. Peace of mind, thus, means a mind full of calmness, quietness, and tranquility. Peace of mind means that one's mind is not disturbed by Greed, Hatred, Delusion, Arrogance, Pride, Jealousy, Stinginess, Fear and Guilt, etc. The mind at peace is without:

- Sensual Desires
- Ill-Will
- Sloth & Torpor
- Regret & Distraction of Thoughts
- Doubt

EQUANIMITY

Equanimity means : A calm state of mind and heart which means that you do not become angry or upset, especially in difficult situations. Equanimity also means that you are able to stay unflappable, cool and calm in a difficult situation. It means you are not disturbed or excited by the eight winds or the vicissitudes of life; viz.:

- Gain & Loss
- Popularity & Isolation
- Praise & Criticism
- Pleasure & Pain

Equanimous state of mind and heart transcends likes and dislikes, being entirely free from attachment to anything. Equanimity means the original mind devoid of Greed (Lobha), Anger (Dosa), Delusion (Moha), Pride (Māna), Wrong View (Dhitthi).

ACCEPTANCE

Acceptance means : The act of agreeing with something and approving of it. It also means willingness to accept an unpleasant or difficult situation. A spirit of acceptance is practicing like a mirror. A mirror refuses nothing but accepts all things. The real beauty of the original nature of a mirror is that **it keeps nothing**. The in-depth meaning of acceptance is that there is no intentional contrivance of any sort, the original mind being devoid of any substance. The original mind is like a blank paper or a empty cup, on which something can be written or into which something can be filled up respectively.

COMPOSURE

Composure means : A state of mind undisturbed by likes and dislikes. A person with a perfect composure is not moved or excited or disturbed by FORMS & COLORS, SOUND, SMELL, TASTE or TOUCH or THOUGHT. A composed mind is like a firm rock thoroughly withstanding all the strong winds. A mind with perfect composure always **Lets Go, Lets Flow, Lets Blow and Lets Glow**.

ENDURING PATIENCE & FORBEARANCE

A person living moving and having his or her being with peace of mind has tremendous enduring patience and forbearance. Patience means the ability to stay calm and accept a delay or something annoying without complaining. Forbearance means the quality of being patient and sympathetic towards other people, especially when they have done something wrong. Without enduring patience and forbearance, nothing great has ever been achieved. Patience and forbearance can breed tolerance of hardship and difficulties of life.

MATURITY

Maturity means :

- (1) The quality of thinking and be having in a sensible, adult manner.

He has maturity beyond his years. Her poems show great maturity.

- (2) The state of fully grown or developed. A mature person isn't one who has come to a certain level of achievement and stopped there. He is rather a maturing person—one whose linkages with life are constantly becoming stronger and richer because his attitudes are such as to encourage their growth rather than their stoppage. A mature person, for example, isn't one who knows a large number of facts. Rather, he is one whose mental habits are such that he grows in knowledge and in the wise use of it. A mature person is not one who has built up a certain quota of human relationships – family, friends, acquaintances, fellow workers—and is ready to call a halt, dismissing the rest of the human race as unimportant. Rather, he is a person who has learned how to operate well in a human environment so that he continues both to add new people to those whom he cares about and to discover new bases of fel-

lowship with those already familiar.

INSIGHT

Insight means :

- (1) The ability to see and understand the truth about people or situations : *a writer of great insight. With a flash of insight, I realized what the dream meant.*

- (2) An understanding of what something is like: *The book gives us fascinating insights into life in Mexico.*

- (3) The ability to see penetratively the core content through all the layers of the cover of forms and colors. One of the very remarkable insights was the wish of the two old blind parents desiring to see the delirious son, who was on the death throes from being hit by a poisonous arrow, stand up and come to them carrying the gold vases on his shoulders (reference to the story of Suvannasāma.)

NON-VIOLENCE

Non-violence means : The policy of using peaceful methods, not force, to bring about political or social change. It also means not engaging in fighting or armed conflicts for solving some disagreement. It means using peaceful means such as engaging in dialogue, give and take, negotiation, cooperation, compromising or friendly relationship.

DETACHMENT

Detachment means :

- (1) The state of not being involved in something in an emotional or personal way. *They answered with an aim of detachment. She felt a sense of detachment from what was going on.*

- (2) The state of not being influenced by other people or by your own feelings. In judging these issues, a degree of critical detachment is required. Detachment also means a sense of not being attached or clung to somebody or something. It means non-attachment or non-clinging, or not hankering after, or not longing for anything. It means you are carefree and self-sufficient with freedom, independence of mind and not being in bondage of any sort. Detachment also means being unconditioned.

CONCLUSION

A unique formula for getting and enjoying Peace of Mind is :

“To Avoid all evil,

To Do good, and

To Purify your mind.”

Let's just strive for PEACE, LOVE and JOY, with Strength, Strategy and Stamina!

Ref : 1.) Oxford Dictionary

2.) *The Mature Mind* by H.A. Overstreet

U Kyi Mun residing in Yangon is a consultant of NAING Group Capital Co.,Ltd.

LOCAL NEWS

Grassroots work vital, chief minister says



MANDALAY, 14 April — Township administrators need to do grassroots work to fulfil the requirements of local residents, Chief Minister of Mandalay Region U Ye Myint told the coordination meeting of the region government at its office on 12 April. Chairmen of the Township Development Affairs Committees reported on collection of tax in respec-

the coordination meeting of the region government at its office on 12 April. Chairmen of the Township Development Affairs Committees reported on collection of tax in respec-

Region ministers U Aung MOUNG, U Myint Than, U Than Soe Myint and Dr Myint Kyu reviewed the discussions of township authorities. *Thiha Ko Ko (Mandalay)*

Residents in Muse enjoy Maha Thingyan festival on Akyo Day

MUSE, 14 April — An opening ceremony for the water-throwing pandal at the junction to the former airport in Muse, Shan State, was held on Akyo

Day, 13 April. It was attended by Muse District's deputy commissioner U Kyaw Tun, representatives from the People's Repub-

lic of China, Commander of District Police Force Police Lt-Col Min Min Oo, departmental officials and local people. The deputy commis-

sioner urged locals to preserve Myanmar's fine traditions in the Maha Thingyan festival. Artists performed for the public while local people enjoyed the water-throwing festival. *L Soe (IPRD)*



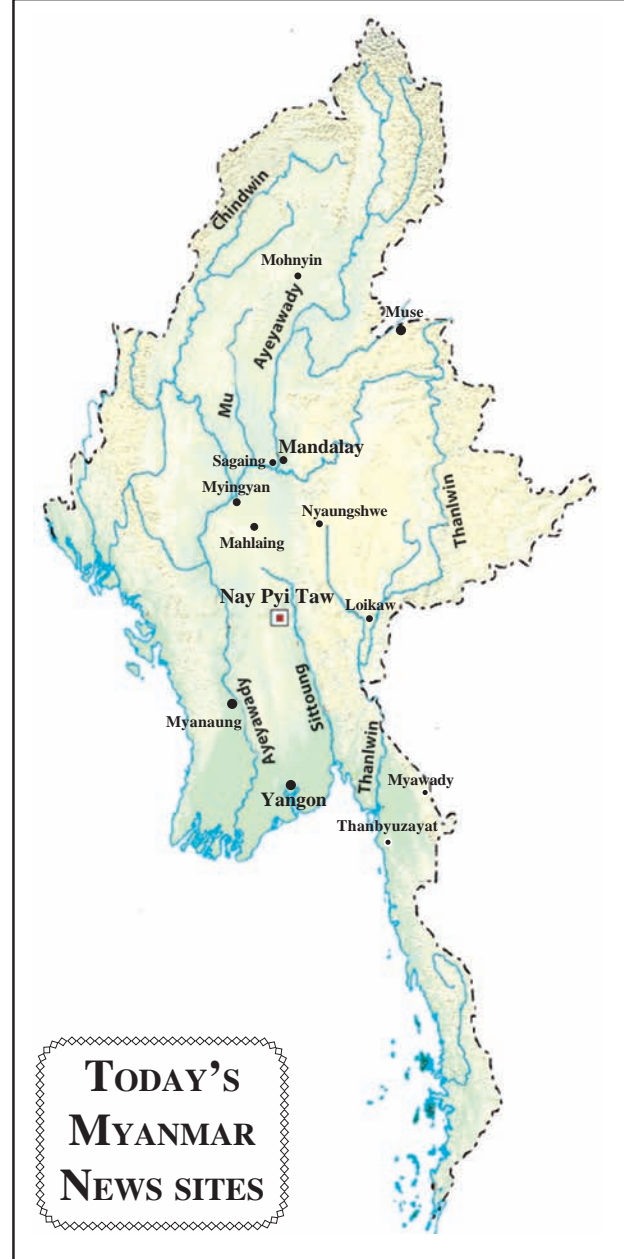
Tourists may visit major cities in Kachin State without permission

MOHNYIN, 14 April — Local authorities in Kachin State are allowing foreign tourists to freely visit the

far northern towns of Myitkyina, Mohnyin, Mogaung, Bhamo and Shwegu without obtaining special per-

mission. Permission is still required for sightseeing in other townships in the far northern part of the state.

Local visitors are able to freely travel to Myitson, where the Ayeyawady River originates, the snow-



Departmental officials focus on protection of child rights

THANBYUZAYAT, 14 April — Mon State Social Welfare Department, Thanbyuzayat Township Child Rights Committee and World Vision jointly organized a workshop on child protection at the hall of the township General

Administration Department on 7 April. U Ko Ko Naing, Deputy Director of Mon State Social Welfare Department as well as secretary of Mon State Child Rights Committee, Secretary of Township Child Rights

Committee Daw Aye Aye Maw and officials of World Vision discussed child protection, legal rights for children and activities of community-based organizations. *Kyaw Win (Township IPRD)*



Obama, Iraq's Abadi to discuss Islamic State fight in White House meeting



US President Barack Obama holds a news conference at the conclusion of the Summit of the Americas in Panama City, Panama on 11 April, 2015.

REUTERS

WASHINGTON, 14 April—Iraqi Prime Minister Haidar al-Abadi and President Barack Obama will discuss the fight against Islamic State on Tuesday at a White House meeting likely to be dominated by

Iraqi requests for US arms and tension over Iran's role on the battlefield.

In his first US trip since becoming prime minister, Abadi is expected to seek billions of dollars in drones and other US weapons to combat Islamic State, which seized much of northern and central Iraq last year.

Obama's administration, which welcomed Abadi's ascension after a tricky relationship with former Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki, may not agree to all of the requests.

Nonetheless, the high-profile meeting in the Oval Office is meant to convey a US stamp of ap-

proval for a leader who has sought to be more inclusive than his predecessor in governing Iraq.

Obama, who came to power on the back of a promise to end the war in Iraq, is restricted by public aversion to US entanglement in another regional conflict and congressional constraints on his budget authority.

"The US is not going to be willing to step up in terms of major military support. It's unclear that the US can budget for major aid," said Anthony Cordesman, foreign policy expert at the Centre for Strategic & International Studies in Washington.

Obama in August authorized the first US air strikes on Iraq since the 2011 US troop withdrawal and has deployed about 3,000 American military forces to train and advise Iraqi and Kurdish forces to fight Islamic State.

"If there are specific ideas that Prime Minister Abadi has for stepped-up assistance, then we'll obviously consider them seriously," White House spokesman Josh Earnest said on Monday.

"The goal is to continue the obviously deep coordination that already exists between the United States and Iraq. This is a partnership that the United

States is obviously deeply invested in."

Concern over Iran's role in the fight against Islamic State may also feature in the Obama-Abadi talks. Iran-backed Shi'ite militias have played a major role in battling the group, an al-Qaeda offshoot that emerged from the chaos in Iraq and neighbouring Syria.

A senior US general told Congress last month that the United States conditioned its entry into Iraq's battle to retake Tikrit from Islamic State on the withdrawal of the Shi'ite militias from the clearing operation.

Reuters

Nigeria's Boko Haram abducted 2,000 women and girls

DAKAR/LONDON, 14 April—Boko Haram Islamic militants have kidnapped at least 2,000 girls and women since the start of last year, turning them into cooks, sex slaves and fighters, and sometimes killing those who refused to comply, Amnesty International said on Tuesday.

The human rights group's 90-page report based on dozens of interviews with witnesses and escaped abductees comes a year after the group seized more than 200 schoolgirls from Chibok, a community deep inside an area of north-eastern Nigeria the fighters claimed as their caliphate.

The kidnapping, and a video showing the captured girls dressed in dark hijabs soon afterwards, provoked international outrage. But

the majority are still missing despite Western pledges to help track them down and a Chadian attempt to broker their release.

Boko Haram's leader, Abubakar Shekau, claims the girls had been "married off" to his fighters.

Amnesty's report said that Boko Haram, meaning Western education is sinful in Hausa, routinely rounded up women and girls after taking control of a town and held them in houses or prisons.

A 19-year-old woman told Amnesty how she had been abducted at a wedding in September 2014 alongside the bride and the bride's sister and then held at a training camp in Madagali alongside hundreds of female fighters.

"I was among the girls

trained to shoot. I was also trained how to use bombs and how to attack a village," said the woman, who was gang-raped several times by the guerrillas and wished to remain anonymous. She told Amnesty some of those who refused to convert to Islam or to fight were dumped in a mass grave.

Many men who refuse to join Boko Haram's ranks have also been killed. Two young men told researchers that at least 100 were executed in one day in December when the armed group took over Madagali. They survived because the killers' knives had become too blunt to slit more throats.

"These appalling executions, the sexual violence, the recruitment of child soldiers, these are war crimes and crimes against human-



Nigerians take part in a protest, called by Malaga's Nigerian women Association, for the release of the abducted secondary school girls in the remote village of Chibok in Nigeria, at La Merced square in Malaga, southern Spain on 13 May, 2014. —REUTERS

ity and they need to be investigated (by the Nigerian authorities)," Daniel Eyre, author of the report, said in an interview.

Reuters

UN vote on Tuesday on Yemen arms embargo; Russia stance unclear

UNITED NATIONS, 14 April—The UN Security Council is due to vote on Tuesday on a resolution to blacklist the son of Yemen's former president and a Houthi leader and effectively impose an arms em-

bargo on the rebels who rule most of the country, diplomats said.

It was unclear how Russia would vote on the draft by council member Jordan and Gulf Arab states. Russia had un-

successfully suggested during negotiations that the text call for an immediate ceasefire and that an arms embargo include President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi's government, diplomats said.

The Russian UN mission declined to comment on Monday on whether it would support the resolution, abstain or veto.

Saudi Arabia launched air strikes against the Iran-allied Houthis in neighbouring Yemen last month with a coalition made up mainly of four Gulf Arab allies. The United States said last week it is speeding up arms supplies to the coalition.

Iran on Monday urged the formation of a new

Yemeni government and offered to assist in a political transition.

The draft UN resolution would impose a global asset freeze and travel ban on Ahmed Saleh, the former head of Yemen's elite Republican Guard, and on Abdulmalik al-Houthi, a top leader of the Shi'ite Houthi group.

Saleh's father, former Yemen President Ali Abdullah Saleh, and two other senior Houthi leaders, Abd al-Khaliq al-Huthi and Abdullah Yahya al-Hakim, were blacklisted by the Security Council in November. Yemeni soldiers loyal to the former president are fighting alongside the Houthis.

Reuters

Islamic State militants breach Iraq refinery perimeter, repelled

BAGHDAD, 14 April—Islamic State militants breached the security perimeter around Iraq's largest refinery in Baiji early on Monday but were beaten back by security forces and coalition air strikes, local officials said.

The refinery was under siege for five months after Islamic State militants tore through Iraq last summer. Security forces drove the militants out of the nearby town of Baiji in November.

They subsequently withdrew, leaving a single supply line to the refinery, which the militants cut on Sunday, surrounding the complex once again and

setting fire to three oil storage tanks.

"The attack that began two days ago on Baiji refinery is the most violent yet," said Salahuddin provincial council member Khazaal Hammad. "They managed to infiltrate the security cordon and enter the refinery (complex). But the security forces and coalition air force have dealt with the advancing militants."

Hammad said the situation was under control, although the refinery is within range of fire from outside the perimeter of the complex, which covers an area of around 20 square kilometres.—Reuters



A Saudi artillery unit fires shells towards Houthi positions from the Saudi border with Yemen on 13 April, 2015.—REUTERS

BUSINESS & HEALTH

Four of seven liver transplant recipients died at brand-new Kobe hospital

KOBE, 14 April — A hospital that opened in November last year in Kobe, western Japan, saw a very high death rate among liver transplant recipients in its first four months of operation, officials at the hospital said on Tuesday.

Of the seven patients who received the transplants from living donors at the Kobe International Frontier Medical Centre in the four months through March, four died within one month after their surgeries.

The outcome prompted the Japanese Liver Transplantation Society, a group of liver transplant surgeons across the nation, to launch a probe.

Liver transplants from living donors involve removing part of a healthy person's liver and transplanting it into a recipient, often the donor's relative, who suffers from conditions such as liver cancer or

biliary atresia — inflammation of the bile ducts causing liver damage.

The patients comprised two Japanese and two Indonesians, including two who were aged under 15 — one Japanese and one Indonesian, the hospital said. The hospital has courted overseas patients to come to Japan for surgery since its establishment.

According to a source well versed in transplantation medicine, the death rate at the hospital is “unthinkably high,” and necessitates close investigation.

“The survival rate for liver transplants from living donors one year after the surgery is usually over 80 percent,” the source said.

According to the hospital, several of its doctors carried out the transplants. The doctors were questioned by the transplan-

tation society on 5 April.

“We gave (patients) prior explanation that the surgery would be difficult,” hospital officials said.

The hospital, led by Kyoto University professor emeritus Koichi Tanaka, a veteran liver transplant surgeon, is part of a medical industry cluster project in Kobe. The city is part of a “strategic special zone” in western Japan designated by the central government where certain regulations are allowed to be loosened to encourage investment in the medical industry.

A Kobe official said the city is aware that patients have died.

“Our understanding is that (the hospital) takes on end-stage patients who have been deemed impossible to treat at other hospitals,” the official said.

Kyodo News



Photo taken on 14 April, 2015 shows the Kobe International Frontier Medical Centre in Kobe, western Japan.

KYODO NEWS

Aso to paint brighter picture of Japan economy at G-20 meeting

TOKYO, 14 April — Finance Minister Taro Aso said on Tuesday he will explain how Japan's economy is improving as a result of the government's “Abenomics” policy mix when he attends a meeting of the Group of 20 finance chiefs later this week.

“I will have to say that Japan's current situation is starting to change in a favourable way compared to the previous meeting” in February, Aso told a Press conference in Tokyo ahead of the two-day meeting starting on Thursday in Washington.

He referred to an annualized real 1.5 percent growth in Japan's gross domestic product in the October-December period, the first expansion in three quarters.

In a statement issued in the previous meeting in Istanbul, Japan was pointed to as one of several advanced economies where progress in economic recovery is slow.

The “Abenomics” policy mix centres on drastic monetary easing and massive fiscal spending.

On a planned Chinese-led investment bank called the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, Aso said he will reiterate Japan's stance of seeking transparency in its governance and its screening for the provision of loans.—Kyodo News

Asia shares hesitate, Singapore stands pat on policy

SYDNEY, 14 April — Asian share markets got off to a hesitant start on Tuesday as Singapore disappointed expectations of policy easing while Wall Street was weighed down by worries over the corporate earnings season.

The Monetary Authority of Singapore (MAS) kept its policy unchanged, contrary to the expectation of majority of 25 analysts polled by Reuters. The central bank's announcement lifted the local dollar.

Still, moves in Asia were slight, with speculation high that China will continue to add to its stimulus steps following poor trade data. Figures for gross domestic product due Wednesday are forecast to show growth cooling to 7 percent. MSCI's broadest index of Asia-Pacific shares outside Japan

was a fraction firmer at 514 and not far from September's peak at 516. A break there would take it to ground last trod in early 2008.

Japan's Nikkei dithered around 19,900 having struggled to sustain a break above the 20,000 barrier.



A man stands next to a stock quotation board displaying Japan's Nikkei Average (top) and the exchange rates between the Japanese yen and the US dollar at the Tokyo Stock Exchange in Tokyo on 13 March, 2015.—REUTERS

A tide of new liquidity has lifted Chinese stocks to seven-year highs with the CSI300 index and the Shanghai Composite having climbed almost uninterrupted for more than five weeks.

The flood of money spilled over into Hong Kong

where the Hang Seng Index has risen 12 percent in just five sessions.

On Wall Street, investors fretted that a strong dollar would constrain earnings at multinational corporations. The Dow ended on Monday down 0.45 percent, while the S&P 500 dropped 0.46 percent and the Nasdaq 0.15 percent.

Estimates for first-quarter S&P 500 results have fallen sharply since 1 January, with earnings for the period expected to have declined 2.9 percent from a year ago, Thomson Reuters data showed. Eyes are also on US retail sales data due later Tuesday for evidence that spending is picking up after a sluggish start to the year. An upbeat result would also add to the case for rate hikes from the Federal Reserve later this year, and thus

add further support to the dollar. Against a basket of major currencies, the dollar was holding steady at 99.434 and just a whisker from recent peaks. The euro drifted down to \$1.0577 (0.72 pounds), having fallen as low as \$1.0519 on Monday.

The yen made gains of its own after Koichi Hamada, an economic adviser to Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, indicated the yen was excessively weak against the dollar.

The dollar slid a whole yen to 119.68 yen (0.68 pounds) at one stage before steadying at 120.05. The euro dived as deep as 126.505 yen, reaching a low not seen since June 2013.

In commodities, US crude was quoted 20 cents firmer at \$52.10, while Brent May crude added 22 cents to \$58.15 a barrel.—Reuters

US regulator warns against use of muscle growth product linked to liver injury

WASHINGTON, 14 April — The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) on Monday warned consumers to stop using a dietary supplement for muscle growth linked to serious liver damage.

The FDA said it's investigating Tri-Methyl Xtreme, distributed by Las Vegas-based Extreme Products Group, after receiving three adverse event reports from consumers in three states of California, New Jersey and Utah.

The product is marketed as a dietary supplement that claims to contain anabolic steroids and is sold on the Internet and in some retail stores and gyms.

“Products marketed as supplements that contain anabolic steroids pose a real danger to consumers,” Charles Lee, a senior medical advisor in the FDA's Center for Drug Evaluation and Research's Office of Compliance, said in a statement. “Anabolic steroids may have a range of serious adverse effects on many organ systems, and the damage may be irreversible.”

According to the FDA, liver injury is generally known to be a possible outcome of using products that contain synthetic anabolic steroids, and steroid-like substances.

Anabolic steroids may also cause other serious

long-term consequences, including adverse effects on cholesterol levels; increased risk of heart attack and stroke; masculinization of women; shrinkage of the testicles; breast enlargement; infertility in males; and short stature in children.

Consumers who suspect they are experiencing problems associated with Tri-Methyl Xtreme or other body building products should consult a health care professional, especially if they have experienced unexplained fatigue, abdominal or back pain, discolored urine or any other unexplained changes in their health, the FDA suggested.—Xinhua

Singapore to maintain policy of modest, gradual appreciation of Singapore dollar

SINGAPORE, 14 April — The Monetary Authority of Singapore (MAS) said on Tuesday that it would maintain its policy of a modest and gradual appreciation of the Singapore dollar.

The latest policy announcement came amid Singapore's moderate economic growth, MAS said in a statement.

“There will be no change to the slope and width of the policy band, and the level at which it is centred.” Singapore economy grew by 2.1 percent in the first quarter of 2015 on a year-on-year basis. This was due in part to relatively slow growth in manufacturing sector, which makes up a fifth of the economy.

MAS adjusted its monetary policy in January, saying it would slow the Singapore dollar's appreciation by reducing the slope of the policy band, citing the more benign inflation outlook.—Xinhua

Possible Lincoln deathbed blanket tested in Wisconsin 150 years after assassination

MILWAUKEE, 14 April — A bedspread that may have covered Abraham Lincoln as he lay dying will be tested for his blood in Wisconsin on Tuesday, 150 years to the day after the 16th US president was fatally shot while watching a play in Washington.

University of Wisconsin textile expert Majid Sarmadi will test the cotton bedspread to determine if human blood is on the Wisconsin Historical Society artefact. “It is the most exciting thing to work on,” Sarmadi said on Monday. “It gives me goosebumps. ... There is no single president in history that I regard more than Lincoln.”

Lincoln was shot by John Wilkes Booth as he watched a play in Ford’s Theatre on 14 April, 1865, five days after Confederate General Robert E Lee surrendered his army to Union General Ulysses S Grant, effectively ending the Civil War. The president was taken across the street to the Petersen House and placed in a bed, where he died the next morning, perhaps covered by the artefact headed for the lab.

Wisconsin State Journal owner Richard Lloyd Jones gave the blanket to the Wisconsin Historical Society in 1919. Jones, who was interested in preserving Lincoln artefacts, acquired it from the Petersen family in 1907. The Wisconsin Historical Society decided to run tests after fielding questions about the small spots on it that appear to be bloodstains, said social history curator Leslie Bellais.—Reuters

S Korea lifts travel ban on Japanese journalist

SEOUL, 14 April — The South Korean Justice Ministry on Tuesday lifted a travel ban on a Japanese newspaper journalist who has been accused of defaming South Korean President Park Geun-hye.

Tatsuya Kato, a former Seoul bureau chief of the *Sankei Shimbun* who had been banned from leaving South Korea since last summer, was planning to fly to Japan on Tuesday afternoon, according to people close to him.

The South Korean justice minister imposed the travel ban on Kato on 7 August last year after South Korean prosecutors determined that an online article he wrote for the newspaper was

defamatory, and renewed it eight times, most recently for a period of three months through on Wednesday.

Kato, who is not under arrest, was indicted and is on trial at the Seoul Central District Court on charges of defaming Park in the article by writing about rumors that she was meeting secretly with a former male aide during a ferry disaster in April last year that killed more than 300 people.

Kato has pleaded not guilty to the defamation charge. But after the presiding judge in his trial said during a hearing on 30 March that the rumors were false, the *Sankei Shimbun* on 7 April ran Kato’s note that said he does not intend



Tatsuya Kato, former chief of the Seoul bureau of Japan’s *Sankei Shimbun* newspaper

to argue against this point.

It is unusual for a travel ban on a foreigner who has been indicted in South Korea to be lifted before a

court decision. South Korean prosecutors, who had asked the ministry to lift the ban because deliberations on the most important points have been covered in court hearings, said they took the case into consideration from a humanitarian standpoint as Kato’s mother was ill and he promised to attend future hearings.

A senior Japanese Foreign Ministry official told reporters in Tokyo that the lifting of the travel ban is a matter of course, saying that the Japanese government has repeatedly conveyed to South Korea its concern over the case on humanitarian grounds.

Japanese ruling and opposition lawmakers wel-

comed the development.

Meanwhile, South Korea’s Foreign Ministry spokesman reiterated his country’s position that the case should not become a diplomatic issue between the two neighbours.

“The prosecution has handled the case in accordance with law and principles and it has nothing to do with bilateral relations between South Korea and Japan,” Noh Kwang Il told journalists. “So it’s not desirable for the case to become a diplomatic issue.”

Noh said the Justice Ministry has taken the measure to lift the travel ban according to regulations concerning immigration laws.—Kyodo News

China accuses prominent NGO of ‘breaking the law’

BEIJING, 14 April — China’s foreign ministry threatened on Tuesday to punish a prominent non-governmental organization which lobbied for the release of five freed women activists, saying the group must be held accountable for “breaking the law”.

Yirenping, an anti-discrimination NGO, has defended the rights of people with HIV, Hepatitis B, women and people with disabilities.

President Xi Jinping’s administration has detained hundreds of activists in the past two years, in what some rights groups say is the worst clampdown on dissent in two decades.

In late March, Chinese police officers raided Yirenping’s office and seized laptops and details of contacts, its co-founder, Lu Jun, told Reuters.

The NGO has also lobbied for five women activists whose detentions sparked an outcry by the West and

Chinese rights campaigners. The women, who have campaigned against domestic violence and discrimination, were released on bail on Monday.

“For the organization they are affiliated with,

Beijing Yirenping Centre, because this organisation is suspected of violating the law, it will face punishment,” Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Hong Lei said at a daily news briefing.

It is unclear what punishment Yirenping will face.

Lu, who is in New York, did not respond to a request for comment. Calls to its Beijing office went unanswered.

For more than a month,

Lu has campaigned for the release of the women, sending journalists information and setting up a Facebook group called “Free Chinese Feminists”.

Wang Zheng, a scholar who researches Chinese women and gender at the University of Michigan, said she believed Chinese authorities targeted the women activists because “they want to smash Yirenping”.

“The authorities probably don’t want to make too big a splash by arresting the head of Yirenping, so they detained these young women to send the message,” Wang was quoted as saying in an interview published last weekend on China Change, a website on civil society in China.

“They succeeded in terrifying Yirenping. Once these young feminists were detained, everyone working at Yirenping knew this was about Yirenping,” she said.—Reuters



Portraits of Li Tingting (top L), Wei Tingting (top R), (bottom, L-R) Wang Man, Wu Rongrong and Zheng Churan are pictured during a protest calling for their release in Hong Kong on 11 April, 2015.—REUTERS

Taipei eyes tightening rules on food imports from Japan in May

TAIPEI, 14 April — Taipei, one of the major importers of Japanese produce, is tightening regulations on food products arriving from Japan possibly in mid-May in addition to an existing ban imposed on food items from a region close to the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant, the Food and Drug Administration said on Tuesday.

Pan Chih-kuan, a division director of the FDA, told *Kyodo News*

that while food imports from Fukushima Prefecture and nearby Ibaraki, Gunma, Tochigi and Chiba prefectures are still banned from entering Taipei, all food products imported from other parts of Japan must carry prefecture-specific labels of origin.

The place-of-origin labels must be issued by the Japanese government or private agencies authorized by the Japanese government or approved by Taipei’s FDA, he said.

Apart from documents related to the place of origin, the measure of conducting radiation checks on nine categories of imported foods at ports of entry will continue.

In addition, seven categories of food products such as baby food, cookies and candies must carry documents of radiation checks by Japanese authorities or private agencies authorized by the Japanese government or approved by Taipei’s FDA, Pan said.

He said the new measure will be officially announced in the next few days and come into force 30 days after the official announcement is made.

Japan voiced strong regret over the development, with Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga saying, “We will continue to strongly urge the Taiwanese side to take appropriate measures based on scientific grounds.”

Taipei’s move came after a legislative commit-

tee ruled last month in favor of a motion tightening inspections on food products imported from Japan.

The legislative committee passed the motion after the revelation last month that some foods were found to have been imported to Taipei from areas subject to the existing ban, which was placed after the 2011 Fukushima nuclear disaster.

The FDA announced in October last year that it was planning to introduce

new regulations, which were expected to take effect as early as 1 January this year if no objections were filed within a 60-day window starting on 29 October. However, the measure did not come into force in January due to objections voiced by Japan. Taipei is a major buyer of agricultural products from Japan — measured in value — only after Hong Kong and the United States.

Kyodo News

ADVERTISEMENT & GENERAL

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Consignees of cargo carried on MV PANJA BHUM VOY NO (048N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 15.4.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.W.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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**Russian envoy visits Hiroshima after rejecting
protest at nuke remark**

HIROSHIMA, 14 April — Russian Ambassador to Japan Evgeny Afanasiev visited the city of Hiroshima on Tuesday, after having rejected protests lodged by Hiroshima and Nagasaki against Russian President Vladimir Putin's remarks that Moscow was ready to put its nuclear forces on alert during the Crimean crisis last year.

Afanasiev offered flowers at the memorial cenotaph for atomic-bomb victims in Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park and visited the museum in the park showing the devastation caused by US bombing in 1945.

Afanasiev then met with Hiroshima Mayor



Russian Ambassador to Japan Evgeny Afanasiev (L) and Hiroshima Mayor Kazumi Matsui shake hands after their meeting at the Hiroshima city hall on 14 April, 2015.
KYODO NEWS

Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Afanasiev said Japan's reliance on nuclear deterrence contradicts the Japanese atomic-bomb survivors' wish for peace, and the target of the protest should be the United States, which dropped atomic bombs on both Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Afanasiev visited Hiroshima for the first time since taking office as ambassador to Japan in 2012. Hiroshima has been inviting Russia to an annual peace memorial ceremony held on the anniversary of the 6 August bombing of Hiroshima and other Russian government officials have attended it.

Kyodo News

Kazumi Matsui who reiterated his concern about Putin's remarks, saying it is Hiroshima's role to convey atomic-bomb victims' wishes to the world.

The ambassador said he is well aware of Hiroshima's people's feelings and that the president did not say Russia would use nukes. Afanasiev also told reporters that reports on Putin's remarks were distorted and that Russia is proactively working toward abolition of nuclear arms. In a letter dated last Thursday to the mayors of

**China, Singapore vow to
deepen military cooperation**

BEIJING, 14 April — China and Singapore pledged to deepen military cooperation in hopes of making contributions to regional peace and stability, Chinese Defence Minister Chang Wanquan said in Beijing on Tuesday.

Chang, also a state counselor, made the remarks during a meeting with Ng Chee Meng, Singapore's Chief of Defence Force. China attaches great importance to China-Singapore ties and regards Singapore as an important partner, Chang said.

The Chinese military

is willing to make joint efforts with Singapore's defence force to strengthen cooperation and communication in various fields, Chang said.

Ng Chee Meng said it was his first official visit to China since taking office. This year marks the 25th anniversary of the establishment of Singapore-China diplomatic ties. He said his visit is "meaningful".

Singapore is willing to further cooperation with China in the fields of delegation visits, joint training and personnel training, Ng Chee Meng said.—Xinhua

**Volcanic eruption drill at
Mt Azuma**



Local officials take part in a drill simulating a volcanic eruption at Mt Azuma in Fukushima city in northeastern Japan on 14 April, 2015, prior to the loosening of restrictions of entry to the mountain on 17 April.—KYODO NEWS

WEATHER REPORT

BAY INFERENCE: Weather is partly cloudy to cloudy in the Andaman Sea and Bay of Bengal.
FORECAST VALID UNTIL EVENING OF THE 15th April, 2015: Rain or thundershowers are likely to be scattered in Shan, Chin and Kayah States and isolated in the remaining Regions and States. Degree of certainty is (60%).

STATE OF THE SEA: Strong easterly winds with moderate to rough sea are likely at times Deltaic, Gulf of Mottama, off and along Mon-Taninthaty Coasts. Surface wind speed in strong easterly wind may reach (35) mph. Seas will be moderate elsewhere in Myanmar waters.

**China, S Korea, Japan agree to strengthen trilateral
cooperation on water policy innovation**

GYEONGJU, (South Korea), 14 April — China, South Korea and Japan on Monday agreed to strengthen trilateral cooperation on water policy innovation during the 7th World Water Forum held in South Korea's southeastern cities of Daegu and Gyeongju.

The three countries held a trilateral ministerial meeting during the forum on Monday, bringing together China's Vice Minister of Water Resources Jiao Yong, South Korea's Minister of Land, Infrastructure and Transport Yoo Il-ho and Japan's Minister of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism Ohta Akihiro.

The three sides signed a joint statement to strengthen trilateral cooperation on water-related issues under the topic "Water Policy Innovation in Response to Persistent and Emerging Water Challenges".



China's Vice Minister of Water Resources Jiao Yong, South Korea's Minister of Land, Infrastructure and Transport Yoo Il-ho and Japan's Minister of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism Ohta Akihiro (R-L) pose for photo after signing a joint statement during a trilateral ministerial meeting at the seventh World Water Forum held in Gyeongju, South Korea, on 13 April, 2015. China, South Korea and Japan on Monday agreed to strengthen trilateral cooperation on water policy innovation during the seventh World Water Forum held in South Korea's southeastern cities of Daegu and Gyeongju.—XINHUA

"We share the recognition that water policy innovation and reform should be promoted by each coun-

try in order to strengthen the core role of water resource in sustainable development, improve synergy

among relevant government agencies and relevant stakeholders, enhance the resilience of water infrastructure and attract more financial investment into the water sector," the statement said.

They also decided to share the knowledge and experience learned in above water policy innovation initiatives for improved water security in three countries.

In addition, they welcome trilateral cooperation to share and spread achievements and success to other countries, in particular, developing nations, according to the statement. The World Water Forum, which is held every three years by the World Water Council, is the world's largest water-related forum that bring together around 3,500 world leaders, business people and experts.—Xinhua

Tribute to late 'German Sinatra' is surprise Berlin hit



Udo Jürgens holds up his trophy for Lifetime Achievement during the Bambi 2013 media awards ceremony in Berlin on 14 Nov, 2013.—REUTERS

BERLIN, 14 April — A German musical celebrating 20 of the top hits from pop star Udo Jürgens has become the show to see in Berlin after the German-speaking world's answer to Frank Sinatra died at the age of 80 late last year.

The musical "Ich war noch niemals in New York"

(I've never been in New York) takes its title from one of Jürgens's easy listening "Schlager" (hit songs) and has been filling the 1,600-capacity Theater des Westens since its 25 March premiere.

Jürgens, who sold more than 105 million records and wrote hundreds of

original tunes and covers of songs from Sinatra, Sammy Davis Jr, Bing Crosby and Matt Monro, had a 64-year career that took off after he won the Eurovision Song Contest for his native Austria in 1966.

The musical features many of his best-known hits such as "Siebzehn Jahr, blondes Haar" (17 and Blond Hair), "Griechischer Wein" (Greek Wine) and "Aber bitte mit Sahne" (But with Whipped Cream, Please), all catchy tunes that made him a household name in Germany, Austria and Switzerland for decades.

Although he was a regular on television and in concert halls, the show's success has surprised some critics, who guess that its timing — coming only months after his death of a heart attack in Switzerland last December — helped

trigger interest.

During his career, Jürgens managed to attract audiences of all ages and ended his concerts with his trademark gesture — returning for encores in a bathrobe. He once performed an open-air concert before a crowd of 220,000 in Vienna in 1992.

In 1970, he played more than 200 concerts to audiences on an exhausting tour of Germany, Switzerland, Austria and then-communist Eastern Europe.

Like the ABBA musical "Mamma Mia" that packed the Theater des Westens for a 16-month run that ended in February, the Jürgens show is a light-hearted story about a love-struck couple of senior citizens in a gloomy retirement home who elope by ship to New York, a city neither had ever seen before.

Reuters

Musician Carlos Varela seeks to bridge US and Cuban audiences



Musician Carlos Varela, dubbed "The Poet of Havana," known for his subtle political lyrics, performs in concert at the National Theater in Havana on 7 Jan, 2013 in this photo released to Reuters on 12 April, 2015.—REUTERS

TAMPA, (Fla), 14 April — Singer-songwriter Carlos Varela, dubbed "The Poet of Havana," has walked a cultural tightrope in Cuba for decades, questioning the island's communist government in his lyrics, while also hitting out at Washington's five-decades-old trade embargo.

His songs earned him a following on both sides of the Florida Straits despite their Cold War divide.

Artists hope the thaw in relations and a documentary about Varela will allow them to bring audiences closer together in both countries.

"The Poet of Havana," by Toronto-based film director Ron Chapman, depicts Varela as a symbol of a generation of Cuban artists born soon after the 1959 revolution who opted to stay in Cuba rather than emigrate. Although they have grown disillusioned

with the island's communist system, they did not actively seek to overthrow it.

The documentary, which premiered last month at the Gasparilla International Film Festival in Tampa, will be shown in the United States, Cuba and England. It features interviews with actor Benicio Del Toro and American musician Jackson Browne, as well as Cuban music critics and musicians.

"There is a misperception about Cuba and Cuban music in the world at large, more so in the United States because of the embargo," Chapman said in an interview.

Many people associate Cuban music only with the traditional "son" music made famous by the Buena Vista Social Club documentary and album. But Chapman said Cuba has produced many other styles of music.—Reuters

Hollywood star Bill Murray to attend Laureus Awards

SHANGHAI, 14 April — Hollywood actor Bill Murray, famous for iconic roles in blockbuster films such as Groundhog Day, Ghostbusters, Lost In Translation and The Grand Budapest Hotel, is to present an Award in Shanghai's Grand Theatre at Wednesday's Laureus World Sports Awards.

He will be joined as an Award presenter at the most prestigious honors event on the international sporting calendar by top model Karolina Kurkova. In a star-studded line-up, they will be joined by Henry Cavill, widely acclaimed for his role as Superman in the highly successful film Man of Steel, and South Korean award-winning actress Ha Ji-won. The Awards Ceremony will be hosted for the second year by film and TV star Benedict Cumberbatch.

The Laureus World Sports Awards is the premier honors event on the international sporting calendar. The winners, as voted by the Laureus World Sports Academy, the ultimate sports jury, made up of 50 of the greatest sportsmen and sportswomen of all time, will be unveiled at the globally televised event on 15 April. —Xinhua

Will Smith sings at 'Suicide Squad' party

LONDON, 14 April — Hollywood star Will Smith provided the entertainment at a party for the cast and crew of "Suicide Squad" as he performed a song. The 46-year-old took to the stage to rap his 1988 hit 'Brand New Funk', reported Digital Spy.

Smith's co-star Jim Parrack recorded the performance and swiftly uploaded it to Instagram. Smith recently confirmed

that he has worked on new material with Kanye West. Last week, the "Suicide Squad" cast assembled for their first picture together, following the addition of Adam Beach and Ike Barinholtz to the line-up.

Meanwhile, director David Ayer has revealed a first look at Jared Leto in Joker mode for the movie. Warner Bros Pictures will release "Suicide Squad" on 5 August, 2016.—PTI



'Furious 7' races to USD 800.5 million at box office

LOS ANGELES, 14 April — 'Fast & Furious 7' has hit USD 800 million mark at the global box office only in its second week-end. The Universal movie, the final film from the late

Paul Walker, earned another USD 195 million overseas from 66 markets for a foreign total of USD 548 million.

Domestically, "Furious 7" earned USD 60.6

million to end the week-end with a 10-day total of USD 252.2 million, which is more than the USD 239 that "Furious 6" collected in entire run, said the Hollywood Reporter.



'Furious 7' collection in India stands at USD 20.8 million.—PTI

The movie debuted in China on Sunday to USD 68.6 million — the biggest single-day gross in history for the world's second-largest moviegoing market. Its collection in India stands at USD 20.8 million, in Mexico it is USD 39.7 million, followed by USD 39.1 million in the UK, USD 28.3 million in Germany, USD 23.5 million in Brazil, USD 23.1 million in Australia, USD 20.7 million in France, USD 18.8 million in Taiwan, USD 16.3 million in Argentina, USD 16.2 million in Italy and USD 16.1 million in South Korea.

The movie is already Universal's highest-grossing film of all time in 14 territories, including Argentina and India.

PTI

Mariah Carey announces '#1 to Infinity' album



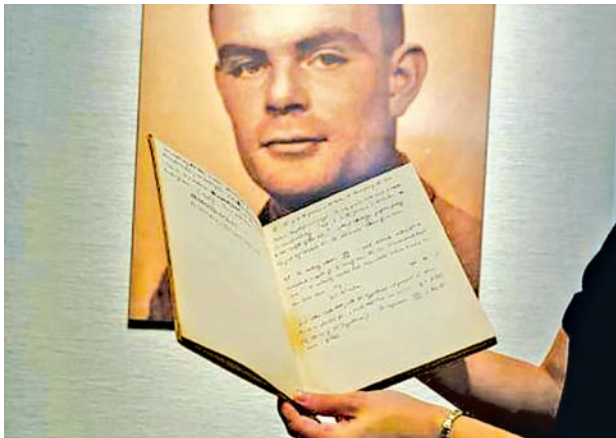
LOS ANGELES, 14 April Singer Mariah Carey has officially announced her new album, "#1 to Infinity", which is the re-issue of her 1998 hit album "#1".

The album will accompany her upcoming Las Vegas residency.

Carey, 45, also revealed the album's cover art, which shows her in a mini black dress teamed with a pair of black heels in the cover of the re-issue of her 1998 greatest hits album "#1", reported Ace-showbiz.—PTI

GENERAL

Manuscript by Nazi code breaker Alan Turing sells for \$1 million



NEW YORK, 14 April — A 56-page handwritten notebook that belonged to World War Two Nazi code breaker and computer pioneer Alan Turing, played by actor Benedict Cumberbatch in the film “The Imitation Game,” sold for more than \$1 million at an auction in New York, Bonhams said on Monday.

Turing, a British mathematical genius, led a team of cryptographers who cracked the wartime Enigma code, which the Germans had considered unbreakable. Their work is credited with hastening the end of the war and saving lives.

Cassandra Hatton, senior specialist in Bonhams’ fine books and manuscripts department, said the result of the auction as a testament to Turing’s legacy. Bonhams

declined to name the buyer.

“It reflects his importance in history. I think he is someone who merits further study, and I hope this contributes to increased interest in him and his work,” she said in an interview.

The auction also reaffirms a growing interest in scientific material, the history of computers, space, exploration and early science, she added.

Part of the proceeds from the sale will go to an unspecified charity.

The notebook, which had never been seen in public, is considered the only existing, extensive manuscript by Turing. It dates back to 1942 and was left to his friend Robin Gandy. In it Turing worked on mathematical formulas and the basics of computer

science, giving insights into the workings of his brilliant mind. Gandy added his own notes between the pages of Turing’s musings and kept the notebook hidden until his death.

Turing, a homosexual, never received credit for his groundbreaking work during the war. He committed suicide in 1954 at the age of 41 while receiving hormone treatment. It was an alternative to imprisonment after he was charged with gross indecency in 1952 for having sex with a man. Homosexual sex was a crime at that time in Britain.

Sixty years after his death Turing received a rare, royal pardon by Queen Elizabeth for his gay conviction.

Cumberbatch received a best actor Academy Award nomination for his portrayal of Turing in the film, which won an Oscar for best adapted screenplay. The film is based on the book, “Alan Turing: The Enigma,” by Andrew Hodges.

“This notebook shines extra light on how, even when he was enmeshed in great world events, he remained committed to free-thinking work in pure mathematics,” Hodges said in a statement.—Reuters

Cambodian sticky rice cake wins Guinness World Record

PHNOM PENH, 14 April — A giant Cambodian sticky rice cake that is 5 meters long and weighs over 4 tons won a Guinness World Record on Monday.

Organizers of Cambodian New Year events, which announced the Guinness listing, said the giant cake was prepared by 100 chefs for New Year celebrations and it took 45 hours to cook.

The giant sticky rice cake is being displayed in front of the Angkor Wat Temple for two days until Tuesday, the first day of a three-day Cambodian New Year festival.

Sticky rice cake, popular in Asian countries, is a representation of traditional Khmer food.

Apart from glutinous rice, other ingredients include pork, coconut cream, salt, garlic, black pepper, beans and sugar.

At 4.2 tons, this year’s sticky rice cake outweighs last year’s creation, which weighed 2.8 tons.

Kyodo News

Workplace workouts can snag on stressful corporate culture

NEW YORK, 14 April — As evidence mounts that fit employees are productive workers, companies have slotted into the corporate routine an array of workplace workout initiatives, from in-house gyms to lunchtime yoga.

But fitness experts say even the best-intentioned get-fit efforts can founder before the demands of a corporate culture that is stressful, sedentary and increasingly round-the-clock.

“This demand for 24/7 access, this idea that I can always access you and you should intensely, immediately respond, is a stressor, and we know from studies that chronic stress will shorten your life and ultimately kill you,” said Dr Mary Ellen Rose, a Washington, DC-based consultant for workplace health promotion.

Rose believes that even the wearable fitness bands

and watches meant to keep exercisers on track can be counter-productive.

“When you’re happy and healthy, you’re more productive,” she said. “But for people who are high anxiety, monitoring every little thing becomes a stressor.”

Obesity costs employers about \$73 billion annually in absenteeism and medical expenses, according to the US Centres for Disease Control.

Patrick Hitchens, co-founder of FitRankings, an Austin, Texas-based fitness tech company that ranks the fitness levels of individuals and companies, notes that most fit people in a company are usually the executives.

“For employees to perform at their best they need to be fit, yet workplaces have become anti-fit and increasingly sedentary,” he said.

Hitchens believes companies have a long way to go before they see their employ-



Local government employees participate in a mandatory physical activity session at their office in downtown Mexico City on 14 Aug, 2013. —REUTERS

ees as athletes rather than as cogs in a machine.

“(We need) to raise that awareness on the corporate level that its (fitness) is cheaper than a trip to the hospital,” he said.

Installing showers at the office and welcoming yoga pants at midday meetings are among the methods that Alexia Brue, co-founder with Melisse

Gelula of the wellness media company Well+Good, said corporations can use in the workplace. “One of the challenges is (creating the) acceptance that you can work out at lunch and come back to the desk sweaty,” said New York-based Brue. “Culturally there needs to be a shift, so workers can roll into office from their workout.” —Reuters

mitv Myanmar International

(15-4-2015 07:00 am~ 16-4-2015 07:00 am) MST

- Myanmar Traditional Thingyan Festival (Live)
- News
- Myanmar Social & Charitable Association (Ep-2) (Jivitadana Hospital)
- Black Gold (P - I)
- News
- Mon Traditional Thingyan Rice
- Thingyan Dance
- Lucrative Myanmar Rattan Industry
- News
- Marketable Goods (Straw Painting)
- Youth Film-Maker: Khin Su Kyi
- News
- Super Traditional Fencing Form (Ep-3)
- A Lucky Boy
- News
- A Bike Ride in pursuit of Mural Art (Episode-2)
- Temple Stalls
- Today Myanmar
- “Visiting Neighbours Thailand”
- News
- Exquisite Myanmar Silk
- Thingyan Lover
- Life of Sea Urchin Diver
- News
- Insight Myanmar: Women & Election
- A Visit To Ye
- News
- Rakhine’s Incense Grinding Ceremony
- Thingyan Dance
- A Historic Town: 9 Pagodas
- News
- Skillful Marionette Performance of New Generation Artists
- Dhamma School
- The Pride of Myanmar “Traditional Handicraft”
- News
- Myanmar Traditional Wicker Ball (Chinlone)
- Next Weekend

MRTV News Channel in Brief

(15-4-2015, Wednesday)

- 6:00 am**
 - Paritta by Venerable Mingun Sayadaw
- 6:25 am**
 - Physical Exercise
- 6:35 am**
 - Classical Song
- 7:00 am**
 - News / Weather Report
- 7:30 am**
 - Head Line News
- 8:00 am**
 - News / International News
- 8:35 am**
 - The Nine precept
- 9:00 am**
 - Mandalay Thingyan Festival (Live)
- 9:50 am**
 - Mawlamyine Thingyan Festival (Delay)
- 10:10 am**
 - Yangon Thingyan Festival (Live)
- 11:10 pm**
 - Larshow Thingyan Festival (Delay)
- 12:00 noon**
 - News / International News / Weather Report
- 2:05 pm**
 - Documentary
- 3:00 pm**
 - Mandalay Thingyan Festival (Live)
- 3:40 pm**
 - Mawlamyine Thingyan Festival (Delay)
- 4:00 pm**
 - Yangon Thingyan Festival (Live)
- 4:40 pm**
 - Patheingyi Thingyan Festival (Delay)
- 5:10 pm**
 - Nay Pyi Taw Thingyan Festival (Live)
- 6:15 pm**
 - Songs of Thingyan Festival
- 7:00 pm**
 - News
- 8:00 pm**
 - News / International News / Weather Report
- 9:00 pm**
 - News / International News / Weather Report
 - Myanmar Movies (Part-1)

MRTV Entertainment Channel

(15-4-2015, Wednesday)

- 6:00 am**
 - Mono Classical Songs
- 6:15 am**
 - Song and Dance of Thingyan Festival
- 6:35 am**
 - Thingyan Song and Dance of Children
- 7:10 am**
 - Save Our City (Cartoon)
- 7:15 am**
 - Pyi Thu Ni Ti
- 7:30 am**
 - Song and Dance of Thingyan Festival
- 7:50 am**
 - TV Drama Series
- 8:30 am**
 - Myanmar Video
- 9:55 am**
 - Song and dance of Thingyan Festival
- 10:05 am**
 - Myanmar Movie

Liverpool back in Champions League hunt with Newcastle win



Liverpool's Raheem Sterling in action with Newcastle's Daryl Janmaat during their Barclays Premier League at Anfield on 13 April, 2015. —REUTERS

LIVERPOOL, 14 April — Liverpool kept alive their hopes of Champions League football next season with a comfortable 2-0 Premier League victory on Monday against a Newcastle United side who finished with 10 men.

A goal in each half from Raheem Sterling and Joe Allen respectively secured victory and closed the gap on fourth-placed Manchester City to four points with six games remaining.

When Liverpool and Newcastle meet goals are normally the order of the day with 130 scored in their previous 41 league meetings without a single goalless draw in that time.

Sterling ensured that run continued when he netted after nine minutes to give Liverpool the perfect start following back-to-back league defeats by Manchester United and Arsenal.

Allen doubled Liverpool's lead in the 70th as Newcastle, who had Moussa Sissoko sent off for a second booking late on, were condemned to a fifth straight league defeat.

Fifth-placed Liverpool now have 57 points from 32 games, one point ahead of Southampton in sixth, and are closing in on ailing City who lost 4-2 at local rivals Manchester United on Sunday, while struggling Newcastle remain 13th with 35 points.

"Manchester City have maybe opened up the door a wee bit and if we keep winning our games we will see what will happen but I am sure that there will be plenty of twists and turns to come still," said Liverpool manager Brendan Rodgers.

Liverpool, who play Aston Villa in an FA Cup semi-final at Wembley on Sunday, arrived at Anfield in desperate need of a win to close the gap on Manchester City and give themselves renewed hope of qualifying for the Champions League.

Sterling, making his first Anfield appearance since a BBC interview about his decision to wait on signing a new contract, gave the hosts the perfect start when he weaved his way into the box and curled an exquisite shot past goalkeeper Tim Krul.

Newcastle spent most of the first period on the

back foot but they finished it strongly and felt they should have won a penalty when Ayoze Perez was wiped out in the box after a wild swing of the boot from defender Dejan Lovren.

Sterling missed a glorious chance to double his tally at the start of the second half when he scuffed Henderson's cross wide from point-blank range but Allen made amends for the

England forward's miss when he lashed the ball home from close range. Newcastle were then reduced to 10 men when midfielder Sissoko received a second yellow

card for a mistimed tackle on Lucas as John Carver's side fell to yet another defeat leaving them in danger of being dragged into a relegation battle.—Reuters

Politics, Champions League hope add spice to Europa

BERNE, 14 April — The possibility of a final between teams from Russia and Ukraine plus the chance of qualifying for the Champions League has added some spice to the Europa League which reaches the quarter-final stage on Thursday.

Napoli, in particular, will be glad of the rule change introduced this season, which allows the Europa League winners a back door entry into the Champions League, as their chances of qualifying through the Serie A route have all but fizzled out.

Rafael Benitez's team are seven points adrift of the Serie A Champions League places after a dismal run which has infuriated club president Aurelio Di Laurentiis.

Napoli, who visit Bundesliga side VfL Wolfsburg in their quarter-final, first leg on Thursday, have been confined to a training camp, despite ending a four-match winless run in Serie A with a 3-0 home victory over Fiorentina on Sunday. Di Laurentiis has

also imposed a "silenzio stampa", or media blackout, which is a favoured recourse for Italian sides when things are not going well.

Despite repeated criticism of Benitez, who won the Europa League with Chelsea in 2013, the Spaniard has taken Napoli to the last eight of a European competition for the first time since 1989 when a Diego Maradona-inspired team won the UEFA Cup.

Wolfsburg are second in the Bundesliga and should qualify for the Champions League through the domestic route.

The other three ties feature two Ukrainian sides, Dnipro Dnipropetrovsk and Dynamo Kiev, as well as Russia's Zenit St Petersburg, increasing the chances that clubs from the two countries could end up in the final in Warsaw.

UEFA's Emergency Committee decided to keep teams from the two countries apart since last July due to the tension between them following Russia's annexation of Crimea and civil unrest in

the Russian-speaking east of Ukraine.

Dnipro, third in the Ukrainian league, visit on-song Club Brugge, who are unbeaten in 14 games in the competition since entering the fray in the third qualifying round.

Michel Preud'homme's team, who lead the Belgian league and have already won the domestic cup, will seek to revive the spirit of their 1970s heyday, when Ernst Happel led them to the European Cup and UEFA Cup finals, losing both to Liverpool.

Dynamo Kiev, the other Ukrainian side, host Fiorentina and look to be favourites versus a side who have lost their last two domestic games 3-0 against Juventus and Napoli.

Fiorentina's big hope, as they attempt to win a European trophy for the first time since lifting the Cup Winners' Cup in 1961, is Egypt forward Mohamed Salah, who has been in inspired form since moving on loan from Chelsea in January.—Reuters

Bayern count injuries but confident against Porto

BERLIN, 14 April — Bayern Munich may be missing some of their biggest names when they travel to Porto for the first leg of their Champions League last eight on Wednesday but the Germans are confident they have enough firepower to defend their favourites tag.

Chasing a second treble after 2013, Bayern will be without Arjen Robben, Franck Ribery and Bastian Schweinsteiger among others but they know their season will not be a suc-

cess if they do not advance in the Champions League.

Bayern left a day earlier than usual, arriving in the Portuguese city on Monday for Wednesday's game as coach Pep Guardiola shifts the focus away from injuries to their dominant domestic season.

Porto beat them in a memorable European Cup final in 1987 — their only win in five matches against Bayern. But the only thing on the Germans' mind is taking an advantage back to Munich for the return

leg and then qualify as they did on two previous occasions against Porto in the quarter-finals.

"We know that it will not be an easy game at Porto," said club CEO Karl-Heinz Rummenigge. "We are being given the favourites tag but we have no problem with that."

Five-time winners Bayern are looking for a fourth successive semi-final appearance but will also be without injured defenders David Alaba and Medhi Benatia.

Coach Guardiola, however, will have central defender Jerome Boateng, rested in Saturday's 3-0 win over Eintracht Frankfurt, back in the squad.

Porto, looking for their first semi-final appearance since winning the trophy in 2004, also enjoyed a successful dress rehearsal, beating Rio Ave 3-1 on Saturday.

Winger Ricardo Quaresma was again on target for them taking his tally to three goals in two matches.—Reuters



Bayern Munich's Thomas Mueller (L) and Robert Lewandowski celebrate their team's third goal against Eintracht Frankfurt during their German first division Bundesliga soccer match in Munich, on 11 April, 2015.—REUTERS