

President U Thein Sein visits Kengtung Cultural Museum, Loimwe hill station

NAY PYI TAW, 7 May — President U Thein Sein on his trip to Shan State offered flowers, water and lights to the Buddha Image in Sasana Beikman in Kengtung on Thursday morning, while also offering provisions to senior Buddhist monks.

While in Kengtung, the president also paid homage and donated flowers, water and lights to Maha Muni Buddha Image and Khemaraththa Standing Buddha Image.

The president, accompanied by union ministers Lt-Gen Ko Ko, Lt-Gen Thet Naing Win, U Wunna Maung Lwin, U Ye Htut, U Myint Hlaing, U Nyan Tun Aung, U Khin Maung Soe, U Khin Yi, U Win Myint, U Win Shein, U Than Htay and Lt-Gen Yar Pyae of the Office of the Commander-in-Chief (Army), visited booths displaying traditional ethnic items and Buddhist culture at the Cultural Museum in Kengtung.

The museum was built in January 2000. Its booths showcase stupas and pagodas in eastern Shan State, Tri-Pitakat treatises in Pali, Gon Shan and Myanmar, traditional costumes of Tai Nay, Tai Lyan, Tai Lon, Gon Shan, Akha, Lahu,



President U Thein Sein pays homage to abbot of Kengyin monastery Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Bhaddanta Khemaçara in Kengtung.—IPRD

Wa, Inn and Bamar ethnics, traditional equipment, and agricultural machinery. The president inspected improvements to Kengtung-Loimwe Road

and development of the tourism industry in Loimwe hill station.

In Loimwe, he paid homage to Saturattha Thumingala Pagoda and

made cash donations.

The president viewed an ancient house of Colonel Rubel built in 1918 where Shan State Minister for Transport U Sai Naw

Kham reported on maintenance of the building, repairing of Kengtung-Loimwe road section and prospects of the tourism industry.—MNA

Bago brewery marks Carlsberg's entry to Myanmar market

By Aye Min Soe

BAGO, 7 May — The Denmark-based Carlsberg Group, in a joint venture with local partner Myanmar Golden Star, officially opened its factory in Bago on Thursday, marking the beginning of its beer brewing operation in Myanmar.

The joint venture invested US \$75 million in the brewery, which has a production capacity of 60 million liters per year.

In addition to the flagship Carlsberg brand, the brewery will produce the Tuborg brand sold in more than 70 countries, and YOMA, a new brand developed for the Myanmar market.

Carlsberg Myanmar has not yet made plans to

export products from the plant and will focus on the beer market in Myanmar's major cities, said U Thant Zin Tun, the Vice-Chairman of MGS and the executive director of Carlsberg Myanmar.

According to the company's research, Myanmar's beer consumption, at 6 litres per head on average per year, is very low compared with 38 litres for Thailand and 100 litres for Europe.

Carlsberg signed an agreement with Myanmar Golden Star (MGS) Group in February, 2013, retaining 51 per cent of the joint venture, according to the company.

Carlsberg says its presence in Myanmar will bring employment to (See page 2)

Peace in Myanmar must precede further investment, EU ambassador says

By Ye Myint

YANGON, 7 May — The European Union wants to help Myanmar end conflicts and achieve peace as its first priority, EU Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Roland Kobia said Thursday at a press lunch in Yangon to mark Europe Day 2015.

Europe Day highlights the principles of democracy and freedom which the EU wishes to share with Myanmar, Mr Kobia said.

The EU is one of the major foreign donors to Myanmar, providing a US \$1.1 billion grant for the period of 2014-2020 to implement development projects in the country.

"The great majority of the money will go to education and rural development," the EU ambassador said.



Roland Kobia, EU Ambassador to Myanmar, gives a speech to mark Europe Day 2015 at a press lunch in Yangon on Thursday.—PHOTO: YE MYINT

"The reason why we want to work on the peace process is because the EU is a (peace) promoter.

"We want to help Myanmar in achieving peace."

He said spending money on other areas is a waste until peace is achieved.

"If you don't have peace, if you have conflict and if you have war, all

this money will be wasted because war is not a conducive environment to develop the country or to develop democracy," he said.

(See page 2)

Union Industry Minister meets Malaysian, Thai delegations

NAY PYI TAW, 7 May — Union Minister for Industry U Maung Myint received President Elect Mr Yap Mew Sang and party of International Council of SME & Entrepreneurship (ICSMEE) of Malaysia at the ministry, here, on Thursday.

They discussed establishment of ASEAN Council of Small Business (ACSB) and International Council of SME & Entrepreneurship (ICSMEE) Myanmar for cooperation among ASEAN countries for development Myanmar's SMEs, and partici-

pation of Myanmar's Ministry of Industry in the 3rd ASEAN Council of Small Business (ACSB) Conference in Malaysia from 26 to 29 October.

The union minister also held talks with Chairman Mr Vikrom Kromadit and party of Thailand's Amata Corporation PCL at his office on Wednesday.

They focused on investment opportunities in Thilawa, Kyaukpyu and Dawei special economic zones, Myotha, Patheingyi and Myawady industrial zones.

MNA

Bago brewery marks . . .

(from page 1)

thousands of people countrywide in the coming years, with the company already employing more than

150 staff.

Guests who spoke at the opening included U Nyan Win, the Chief Minister of Bago Region, and the Danish Ambassador to Myanmar, Peter Lysholt Hasen.—GNLM



U Thein Tun, Chairman of MGS, (4th from left), Danish Ambassador to Myanmar Peter Lysholt Hasen (5th from left) and Bago Region Chief Minister U Nyan Win (6th from left) celebrates to officially open Carlsberg Myanmar brewery facility in Bago.—PHOTO: AYE MIN SOE

By Khaing Thanda Lwin

YANGON, 7 May — United Overseas Bank Group (UOB) on Wednesday announced that it has offered an onshore loan to a French-Myanmar joint venture company for refurbishing a new hotel in downtown Yangon but the amount of the loan was not disclosed.

The loan to Rangoon Excelsior Co. will help turn a former colonial building in downtown Yangon into a five-storey hotel, according to a news release issued by UOB.

“The financing of a

new hotel is in line with our approach of supporting businesses that are helping to drive the development of Myanmar,” Mr Ian Wong, managing director and head of strategy and international management, UOB group, said in the news release on Wednesday.

“Tourism is expected to be a main contributor of new jobs in the country over the next decade,” he added.

Singapore-based UOB is one of nine international banks granted licences in October 2014 to operate

a local banking branch. It opened its branch at Park Royal Hotel in the centre of Yangon on 4 May, aiming to provide services to foreign companies such as trade and project financing, corporate loans and cash management solutions.

Within the first month of its Yangon branch opening, UOB expects to offer several more onshore loans to its clients in the manufacturing, hospitality and infrastructure sectors. These loans will help finance the setting-up of factories, retail shops and hotels. Mr Harry Loh, Executive Director and Country Man-

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and party arrive at Benazir Bhutto International Airport in Islamabad



Senior General Min Aung Hlaing being welcomed by senior military officers from Pakistan at Benazir Bhutto International Airport. MYAWADY

NAY PYI TAW, 7 May — Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and party arrived at Benazir Bhutto International Airport in Islamabad, Pakistan, on 6 May evening.

The senior general and party were welcomed by Lt-

Gen Najib Ullah Khan, HI (M), Brig-Gen Anas Asad, Senior Liaison Officer Brig-Gen Rehan of the Office of

the Joint Chiefs of the Staff Committee of the Pakistan Armed Forces, Myanmar Ambassador U Win Naing

and wife, Myanmar Military Attaché Brig-Gen Hsan Oo Hlaing and wife and officials.—Myawady

Peace in Myanmar must

(from page 1)

At the press lunch, the ambassador said the EU is going to help prepare for the Myanmar's upcoming elections in cooperation with other international

organizations.

The European Union comprises 500 million people from 28 countries. In a vote of support for Myanmar's reform steps, the EU lifted sanctions and opened

an office in the country in 2012. In 2013, a full-fledged delegation in Yangon was established with the arrival of its ambassador to Myanmar, with the country also regaining access to the EU's generalized system of preferences.—GNLM

Performers show skills in dancing, music and song contests

NAY PYI TAW, 7 May — Various events of 21st Myanmar National Races' Performing Arts Competitions kicked off at designated venues, here, on Thursday, with participation of performers from regions and states including Nay Pyi Taw Council Area.

At the convocation hall of University of Veterinary Science, two contestants took part in the amateur level (first class) men's

dancing contest while three women participated in the amateur level (first class) dancing contest.

At the assembly hall of Forest Research Department, two troupes showed their skills in the amateur level (second class) women's orchestra contest, one troupe in amateur level (first class) women's event and one troupe in the higher education level contest.

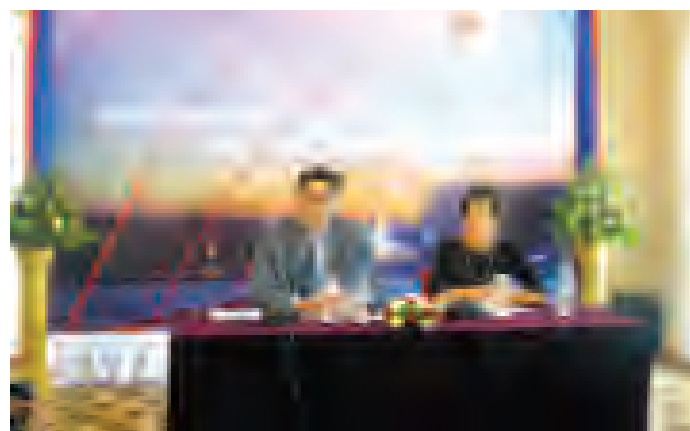
Three troupes took part in the amateur level

(first class) Ozi contest, two troupes in higher education level and four troupes in the amateur level (second class) event.

At the lecture hall of University of Agriculture, eight men from regions and states took part in the amateur level (first class) modern song contest and 13 women in the basic education level (aged 15-20) song contest.

Phyo Sanda Myint/
Khin Khin Thet

United Overseas Bank provides its first onshore loan in Myanmar to finance hotel project



Mr Harry Loh, Executive Director and Country Manager for UOB Myanmar speaks about functions of UOB. PHOTO: KHAING THANDA LWIN

ager for UOB Myanmar, said at a media briefing on Wednesday in Yangon that

UOB will focus on helping companies invest in four sectors—energy, manufac-

turing, construction, and hospitality.

GNLM

Dr Sai Mauk Kham urges well-rounded youths to strive for international recognition



Vice President Dr Sai Mauk Kham presents gift to an outstanding student at the dinner in their honour.

MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 7 May — Vice President Dr Sai Mauk Kham attended a dinner hosted in honour of well-rounded youths at the Myanmar International Convention Centre-2 here on Thursday.

At the dinner, the vice president described good infrastructure as vital to building a peaceful, modern nation, adding his country is still in need of hard infrastructure and soft infrastructure.

“Our country still needs hard infrastructure like roads, bridges, power and water supplies, transportation and communication, and soft infrastructure

like education, health, rule of law, security and peace.”

He spoke of the constant efforts of successive governments to produce outstanding youths who will shoulder the responsibility of the country in the future, stressing the need to sharpen their individual calibre.

He urged well-rounded youths to keep up their good work and strive to be on a par with their peers from the ASEAN community and the world as a whole.

Outstanding students presented gifts to the vice president and union ministers.—MNA

Vice President U Nyan Tun hails arts competition as vital to preserving culture

NAY PYI TAW, 7 May — Vice President U Nyan Tun delivered a speech at the opening ceremony of the 21st Traditional Performing Arts Competition of National Races of Myanmar on Thursday in Nay Pyi Taw.

The competition at Myanmar International Convention Centre-2 aims to promote national spirit among all of the country’s people and help preserve national cultural characteristics and heritage through fine arts.

The ceremony was attended by union ministers, deputy ministers, members of the organizing committee and sub-committees, team managers, contestants and enthusiasts of Myanmar culture.

Organizing committee chairman, Union Minister U Aye Myint Kyu,



Vice President U Nyan Tun delivers speech at opening ceremony of 21st Traditional Performing Arts Competition of National Races of Myanmar.—MNA

explained the arrangements for the competition.

In his speech at the ceremony, patron of the leading committee Vice President U Nyan Tun said the government every year organizes the competition of traditional

cultural music, dance and song-composing because such cultural aspects must be preserved alongside the territorial integrity of the nation.

Various national races have been living side by side in Myanmar for eons

and have been building the union with solidarity which, like water, cannot be divided, according to the vice president.

Although there are slight differences in language, cultures and arts, all share the basic common principles of helping one another, empathy, respect and unity, the vice president added.

The word culture is now being widely used not only in the field of traditions, customs and fine arts but also in the field of politics, economics, education and social relationships, as daily social affairs from the cradle to the tomb are related to cultural traditions and morals, the vice president explained.

The vice president

continued to say that cultural standards of a race are made up of traditions of food, clothing, behaviour and speech.

As cultural standards of countries are not identical, it is impossible to coercively unify and compare different cultures, as attempting to do so may result in cultural clashes, undermining weaker cultures, the vice president pointed out.

As Myanmar nationals appreciate the cultures of others and while loving their own, they have exerted efforts to promote, preserve and protect their cultural heritages, the vice president said.

The fine arts competition is also a festival to preserve cultural traditions of national races, sharing

talents of older generations with younger ones, the vice president said.

The traditional Myanmar dance of Kabyalut has been introduced to the competition this year and traditional dances and rural local dances of other national races will also be invited to participate in the competition, the vice president said.

In conclusion, the vice president said he was proud of those who preserve traditions and cultures of the nation including artists who hand down traditions and culture to new generations.

The categories of the competition include amateur (first class), amateur (second class), higher education level and two basic education levels.—MNA

Training course aims to give administrators grasp on electoral process

NAY PYI TAW, 7 May — Sixty-five trainees from the Union Election Commission, sub-commissions and political parties began a two-day course Thursday on the electoral process ahead of the nationwide general election later this year.

Union Election Commission Chairman U Tin Aye gave an address at the course, which is designed to help electoral administrators

and those involved in the electoral process understand laws, rules, regulations and directives in order to deliver a free and fair general election.

In his address, the UEC chairman called for electoral processes to be in place six months before the upcoming 2015 general elections, highlighting the importance of educating voters.

He also stressed the need to understand the Code of Conduct and the role of local and international election observers who have been invited to monitor the elections.

The aim of inviting international observers is to build international trust in the honesty of electoral processes and take lessons from their analyses of this election, he added.—MNA

Township officials disseminate knowledge about drug elimination to residents



MYINGYAN, 7 May — An educative talk on drug abuse and crime reduction was held at Shwe Pyi Soe Sasana Beikman in Myingyan, Mandalay Region, on 2 May.

Township Administrator U Tun Thein Aung and

Commander of Township Police Force Police Major Tin Htoo spoke about drug-related cases, Head of Township Health Department Dr Zin Mar Than Tun about narcotic drug and psychotropic substances law and IP Kyaw Soe Lin

of Mandalay Region Anti-Drug Squad about drug elimination and traffic rules.

The talk was attended by township departmental officials, restaurant and lodge owners, businessmen and local enthusiasts.—*Zaw Min Naing (Myingyan)*

Emerald Green Project gaining momentum in rural areas

NAY PYI TAW, 7 May — A team led by Staff Officer U Than Win Soe of the Department of Rural Development visited Thagala, Ywathit and Ywadaw villages in Pobbathiri Township and Wetsu vil-

lage in Zeyathiri Township on 6 May.

They checked the progress of the Emerald Green Project in the villages.

The staff officer spoke about correct and accurate accounts for the pro-

ject and undertaking of agriculture and livestock breeding.

The staff distributed posters and pamphlets on implementation of the project to local residents.

Shwe Ye Yint



Departmental personnel present pamphlets on implementation of Emerald Green Project in rural areas in Pobbathiri Township, Nay Pyi Taw Council Area.

Industrial Training School teaches local youths to become technicians

MYINGYAN, 7 May — No 6 Industrial Training School (Myingyan) under the Technical Cooperation Department kicked off its No 2 course in Myingyan, Mandalay Region, on 4 May morning.

Deputy Minister for Industry U Thein Aung spoke on the occasion.

Altogether 165 trainees are attending a one-year course.

Also present at the ceremony were Deputy Commissioner U Myint Thin Aung, Commander of District Police Force Police Lt-Col Maung Win and officials.—*Zaw Min Naing (Myingyan)*



Women's vocational courses aim to improve livelihoods

LOIKAW, 7 May — Women's Vocational Training School in Loikaw, the capital of Kayah State, opened courses on domestic science, advanced tailoring, knitting and Kayah traditional weaving on 5 May.

In a talk at the school, Kayah State Minister for

Security and Border Affairs Col Zaw Myo Tin said the training courses could improve the living standards of local women.

The principal of the training school reported to the minister on arrangements for the courses.

Township IPRD

Contestants from Bago Region make preparations for Performing Arts Competition

BAGO, 7 May — A ceremony to hand over a victory flag to the performers team of Bago Region was held at the city hall in Bago on 6 May.

Secretary of the organizing committee U Win Aung reported on preparations for enabling the region's team to secure achievement in the competition.

Chief Minister of the region U Nyan Win pre-

sented cash assistance to the performers team.

At the ceremony, contestants performed traditional dances and Kayin Don dance to the audiences.

A total of 94 contestants from the team of Bago region will take part in 16 events in the 21st Myanmar National Races' Performing Arts Competition.

Bago Region IPRD

Thai Chinlone team under training of Myanmar coaches in Mandalay

MANDALAY, 7 May — A Thai Chinlone team is taking training at Bahtoo Gymnasium in Mandalay till 20 May with the assistance of the Myanmar Chinlone Federation.

The team comprising eight selected players led by one manager and one coach arrived in Mandalay on 1 May. They have been undertaking two sessions of training a day under Myanmar coaches U Maung Maung Myo and U Tin Win Naing.

The Thai team will take part in two of four Chinlone sports events in the coming SEA Games in Singapore.—*Tin Maung (Mandalay)*



REGIONAL

Australian man could face death penalty in China drug trial



Police escort Peter Gardner as he enters court in Guangzhou, Guangdong province, China, on 7 May, 2015.—REUTERS

GUANGZHOU, 7 May — An Australian man faced a possible death sentence on Thursday on charges of attempting to smuggle millions of dollars worth of drugs out of China.

The trial follows Indonesia's high-profile executions last week of two convicted Australian drug smugglers, Andrew Chan and Myuran Sukumaran, alongside six others from several countries, despite international criticism of its use of the death penalty.

Chinese authorities arrested New Zealand-born Peter Gardner, 26, at the international airport in the southern city of Guangzhou last November, carrying bags of nearly 30 kg (66 lb) of methamphetamine, known as "ice".

Customs officials put the market value of the drugs at several million dollars. As his parents and New Zealand officials watched, Gardner, seated in handcuffs before three judges in the Guangzhou Intermediate Court, pleaded his innocence.

"Without a doubt this is the biggest mistake of my life," Gardner told the judges. When he saw the ice being ripped from the bags, he added, "My heart dropped." Gardner holds dual Australian and New Zealand nationality but entered China on his New Zealand passport. He said he had travelled there to pick up a quantity of athletic performance enhancing drugs, arranged through an intermediary in Sydney.

He was given two sealed black carrier bags by two Chinese men during his stay at the Hilton Hotel, he told the court. Airport customs officials later discovered the bags contained ice.

The Sydney intermediary was a trusted friend, Gardner told the court, and he was just "following instructions" in taking the bags.

A verdict and sentencing were expected later on Thursday.

New Zealand Foreign Minister Murray McCully's office said he stated his country's opposition to the death penalty when he visited China last week, but that New Zealand would neither comment nor intervene further given it is a judicial matter in another country.

Chinese foreign ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying did not know the details of the case.

"But as we've said previously the trafficking of drugs is a very serious crime that is terribly harmful to society and we resolutely oppose it and deal with it in accordance with the law. As for the death penalty, it is used very cautiously in China," she told a daily news briefing in Beijing. Chinese authorities blamed a rise in violent crime last year on a surge in drug smuggling from Southeast Asia. Drug use in China has grown along with the rise of a new urban class with more disposable income.—Reuters

Scholars urge Japan to address wartime history on 70th anniversary

WASHINGTON, 7 May — Scholars of Japanese studies from the United States and other countries have urged Japan to address its wartime history as this year marks the 70th anniversary of the end of World War II, according to a letter released by them on Wednesday.

"This year presents an opportunity for the government of Japan to show leadership by addressing Japan's history of colonial rule and wartime aggression in both words and action," said the letter signed by 187 such scholars including Ezra Vogel, professor emeritus at Harvard University, and John Dower, professor emeritus at the Massachu-

setts Institute of Technology.

"We must leave as full and unbiased an accounting of past wrongs as possible."

The move comes as divergent perceptions of wartime history have left bilateral ties soured between Japan and both China and South Korea. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe will deliver a statement on the 70th anniversary this summer, as he seeks to rebuild the relationships.

The letter applauded Japan's postwar approach, noting that postwar Japan's history of democracy, civilian control of the military, political tolerance, contributions to science and gen-

erous aid to other countries are all things to celebrate.

"Yet problems of historical interpretation pose an impediment to celebrating these achievements," the scholars said in the letter, referring to the issue of the so-called "comfort women" who were forced to work at wartime Japanese military brothels as one of the most divisive.

"Exploitation of the suffering of former 'comfort women' for nationalist ends in the countries of the victims (including South Korea and China) makes an international resolution more difficult and further insults the dignity of the women themselves," they

said. "Yet denying or trivializing what happened to them is equally unacceptable."

In the letter, they also noted that the exact number of "comfort women" is never likely to be known for certain.

"But ultimately, whether numbers are judged to have been in the tens of thousands or the hundreds of thousands will not alter the fact of the exploitation carried out throughout the Japanese empire and its war zones," the scholars said.

"This issue has become so distorted by nationalist invective in Japan as well as in Korea and China," they said.—Kyodo News

Singapore teen pleads not guilty over blog critical of former premier Lee

SINGAPORE, 7 May — A Singapore teenager pleaded not guilty on Thursday to charges of spreading obscene images and offending a religious group, but was not required to enter a plea on a harassment charge for comments he made about late former premier Lee Kuan Yew.

Amos Yee, 16, appeared shackled in the Singapore State Courts after his arrest in March for comments he made on social media about Lee, the founding father of modern Singapore, and Christians soon after Lee's death at 91.

Yee's case has reignited concerns about censorship and social controls in the Asian financial hub and has drawn criticism from human rights activists.

The packed court included his parents, a youth counsellor who has offered to stand bail for him, and

Roy Ngerng, another Singapore blogger who is involved in a separate defamation case with Lee's son, current Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong.

Yee could face up to three years in jail on the charge of wounding the religious or racial feelings of another person. He has been held on remand since bail was set last week at S\$30,000 (\$22,610).

He has also been charged under the recently enacted Protection from Harassment Act over a much-viewed Youtube video in which he celebrated the death of Lee, who died in March and was cremated after a state funeral.

However, the prosecution chose not to proceed with the latter charge until after the first two had been dealt with. It can either decide to proceed later or drop the charge entirely,



Amos Yee eats a banana as he arrives with his father to the State Courts for a pre-trial conference in Singapore on 17 April, 2015.—REUTERS

lawyers said.

"If they (go ahead), we will cross that bridge when we get there," Alfred Dodwell, one of Yee's lawyers, said of the harassment charge, which carries a fine of up to S\$5,000 (\$3,770).

Yee's case has stirred heated debate among Singaporeans about freedom of speech and education.

Lee was slapped outside court last week as he made his way in for a preliminary hearing, and a 49-year-old man was later arrested.

Some of Yee's supporters waited outside the court from early morning. "I'm a Christian. I'm not offended," said 65-year-old John Loh. "Even if I was, I'd forgive him."—Reuters



People visit the Vietnam International Photo and Imaging Show (VIPI) 2015 in Ho Chi Minh city, Vietnam on 7 May, 2015. The event was held from 7 to 9 May. XINHUA

Ceremony marks return of Peace Bell to Japanese Garden at UN



UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon (L) and his wife Yoo Soon Taek ring the Peace Bell, donated 61 years ago by peace activist and former city mayor Chiyoji Nakagawa, during a ceremony to mark the return of the bell to the renovated Japanese Garden at the UN headquarters in New York on 6 May, 2015.

KYODO NEWS

NEW YORK, 7 May — guests in celebrating the UN Secretary General Ban return of the Peace Bell, Ki-moon on Wednesday donated 61 years ago by joined other officials and peace activist and former

city mayor Chiyoji Nakagawa, to the renovated Japanese Garden at the organization's New York headquarters.

The 115-kilogram bell, cast with coins collected from more than 60 countries and a gold coin gifted by the bishop of Rome, is rung by the UN chief every year on the International Day of Peace on 21 September.

At the ceremony to mark the bell's return, Ban said, "Over the last five years that the Peace Bell was away, too many innocent people around the world have heard only the sounds of guns and bombs," adding that "this bell still represents the collective desire for the world to live in peace."

The bell had been temporarily relocated to another garden while the renovation of the headquarters complex took place.

Nakagawa became involved in activities for peace after his experienc-

es during World War II, where he fought in Burma, now Myanmar, and lost many friends. He donated the bell to the United Nations through a nonprofit group in 1954, two years before Tokyo joined the global organization.

He later became mayor of Uwajima, Ehime Prefecture in western Japan in 1959 and died in 1972 while in office at age 66.

His son Shikataro, 65, and daughter Seiko Takase, 67, took part in the ceremony on Wednesday.

Takase told *Kyodo News*, "While we see conflicts in various parts of the world, I hope the United Nations will exert efforts in leading the world to peace."

Shikataro said, "People might say ringing the bell has nothing to do with making peace, but I believe the sound of a hanging bell has the power to bring peace to people's hearts. I hope everyone will have a heart for peace."

Kyodo News

Pentagon notifies Congress of potential \$3 billion Osprey sale to Japan

WASHINGTON, 7 May — The US government has notified Congress of a potential \$3 billion sale to Japan of 17 V-22 Osprey tilt-rotor aircraft and support equipment, according to the Defence Department.

Pentagon spokesman Col Steven Warren told reporters on Wednesday that the aircraft has actually been used in reaffirming their safety.

The proposed sale "will greatly enhance the

Japan Ground Self-Defence Force's humanitarian and disaster relief capabilities and support amphibious operations," the Defence Security Cooperation Agency said in a news release on Tuesday.

Japan plans to procure and deploy 17 Ospreys at Saga airport in southwestern Japan from fiscal 2019, introducing them for a new brigade to be formed in neighboring Nagasaki Prefecture.—*Kyodo News*



File photo taken in July 2014 shows a US Marine Corps' Osprey aircraft flying. The US government notified Congress on 5 May, 2015, of a potential \$3 billion sale to Japan of 17 V-22 Osprey tilt-rotor aircraft and support equipment, according to the Defence Department. —KYODO NEWS

Iran releases Maersk ship and its crew — IRNA

ANKARA, 7 May — Iran has released a Marshall-Islands flagged container ship and its crew which were seized last week in one of the world's major oil shipping lanes, the official IRNA news agency reported on Thursday.

The agency reported an informed source as saying the Iranian Ports and Shipping Organization would issue a statement in a few hours on the details of the release of the *Maersk Tigris*. The vessel was diverted on 2 April by Iranian patrol boats in the Strait of Hormuz, prompting the United States to send vessels to monitor the situation and to accompany US-flagged vessels passing through the strait. Danish shipping giant Maersk had insisted on the release of the vessel and its 24 crew members. IRNA report did not give details on whether a years-old debt case was settled, as demanded by Iran for the release of the ship.

Iran's foreign ministry had said on Wednesday that

the negotiations between "the private complainant and the other party were going on". The Maersk incident coincided with heightened tension between regional arch-rivals Iran and Saudi Arabia over the civil war in Yemen, in which they support opposing sides.

The US Navy had quietly stopped accompanying commercial ships on Tuesday, Pentagon spokesman Colonel Steve Warren said, noting that the original order to carry out the mission had only been for a brief period, which had ended.

US Navy ships started accompanying US-flagged commercial vessels through the Strait on 30 April, a decision taken following the *Maersk Tigris*' seizure and after Iranian ships shadowed the US-flagged *Maersk Kensington* on 24 April. Maersk, the world's largest container shipping company, chartered the ship, which according to ship operator Rickmers is owned by undisclosed private investors.—*Reuters*

Spain ranked as most tourist-friendly country, Japan at 9th

PARIS, 7 May — Spain has topped the global ranking of tourism competitiveness due partly to its cultural resources, the World Economic Forum said on Wednesday in a report that placed Japan at ninth in the list of 141 countries and regions.

Spain, also recognized for airport and other infrastructure strength as well as adaptation to wireless Internet services, has ranked top of the biannual report on tourist-friendly economies for the first time, followed by France, Germany, the

United States, Britain and Switzerland.

Japan climbed to ninth in the competitiveness ranking from 14th in 2013. By indicator, it was ranked first globally in terms of both "treatment of customers" and "quality of railroad infrastructure," a positive sign for a country whose government has been promoting the tourism industry for economic growth.

A record number of foreign tourists are visiting Japan, helped by a cheaper yen as well as government

policies of easing visa rules and expanding the range of tax-free items. The boom is expected to accelerate toward the 2020 Tokyo Olympics.

The WEF, known for its annual meeting in Davos of the world's leaders, attributed Japan's advance in the ranking to its "unique cultural heritage," efficient ground and air transport infrastructure, and a newly launched wireless Internet service.

But the institution also pointed out that relatively higher prices are a less

positive note for Japan as a tourist destination.

Australia, ranked seventh overall, is the only country ahead of Japan in the Asia-Pacific region. Singapore came 11th, with Hong Kong standing at 13th, China at 17th and South Korea at 29th.

The Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Report is designed to assess how well countries could deliver sustainable economic and societal benefits through their travel and tourism sector.

Kyodo News

Singapore appoints Jackie Chan as anti-drug ambassador

SINGAPORE, 7 May — Hong Kong movie star Jackie Chan said on Wednesday he was ashamed and angry when he learned of his son's involvement with drugs as he addressed a huge crowd of teens in Singapore as the city-state's first celebrity anti-drug ambassador.

Speaking to hundreds of students at the auditorium of the Nanyang Polytechnic, where his appointment as Singapore anti-drug ambassador was announced,

Chan urged youths not to use drugs, saying, "It will harm yourself, harm your family."

"And now it has even hurt myself too, and my family. So that's why I am so angry," the renowned kung-fu action hero said.

Chan's son Jaycee Chan recently served six months in a China prison for drug offences for allowing people to use marijuana in his apartment.

The senior Chan, who

was appointed China's anti-drug ambassador in 2009, said the incident has made him determined to campaign harder against drug abuse.

"When I was young, faced a lot of temptations... when 16...I had to confront drugs, secret societies and gambling. But I remembered what my father told me — don't get involved with drugs (or) join secret societies and no gambling," he said.

Chan, who operates his own charitable foundations, has been a goodwill ambassador for UNICEF since 2004, while also serving as one for UNAIDS, which seeks an end to discrimination and stigma toward children and families infected or affected with HIV/AIDS.

He is also an ambassador for WildAid, a conservation group that works to end the illegal wildlife trade.

Kyodo News

WORLD

United Kingdom votes in most unpredictable election in decades

LONDON, 7 May — British voters get to decide on Thursday who they want to rule the world's fifth-largest economy in a tight election that could yield weak government, propel the United Kingdom towards a vote on EU membership and stoke Scottish desire for secession.

Prime Minister David Cameron's Conservatives and Ed Miliband's opposition Labour Party have been neck and neck in opinion polls for months, indicating neither will win enough seats for an outright majority in the 650-seat parliament.

"This race is going to be the closest we have ever seen," Miliband told supporters in Pendle, in northern England, on the eve of the vote. "It is going to go down to the wire."

Cameron said only his Conservatives could deliver strong, stable government: "All other options will end in chaos."

The Conservatives portray themselves as the party of jobs and economic recovery, promising to reduce income tax for 30 million people while forcing through further spending cuts to eliminate a budget deficit still running at 5 percent of gross domestic product. Labour says it would cut the deficit each year, raise income tax for the highest 1 percent of earners and defend the interests of hard-pressed working families and the treasured but financially stretched national health



Natalie Bennett (C), the leader of the Green Party leaves after voting at a polling station in London, Britain on 7 May, 2015.—REUTERS

service.

If neither wins an overall majority, talks will begin on Friday with smaller parties in a race to strike deals. That could lead to a formal coalition, like the one Cameron has led for the past five years with the centrist Liberal Democrats. Or it could produce a fragile minority government making trade-offs to guarantee support on key votes.

British stock and bond prices were moderately higher on the final trading day before polling, with election jitters still failing to register any significant investor selling.

The pound was slightly weaker but remained within the relatively tight trading ranges seen over the past three months.

"What is important to us is clarity as soon as possible," Andrew Witty, chief executive of GlaxoSmithKline, Britain's sixth largest company by market value, told reporters.

Of seven opinion polls released on the last day before voting, three showed

the two main parties tied. Three put the Conservatives ahead by a single percentage point, and one gave Labour a two-point lead.

Leading pollster Peter Kellner of YouGov predicted the Conservatives would end up with 284 seats to Labour's 263, with the Scottish Nationalists on 48, Liberal Democrats 31, the anti-European Union UK Independence Party (UKIP) two, Greens one, and Welsh and Northern Irish parties 21.

If that proved correct, either of the two big parties would need support from at least two smaller ones in order to get laws through parliament.

If a durable government could not be formed, Britain could face political instability and even possibly a second election.

At heart, Britain's post-World War Two political consensus, which saw the Conservatives and Labour take turns in government, is crumbling as once marginal parties in Scotland and England steal

millions of votes from established parties.

Scottish nationalists, who lost an independence vote last September, are likely to win the lion's share of seats in Scotland, capturing dozens from Labour, and making Miliband's chances of winning an overall majority much slimmer.

In England, UKIP has courted Conservative and Labour voters, but is likely to do most damage to Cameron's chances of a majority.

Cameron has warned that Miliband will only be able to rule with the help of the Scottish National Party (SNP), a result Cameron has warned could place the United Kingdom in peril.

Miliband has ruled out doing a deal with the nationalists, despite their overtures to form an alliance against the Conservatives. "If we work together we can lock out the Tories. We will work with others across the United Kingdom, that is my pledge," SNP leader Nicola Sturgeon said in Edinburgh.

If Cameron fails to win a majority, he could try to strike a deal with the Liberal Democrats, a repeat of the 2010 coalition, and possibly also with Northern Irish unionists and UKIP.

Cameron has promised an in-out referendum on Britain's membership of the European Union by the end of 2017. Polls open at 7 am BST for the United Kingdom's 48 million voters and close at 10 pm BST. An exit poll will be published as soon as polls close, and most results are expected in the early hours of Friday.—Reuters

Netanyahu clinches deal to form new Israeli government



Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu

JERUSALEM, 7 May — Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu clinched a deal to form a new government on Wednesday just before a deadline expired, but his coalition will rule by the slimmest of majorities in Israel's turbulent parliament.

"Israel now has a government," Naftali Bennett, the head of the far-right Jewish Home party announced at parliament after hours of haggling with Netanyahu's Likud deputies over cabinet positions, which were not immediately announced.

Netanyahu had struggled to put together a coalition for nearly two months after winning an easy election victory, after a former ally abandoned him this week.

Barely two hours before a midnight (2100 GMT) deadline mandated by law, Netanyahu's right-wing Likud sealed an agreement with ultra-nationalist Jewish Home, which advocates annexation of parts of occupied territory Palestinians seek for a state.

Netanyahu dispatched a formal notice to President Reuven Rivlin, telling him "I am honoured to notify you I have succeeded in forming a government, which I would like to present to parliament as soon as possible."

With Jewish Home, the ultra-Orthodox United Torah Judaism and Shas parties and Kulanu, a centrist faction, the Likud-led government will control 61 of parliament's 120 seats.

Such a narrow majority will make Netanyahu vulnerable to policy demands from even his most junior partners, continuing a long tradition of instability in Israeli politics.

Netanyahu said he would seek to enlarge the coalition. "Sixty-one is a good number, 61-plus is better," he said, without elaborating as to which party he would seek to add.

Jewish Home seems certain to push for the ex-

pansion of Jewish settlement in occupied territory, a policy that could deepen Israel's rift over the issue with its main ally, the United States, and the European Union.

Bennett, the party's leader, has called for the annexation of parts of the West Bank. That goes beyond Netanyahu's pledge to continue to build in settlements only in areas Israel intends to keep in any future peace deal with the Palestinians.

In return for Jewish Home's support, Netanyahu bowed to its demand for the justice minister portfolio, a post critical to the smooth passage of cabinet-approved legislation to parliament for ratification.

Under a compromise, some of the minister's authority may be curbed, Israeli political sources said. The exact job definition was likely to be ironed out only in talks expected to take place overnight until the agreement between the parties is signed.

Bennett is a strong supporter of a bill, promoted by Netanyahu, that would anchor in law the status of Israel as the nation-state of the Jewish people. Critics, among them Rivlin, have said it runs counter to the founding fathers' vision of equality for Arab citizens.

Other proposed legislation likely to be pursued would seek to limit the power of the Supreme Court to overturn laws passed by parliament and tighten controls over foreign donations to left-wing organizations.

Shortly after the 17 March election, Netanyahu appeared to be coasting towards a right-leaning government with control of 67 parliamentary seats and voiced confidence he would be able to form one quickly. Rivlin initially gave him 28 days to do so.

But on Monday, Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman, whose once-strong relationship with the Israeli leader turned sour long ago, took his far-right Yisrael Beitenu party out of the coalition talks.

That left Netanyahu with only 53 seats, making Jewish Home's backing essential to ensuring the unexpected election win would result in a fourth term for the 65-year-old leader.

Reuters

Baltimore asks Justice Department to investigate police practices

WASHINGTON, 7 May — Baltimore Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake asked the US Justice Department on Wednesday to investigate the city's police department for civil rights violations after the death of a black man from injuries sustained in police custody. The investigation will look into police practices such as frisks, street stops of suspects and arrests to see if they violate the US Constitution, Rawlings-Blake said at a news conference.

The request follows the 19 April death of Freddie Gray, 25, who sustained spinal injuries after being arrested. His death sparked protests and a day of arson and looting in the largely black city.

Maryland Governor Larry Hogan lifted a state of emergency for Baltimore on Wednesday. "We cannot be timid in addressing this problem and I am a mayor that does not shy away from our city's big challenges," Rawlings-Blake said.

Six officers were charged last week in the case, which involves the latest in a series of US deaths of unarmed black men involving police officers.

The mayor said the city would seek to have its 3,200-member police department equipped with body cameras by the end of the year. Advocates see cameras as a way to monitor police encounters with civilians. Attorney General Loretta Lynch is considering Rawlings-Blake's request,

the Justice Department said. Lynch met the mayor, police officials and community leaders on Tuesday. Rawlings-Blake, a Democrat who took office in 2010, said the request was part of her years-long effort to reform police. She said the department had made progress, with complaints last year of excessive force down by 46 percent. But improvements had not gone far enough, Rawlings-Blake said.

Gray's death provoked a day of rioting on 27 April in which a number of businesses were looted and a CVS Health Corp (CVS.N) location was burned. The pharmacy chain said on Wednesday that it would rebuild the store.

The Justice Department has conducted similar

reviews of US police departments. An investigation of police in Ferguson, Missouri, where an officer shot dead an unarmed black teenager last year, concluded in March that the department routinely engaged in racially biased practices.

The Justice Department is investigating possible civil rights violations in Gray's death.

Last October, officials in Baltimore asked the Justice Department to begin an informal collaborative review of the city's police department after the Baltimore Sun reported that Baltimore had paid almost \$6 million since 2011 to settle lawsuits alleging police brutality and other misconduct.—Reuters

PERSPECTIVES

Friday, 8 May, 2015

There is a first time for everything

By Kyaw Thura

The faithful discharge of obligations to safeguard territorial integrity, promote national integration and protect the wellbeing of citizens may be regarded as the touchstone of good governance and clean government.

Decades of living under strict control have

left us totally uninterested in politics, which is why most of us find ourselves still new to democracy. Fortunately, thanks to the age of information and technology, we are now able to keep abreast of the latest developments of the world. In other words, we have acquired some knowledge of what became of other countries that placed unprincipled politicians in office.

If we were to choose the wrong people to make and administer laws, our revenues would just be squandered on unworthy people. In democracy, it is our own neglect that puts us in trouble. This emphasizes the importance of the electorate to weigh and measure candidates against one another and vote for those who can carry out their promised measures. Only then will we be able to relax, safe

in the knowledge that we have sent ethical representatives to parliament.

This time we are to make a difference with active participation in national politics. There is a first time for everything. Cheated once, we are not to blame for our wrong actions. Cheated twice, we will only have ourselves to blame.

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.

Asia: Stabilizing and Outperforming

Yu Ching Wong

IMF Resident Representative to Myanmar

Asia and the Pacific are doing well, with the region expected to remain the world's growth leader. This contrasts with the global economic landscape, where growth remains uneven against a backdrop of falling oil prices, sharp variations in exchange rates of major currencies, and potential market volatility. While momentum in advanced economies has picked up, several major emerging markets have lost steam. In addition, the prospect of a new mediocre for the world economy lingers, with medium-term forecasts being marked down again and potential growth constrained.

According to our latest Asia and Pacific Regional Economic Outlook, growth in the region is expected to hold steady at 5.6 percent in 2015, easing slightly to 5.5 percent in 2016. Domestic demand is forecast to remain strong, supported by healthy labor market conditions, historically low interest rates, and more recently, the fall in oil prices.

Exports will continue to benefit from the recovery in advanced economies and weaker exchange rates in some economies, despite the slowdown in some major emerging markets and the trend decline in exports' responsiveness to partner country demand, reflecting greater on-shoring of production.

Growth momentum in the largest economies in Asia and the Pacific, while good overall, is expected to remain mixed. China's economy is slowing to a more sustainable pace, with GDP projected to expand by 6.8 percent in 2015 and 6.3 percent in 2016 as the correction in the real estate sector continues to compress investment. In contrast, growth in Japan is expected to recover to 1.0 percent in 2015 and 1.2 percent in 2016, buoyed by consumption and exports. Thanks to recent policy reforms and lower oil prices, India will be one of the fastest growing economies in the world, expanding by 7.5 percent in 2015 and 2016. Across most of the region, lower

commodity prices are expected to boost incomes and reduce inflation, although commodity exporters such as Australia, Indonesia, and Malaysia will be adversely impacted.

Sharp exchange rate swings in advanced economies reflecting in part divergent monetary policies are also being felt within the Asia and Pacific region. While commodity exporters Australia, Malaysia, and New Zealand have seen their currencies depreciate sharply against the U.S. dollar, other currencies have weakened by considerably less or remained stable. These diverse exchange rate movements may create a dilemma for some policymakers seeking to balance competitiveness considerations with financial stability concerns arising from the buildup of foreign-currency-denominated debt during the past few years.

However, downside risks could cloud this regional outlook. Lower-than-expected growth in China and Japan could spill over to other economies in the region. Volatile global financial conditions could be disruptive, particularly where debt levels are high. In addition, potential growth has moder-

ated across much of the region, reflecting weaker productivity gains and labor force aging. On the upside, lower energy prices could present a larger boost to growth while also creating room for fiscal reforms, as we have already seen in a number of countries.

For Myanmar, we expect economic growth to accelerate to 8.3 percent in FY2015/16 from 7.7 percent in FY 2014/15 supported by strong expansion of manufacturing, construction and services. The growth outlook over the medium term also remains favorable on account of continued structural reform. Inflation is expected to pick up to 8.4 percent in FY2015/16 from 5.9 percent in FY 2014/15 reflecting strong domestic demand and higher import prices due to kyat depreciation.

In view of Asia and the Pacific's outlook and risks, what policies are warranted? Given the wide diversity across the region, no "one size fits all" advice holds. In general, current settings for policy interest rates are broadly appropriate given prevailing economic conditions and inflation rates. Going forward, though, higher policy rates may be needed in some

cases in the event of capital flow reversals to reinforce external stability. On the other hand, in Japan, where interest rates are already close to zero, aggressive stimulus through quantitative and qualitative easing should continue, in order to achieve positive inflation on a durable basis, supported by progress on structural reforms. In countries where public and private debt is high, gradual fiscal consolidation would strengthen resilience. The decline in oil and food prices provides an opportunity to phase out budget subsidies and make room for infrastructure and social spending, including on health and education that can also help reduce income inequality. Macroprudential policies should address financial stability risks, and foreign exchange intervention could be considered to smooth excessive currency volatility.

In Myanmar, the key policy challenge is to maintain macroeconomic stability in this election year. The increased fiscal deficit reflecting in part the large increase in public sector wages will raise aggregate demand and the external current account deficit. This, together with declines in gas prices and shortfalls in foreign direct investments and other capital inflows, could result in

slower reserve accumulation. In this context, a tightening of monetary policy is warranted. It will also be important to prioritize spending and increase tax revenues to contain fiscal deficit to no more than 5 percent of GDP and limit deficit financing by the central bank. Maintaining fiscal sustainability, protecting price and external stability and minimizing financial sector risks are key to achieving sustainable and inclusive growth.

Potential growth has slowed across much of Asia. The decline reflects primarily decelerating total factor productivity, which may be attributed in part to slowing gains from participating in global value chains. An analytical chapter of the Regional Economic Outlook explores how structural reforms can help increase Asian economies' share of the global value chain pie.

As discussed in another analytical chapter of this publication, over the medium term, Asia would also benefit from deeper intra-regional financial integration, which has lagged trade integration. Furthering financial integration holds the promise of more efficient allocation of regional savings to meet the region's large investment needs while also supporting financial inclusion.

GOLD PRICE, FE RATE

(7-5-2015)

Yangon Gold Price

Buying K690,200 per tical: Selling K691,000

Mandalay Gold Price

Buying K689,900 per tical: Selling K690,700

FE RATE

SGD Buying K 832: Selling K 833

Euro Buying K 1,230: Selling K 1,265

KDI discusses research on policies

NAY PYI TAW, 7 May—The 2014 Knowledge Sharing Programme with Myanmar Final Reporting Workshop took place at Thingaha Hotel, here, on Thursday morning.

Deputy Minister for National Planning and Economic Development Daw Lei Lei Thein and Senior

Consultant Dr Won-dong Cho of Korea Development Institute spoke on the occasion.

Republic of Korea provided four work projects—Public Sector Research & Development in Myanmar; Review of the system and suggestions for development; vocational

training system for a skilled workforce; training on project appraisal technique, monitoring of the project, application software and guideline for appraisal and monitoring; and introduction to credit guarantee system in Myanmar.

Experts from Korean Development Institute-KDI

spoke about findings over research on policies while officials of the Ministry of National Planning and Economic Development, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security and Ministry of Science and Technology participated in discussions.—MNA

LOCAL NEWS

Thai university students tour Tachilek, Mongla, Kengtung in eastern Shan State

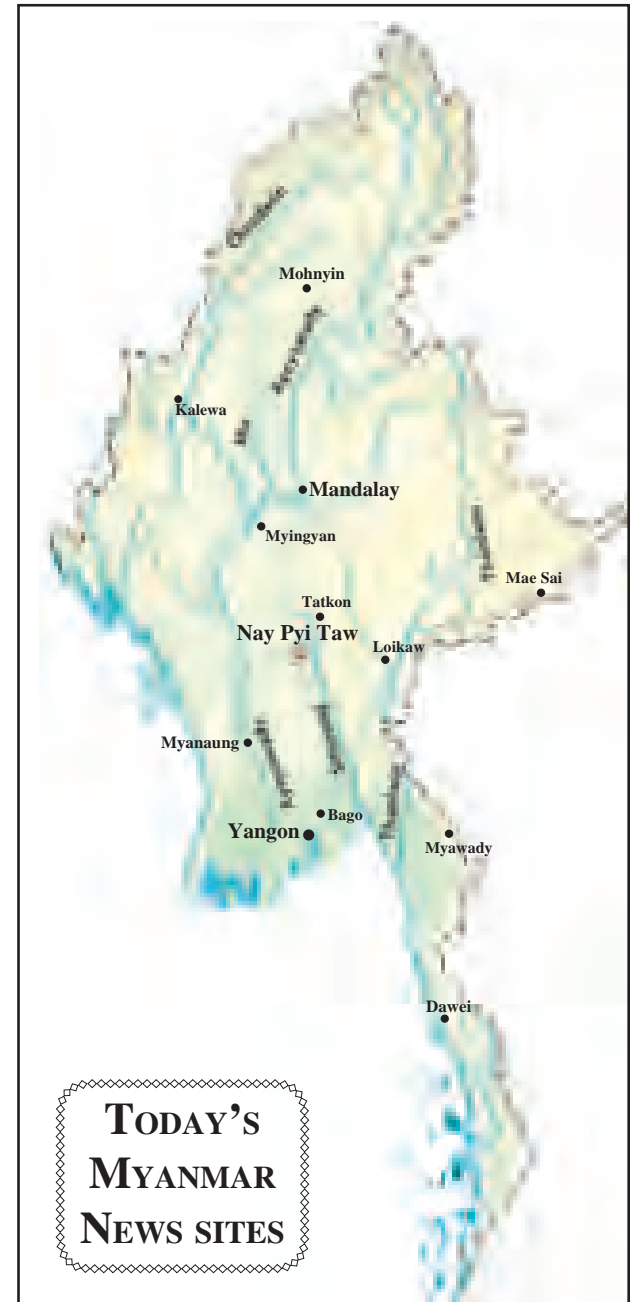


MAE SAI, 7 May — A group of students from Thailand's Mae Fah Luang University recently completed a tour of eastern Shan State. After arriving in Tachilek on 2 May, the 57 students from the university in Chiang Rai visited a number of sites including the Wamin monastery, Swamkham Pagoda and Kengtung Myoma market.

On 3 May, they made a single-day trip to Mongla where they visited the Dwe Nagara Pagoda, Drug Elimination Museum and Karuna Myitta Pagoda.

On 4 May, they called on officials of the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism. In the afternoon, they left for Thailand via Mae Sai.

MoHT



TODAY'S MYANMAR NEWS SITES

Activities mark UN Global Road Safety Week



DAWEI, 7 May — Police Col Chit Sein and Chief Minister of Taninthayi Region U Myat Ko gave a talk as part of UN Global Road Safety Week activities at the city hall in Dawei, Taninthayi Region, on 6 May.

Deputy Commander of the region police force

Head of Region Directorate of Road Administration U Kyaw Sein also spoke at the event.

After the talks, the chief minister and party viewed booths displayed by various departments.

Po Shwe Thun (Dawei)

Township Golfers Association compensates farmers for loss of land

MYANAUNG, 7 May — Farmers who lost land due to the expansion of a golf course received compensation at a ceremony in Myanaung Township on 7 May. The Myanaung Golf Course in Shadaw village-tract was expanded from five to nine holes on the land plots of local farmers under an agreement in 2001.

Some of the farmers recently sought to regain their land from the golf course, on the grounds that they had not been properly compensated. A government investigation found the farmers had not received any payment.

After negotiations between local farmers and the Township Golfers Association, a ceremony to present compensation was held at

the hall of the Myanaung Township Administrator.

Officials of the golf course presented K370,000 per acre for 12.8 acres to farmers U Nyunt, U Thaug Hlaing and U Myint Oo through township level officials.

Nay Win Zaw (Myanaung)



Plan to hoist golden umbrella atop Jade Pagoda

MANDALAY, 7 May — A ceremony to hoist a golden umbrella atop Weirawsana Jade Pagoda, located in Hsinywa Myinhu village, Amarapura Township, will be held in the first week of June.

In commemoration of the umbrella-hoisting ceremony, arrangements have been made to hold a Chinlone contest.

Chinlone teams across the nation may enlist at Myanmar Chinlone Federation, Yangon, on 01-393420 and its Mandalay branch on 09-6801744, 09-43100029, 09-33103132, 09-91020827 and 09-6802063.

Tin Maung (Mandalay)

MBED receives public digital library service machine



NAY PYI TAW, 7 May — Ottara District Information and Public Relations Department installed a public digital library service at Office No 52 of the Myanmar Board of Examinations Department under the Ministry of Education in Ottarathiri Township on 6 May.

A technician explains usage of public digital library service for readers to staff.

Readers may take e-books from the PDLs machine in a 650-m radius area through download access and read-only access.

Usage of the application is described on the vinyl board at the office. IPRD staff explained usage of the machine to office personnel.

So far, the department has installed three machines in Pobbathiri Township, four in Zeyathiri Township and one in Ottarathiri Township.

Shwe Ye Yint

Yemen urges ground intervention to save country—letter to UN

UNITED NATIONS, 7 May — Yemen urged the international community “to quickly intervene by land forces to save” the country, specifically in the cities of Aden and Taiz, according to a letter sent to the United Nations Security Council on Wednesday.

The letter from Yemen’s UN Ambassador Khaled Alyemany, seen by *Reuters*, could provide legal cover for such a move.

A Saudi Arabia-led coalition launched air strikes against Houthi rebels a day after Yemen notified the 15-member Security Council in a 24 March letter that it had requested military help from Gulf Arab states.

The Houthi militia battled its way into Aden’s Tawahi district on Wednesday despite Saudi-led air strikes, strengthening its hold on the city whose fate

is seen as crucial to determining the country’s civil war. The letter sent to the Security Council also urged human rights groups to document “barbaric violations against a defenceless population.” It accused the Houthis of killing civilians and blocking medical teams.

The fighting across Yemen killed 120 people on Wednesday, mostly civilians, including at least 40 who were trying to flee the southern port city of Aden by a boat that was struck by Houthi shells, rescue workers and witnesses said.

The Houthis and ex-army forces loyal to former president Ali Abdullah Saleh have besieged Aden for weeks in an effort to end resistance in the city where President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi briefly based his



Southern Popular Resistance fighters gather on a road during fighting against Houthi fighters in Yemen’s southern city of Aden on 3 May, 2015.—REUTERS

government before fleeing to Saudi Arabia. “Everyone that has committed a crime

will not escape punishment and the government will employ all means to bring

the Houthis and forces loyal to former President Saleh to international justice as

war criminals,” Alyemany wrote in the letter to the Security Council.—*Reuters*

Nigerians fleeing Lake Chad in Niger say some have died from lack of food, water

GEIDAM, (Nigeria) / NIAMEY, (Niger), 7 May — Some of thousands of Nigerians told to leave neighbouring Niger in the past week due to threats from Boko Haram militants have died en route from lack of food and water, evacuees said.

Niger has evacuated Nigerians living around Lake Chad, military and aid officials told *Reuters* on Tuesday, as the armies of four west African nations battle to quash the Islamist militants.

“I counted over 50 people that died on our way out of (the town of) Lalewa when the Niger soldiers were chasing us as if we are animals,” said 45-year old Ibrahim, one of the group who was originally from Nigeria’s Kebbi state.

The United Nations humanitarian coordinator OCHA said that 25,000 people had arrived in the towns of N’Guigmi and Bosso in southeastern Niger after fleeing their island homes on Lake Chad. OCHA said most of these families needed shelter, food and water.

The governor of Niger’s Diffa region initially told people to leave by Monday for security reasons after an attack by Ni-

geria-based Boko Haram, which killed 74 people. The deadline has been extended to Thursday evening.

A six-year insurgency by Boko Haram in Nigeria has seen thousands killed and displaced about 1.5 million people in the country.

Nigerians who fled to the Nigerian border said they had been called out of their homes, lined up and brutally hurried out with no supplies.

Nigeria’s National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) said on Wednesday that about 6,000 people had fled to Nigeria.

Musa Samaila, a fisherman from Lalewa, said he had walked for three days and his son had died of dehydration in his arms.

“I can’t believe what happened that the government of Niger just woke up and decided to chase us out of a place where we have been doing business for years,” Samaila said.

Niger’s prime minister said the government was supplying food and healthcare to those who arrived at the camps in N’Guigmi and Bosso while thousands of other Nigerians had been repatriated.

Reuters

Chile president to reshuffle entire cabinet as popularity falls

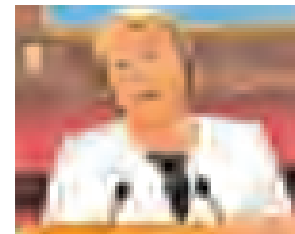
SANTIAGO, 7 May — Chile President Michelle Bachelet said she will reshuffle her entire cabinet in the next few days, a surprise announcement that indicates the depth of her concern about a collapse in her popularity. “A few hours ago I requested the resignation of all the ministers, and I will take 72 hours to decide who will stay and who will go,” she said in an interview with a local TV station on Wednesday evening.

Centre-left Bachelet’s popularity has hit an all-time low in recent weeks after a

series of corruption scandals. Earlier on Wednesday, the latest poll showed that disapproval of the president was still growing.

As well as a scandal over illicit campaign financing that has mostly drawn in opposition politicians, Bachelet herself has been tainted by questions over a bank loan and lucrative land deal that benefited her daughter-in-law.

Although she has always maintained she was unaware of the deal, in the programme on Wednesday night - titled ‘What is going



Chile’s President Michelle Bachelet speaks at a news conference after her welcoming ceremony in the presidential palace in Guatemala City, on 30 Jan, 2015. — REUTERS

on with Chile?’ - Bachelet said she made “important mistakes” in not returning from holiday or commenting on the case in a timely

way. The fuss over the scandals has overshadowed her political agenda at a time when she is trying to push through ambitious labour, education and other reforms.

Most politicians from within Bachelet’s party welcomed the move. “Well done, President!,” tweeted left-wing senator Carlos Montes. “The resignation request marks a new stage.”

It is not clear who, if any, of the ministers will stay. Traditionally the finance minister, currently Alberto Arenas, remains in place for the entire four years of an administration.—*Reuters*

Libya’s coast guard detains almost 600 African migrants



Libyan Navy boat carries illegal migrants who attempted to flee the coast to Europe back to the coastal city of Tripoli on 5 May, 2015.—REUTERS

TRIPOLI, 7 May — Libya’s coast guard detained on Wednesday almost 600 illegal African migrants, among them pregnant women and 18 children, who had tried to sail to Europe on a fishing boat, a se-

curity official said.

The North African country, gripped by violence and a breakdown of state authority four years after the ousting of Muammar Gaddafi, has turned into a major hub for human

traffickers smuggling African migrants by boat to Italy.

As many as 900 people may have died last month off Libya’s coast when their packed boat capsized as they were trying to reach the Italian island of Lampedusa. Many thousands more have managed to make the crossing in an almost daily exodus of boats.

“The coast guard arrested early this morning 585 illegal migrants from different African countries such as Somalia, Eritrea, Ghana and Mali,” said Mohamed al-Ghwaili, a spokesman for a police department tasked with tackling immigration.

He said the Africans had tried to set off to Italy in an old fishing boat in Sa-

bratha, a town west of the capital Tripoli.

Libya’s coastguard, under pressure from Europe to stem the flow, said on Sunday they had intercepted several boats carrying around 500 migrants and brought them back to shore.

Captured immigrants are held in often cramped detention centres in Libya, sometimes for months on end, human rights groups say.

Libya’s coast guards have few resources and rely on fishing and tug boats to combat human trafficking as the central state authority has collapsed across the oil producer, with competing governments and dozen of armed groups battling each other.—*Reuters*

BUSINESS & HEALTH

India and Iran sign port deal despite US warning about haste

NEW DELHI, 7 May — India reached a deal on Wednesday to develop a strategic port in southeast Iran despite US pressure not to rush into any such trade agreements before world powers clinch a final nuclear accord with Teheran.

Shipping Minister Nitin Gadkari and his Iranian counterpart Abbas Ahmad Akhoundi signed a memorandum of understanding to develop the Chabahar Port on the Gulf of Oman, near Iran's border with India's arch rival Pakistan.

"Indian firms will lease two existing berths at the port and operationalise them as container and multi-purpose cargo terminals," the Indian government said in a statement, adding that a commercial accord would be needed to implement the pact.

India and Iran agreed in 2003 to develop the port, but the venture has made little progress because of Western sanctions tied to Teheran's disputed atomic



A general view of an oil dock is seen from a ship at the port of Kalantari in the city of Chabahar, 300km (186 miles) east of the Strait of Hormuz on 17 Jan, 2012.

REUTERS

programme.

Now, spurred on by Chinese President Xi Jinping's signing of energy and infrastructure agreements with neighbouring Pakistan worth \$46 billion, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi wants swiftly to sign trade deals with Iran and other Gulf countries.

Encouraged by a provisional, 2 April deal over Teheran's nuclear programme, India recently sent a delegation to Iran to scout for trade, energy and

infrastructure deals.

However, the United States has expressed concern that India is moving too fast and could undermine a sanctions regime imposed on Iran to try to bring it to the negotiating table.

Washington has said there is no guarantee that a final deal will be secured with Teheran by a 30 June deadline.

"Sanctions won't solve the problem, but they certainly will continue to

bring Iran to a final agreement," Richard Verma, the US ambassador to India, said earlier on Wednesday.

For India, one advantage of a container and cargo terminal at Chabahar is that it would provide landlocked Afghanistan with access to the sea, reducing its reliance on Pakistan.

Iran has also proposed a free-trade agreement with India, a trade ministry source said. Rupee-denominated trade with Iran, started in 2012 because of complications arising from sanctions, has almost doubled Indian exports to Teheran in the past two years to \$4 billion.

Now, Indian exporters want to build on that, using a free-trade zone being developed near Chabahar to export more to the Commonwealth of Independent States, made up of former Soviet Republics, said Mumbai-based Khalid Khan, regional head of the Federation of Indian Export Organizations.

Reuters

US private payrolls growth eases; productivity falls

WASHINGTON, 7 May — US private employers in April hired the fewest number of workers in more than a year, further diminishing hopes of a strong rebound in economic growth after the first-quarter slump.

The tepid private job gains combined with other data on Wednesday showing a second straight quarterly decline in productivity make it less likely the US Federal Reserve will raise interest rates in June as had been expected at the start of the year.

"The data pile onto recent evidence suggesting increased odds that, by the time the June policy meeting rolls around, the hope of a great spring rebound in real growth will have faded," said Steve Blitz, chief economist at ITG Investment Research in New York.

Private payrolls increased 169,000 last month, the smallest gain since January 2014, the ADP National Employment Report showed. That was well below economists' expectations for an increase of 200,000 jobs.

Hiring slowed almost across the board, with



Workers prepare outgoing shipments at an Amazon Fulfillment Centre, ahead of the Christmas rush, in Tracy, California, on 30 Nov, 2014. —REUTERS

manufacturing losing 10,000 jobs after eliminating 3,000 positions in March, likely reflecting the impact of a strong dollar. Private sector job growth has slowed since November.

March private payrolls were revised down to show 14,000 fewer jobs created than previously reported. The report jointly developed with Moody's Analytics was released ahead of the government's more comprehensive employment report on Friday.

The ADP has a poor track record of predicting nonfarm payrolls, and most economists are maintaining their fore-

casts for a bounce back in job growth after March's sharp slowdown, which was blamed on bad weather.

They, however, acknowledged there was a slight downside risk. According to a Reuters survey of economists, nonfarm payrolls likely increased 224,000 in April after rising by 126,000 in March.

"ADP typically doesn't do a good job of picking up short-term swings from weather and other temporary factors," said Ted Wieseman, an economist at Morgan Stanley in New York.

"After over-predicting the nonfarm payrolls

number in March, ADP will probably undershoot in April as weather swings in the positive direction."

Payrolls will be scrutinized closely for clues on the economy's strength after a mix of cold weather, the buoyant dollar, port disruptions and deep spending cuts by energy firms held first-quarter growth to an anemic 0.2 percent annual pace.

But Tuesday's weak March trade data suggests the economy actually contracted in the first three months of the year after expanding at a 2.2 percent pace in the fourth quarter.

The dollar hit a 10-week low against the euro on the data and a spike in European bond yields, which buoyed demand for the single currency. US Treasury debt prices fell on the European bond sell-off and Apple Inc's (AAPL.O) announcement of a new seven-part bond to help fund dividends and share buybacks.

Stocks on Wall Street were trading lower after Fed Chair Janet Yellen warned that equity market valuations at "this point generally are quite high."

Reuters

Safety switches may redeem potent CAR T cancer therapies

NEW YORK, 7 May — New therapies that clinical data show can eliminate blood cancers such as leukemia and lymphoma in 40 percent to 90 percent of patients may have to be genetically modified to include a switch that shields healthy cells from attack.

The therapies could generate tens of billions of dollars in annual sales for drugmakers including Kite Pharma and Juno Therapeutics Inc, once they are approved.

The therapies involve using what are known as CAR T cells, which are white blood cells taken from the body and genetically modified to have the cancer-spotting traits of antibodies. These cells can circulate inside a person for years, even a lifetime, relentlessly seeking out cancerous growth.

But a third of the patients in some trials given CAR T cells have developed life-threatening fevers and inflammation. Doctors say the reason is that the modified T cells cause inflammation because they kill so many cancer cells so quickly. Another concern is that when the therapies are eventually targeted at solid tumors such as lung or kidney cancer, they could also attack healthy cells containing the same protein that's the target of the anti-cancer therapy.

As a result, some drugmakers are building in "switches" to suppress CAR T cells if serious

side effects emerge, or to make them self-destruct if they attack healthy tissue, according to Reuters interviews with company executives. The switches involve an additional receptor on the CAR T cell that can be controlled by giving the patient a second medication, such as the widely-used cancer drug Rituxan.

The so-called suicide switches being developed for CAR T cells are a refinement of the body's own natural process of apoptosis, by which defective or unneeded cells are programmed to self-destruct.

Approval of the new therapies to combat blood cancers are not expected for perhaps another three or four years, analysts said. Approval for therapies to fight solid tumours will take years longer, they said.

Intrexon Corp and Cellectis SA are among the leading switch makers and could become acquisition targets or licensing partners for drugmakers that need their technology, according to analysts.

Bellicum Pharmaceuticals Inc and Cellectis have their own pipeline of switches and experimental CAR T cells. Intrexon has given Ziopharm Oncology Inc exclusive oncology rights to its switches. Juno has built safety switches into at least two therapies, including JCAR014 for patients with advanced leukemias. —Reuters

S Africa HIV treatment covers nearly half of the infected

CAPE TOWN, 7 May — Three million people living with HIV/AIDS are receiving antiretroviral treatment in South Africa, meaning treatment coverage for nearly 50 percent of the infected, the health minister has said.

"The high availability of the antiretroviral treatment suggests that the country is on its way towards universal access to the treatment," Aaron Motsoaledi said when addressing parliament on Wednesday.

South Africa has an estimated 6.4 million people living with HIV/AIDS, one

of the countries with highest prevalence in the world.

Motsoaledi said the antiretroviral programme has increased the patients' chances of survival, but the logistics of supplying drugs for the 3 million have become a challenge.

"(Medicine) demand may always exceed supply, not because of shortage in the country but due to logistical problems," he said.

According to a national development plan, the generation of under-20s will be largely free of HIV by 2030, the minister said.

Xinhua

Hundreds of bodies may be buried in Nepal avalanche, official says

KATHMANDU, 7 May — Body parts are strewn on the slopes of a mountain in Nepal, and up to 300 people, many of them foreigners, are believed buried there by an avalanche set off by last month's devastating earthquake, an official said on Thursday.

Rescuers pulled out six bodies from the Langtang village area, 60 km (40 miles) north of Kathmandu, on Wednesday but operations were being hampered

by bad weather, said Gautam Rimal, assistant district administrator in the area.

About 100 bodies were recovered in the area on Saturday and Sunday and Rimal had previously said about 120 more were buried there.

But on Thursday he said the number could be as high as 300, including 110 foreigners. "There are body parts, broken limbs and pieces of flesh scattered in the

area," he said.

The government has said 7,759 people were killed in the on 25 April earthquake and more than 16,000 injured.

Langtang is on a trekking route popular with Westerners and the village had 55 guest-houses catering for visitors. The village was wiped out by the avalanche but it was not clear how many people were there at the time.—Reuters



People work on top of the collapsed house to salvage belongings after the 25 April earthquake at Bhaktapur on 7 May, 2015.—REUTERS

Cuba says to send 48-member medical team to Nepal

HAVANA, 7 May — The Cuban government will send a 48-member medical team including 22 doctors to Nepal in response to the 25 April earthquake that killed more than 7,600 people, official Cuban media said on Wednesday, citing Health Ministry officials.

The Communist government has traditionally sent medical

teams abroad in response to disasters, including last year when Cuba sent 256 doctors and nurses to three West African countries to treat patients in the Ebola outbreak.

The team would depart with a field hospital that contains a surgical unit, sterilization equipment, an intensive care unit and diagnostic equipment including

X-ray and ultrasound machines, the official website Cubadebate said.

While Cuba provides doctors and nurses for disaster relief for free, it also exchanges them for cash or goods on more routine missions. The island receives an estimated 115,000 barrels of oil per day from Venezuela, where some 30,000 Cuban medical pro-

fessionals are posted.

In all, more than 50,000 Cuban health workers are posted in more than 60 countries.

The death toll from the 25 April quake in the Himalayan mountain nation has reached 7,675, with more than 16,300 people injured, the government of Nepal said.

Reuters

Tornadoes, severe flooding hit Oklahoma City area, injuries reported

OKLAHOMA CITY, 7 May — A series of tornadoes, including a major twister, touched down southwest of Oklahoma City on Wednesday, injuring several residents of a trailer park, causing severe flooding and the escape of bears from a wildlife park, officials said.

No deaths were reported, but some residents of a south Oklahoma City trailer park were injured during the storm and treated at local hospitals, said Dee Patty, a police spokeswoman.

The *Oklahoman* newspaper reported 12 people were hurt in the incident, though there was no word on their specific injuries.

"I think we got lucky," Patty said. "We've seen a lot worse come through these same areas."

Patty also said two people were hurt during a weather-related road accident. The newspaper reported a third was injured when

entering a storm shelter and a fourth person was hurt by flying debris and treated at hospital.

Bears briefly escaped from

enclosures at an animal park after a tornado struck the city of Tuttle, about 30 miles (48 km) southwest of Oklahoma City, the



Woman surveys remains of farmstead she grew up in after it was destroyed by a tornado near Wichita, Kansas on 7 May, 2015.

REUTERS

Grady County Sheriff's Office said. Officials earlier said tigers had escaped.

A storm system brought severe weather to several Great Plains states, and the National Weather Service issued a tornado watch for an area stretching from central Texas to central Nebraska. There had been about two dozen tornadoes reported in the area.

Earlier in the day, passengers, visitors and employees at the Will Rogers World Airport in Oklahoma City were evacuated to a pedestrian tunnel for about 30 minutes as the storms moved through the area, the airport said. All flights were canceled through the evening.

The tornadoes flipped cars, downed power lines and snapped trees. Several roads were closed because of debris, the Oklahoma Department of Emergency Man-

agement said.

The National Weather Service issued a flash flood emergency for downtown Oklahoma City amid storms and heavy rain in the broader area. It said the airport received 6.9 ins (17.5 cm) of rain for the day.

Severe flooding was reported in the downtown Oklahoma City business district and South Oklahoma City, where local media reported a possible drowning victim after a flash flood.

Grady County officials said 10 homes in the nearby town of Amber were damaged along with 25 homes in Bridge Creek. South Oklahoma City reported a hotel along Interstate 35 was among other structures damaged.

The Oklahoma Corporation Commission said more than 10,000 homes and businesses were without power statewide.

Reuters

Rome airport closed after terminal fire, no serious injuries



Airplanes are parked on the tarmac at the international Fiumicino airport in Rome on 7 May, 2015.—REUTERS

ROME, 7 May — Rome's main Fiumicino airport was closed on Thursday after a fire broke out in a baggage storage area but there were no serious injuries, officials said.

The airport would remain closed until 2 pm (1200 GMT), they said, noting that many flights would be cancelled or delayed.

Alitalia, Italy's national carrier, said all flights to and from Fiumicino had been cancelled until the re-opening except some inter-continental flight arrivals.

The closure came at one of the busiest times of the day for the airport, when most trans-Atlantic flights are scheduled to arrive and depart.

Passengers who had arrived for early morning flights were not allowed inside any of the terminals. The main highway linking

the airport to Rome was closed to allow emergency vehicles to pass and train service from the city centre was suspended.

The fire broke out shortly after midnight (2200 GMT) in an underground baggage area of Terminal 3, which is used for international flights.

Pictures posted in the Internet showed thick clouds of smoke emerging from the terminal, which officials said suffered serious damage.

At least three people suffered smoke inhalation, a fire brigade official said, adding that injuries could have been much more numerous had the fire broken out during the day when the terminal is crowded.

He said the fire was under control and that its cause was still unknown.—Reuters

ADVERTISEMENT & GENERAL

Ministry of Energy

Myanma Petrochemical Enterprise

Extension of the request for the Letter of Expression of Interest (LOEI)

Joint Venture Project of No. (3) Fertilizer Factory (Kyawzwa)

Myanma Petrochemical Enterprise (MPE) had invited the interested local and international investors for the request of the Letter of Expression of Interest (LOEI) regarding the joint venture project of No. (3) Fertilizer Factory (Kyawzwa) from 17.3.2015 to 23.3.2015 in the national newspaper and to be submitted not later than (12:00) noon on the date of 4.5.2015.

MPE hereby announces that the submission of LOEI shall be extended up to 4.6.2015 from 4.5.2015.

WEATHER REPORT

BAY INFERENCE: Weather is partly cloudy in the Andaman Sea and Bay of Bengal.

STATE OF THE SEA: Seas will be moderate in Myanmar waters.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL EVENING OF THE 8th May, 2015: Weather will be partly cloudy in Yangon and Ayeyawady Regions, Rakhine State and rain or thundershowers are likely to be isolated in the remaining Regions and States. Degree of certainty is (60%).

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Likelihood of continuation of isolated rain or thundershowers in the Upper Myanmar areas.

**CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV PANJA BHUM VOY NO (050N)**

Consignees of cargo carried on MV PANJA BHUM VOY NO (050N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 8.5.2015 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.

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

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

**SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S WAN HAI LINES PTE LTD**

Phone No: 2301185

**CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV BANGSAPHAN VOY NO (121)**

Consignees of cargo carried on MVBANGSAPHAN VOY NO (121) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 8.5.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of S.P.W (5) where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

**SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S WONGSAMUT OCEAN
SHIPPING CO LTD.**

Phone No: 2301186

M7.1 quake hits PNG, local tsunami threat passes

SYDNEY, 7 May — A strong earthquake with a magnitude of 7.1 struck off Papua New Guinea on Thursday afternoon, but no tsunami alert was issued for the wider Pacific region and experts said the threat to coasts located near the quake's epicenter has passed.

The quake, which had a depth of 23.2 kilometres, was centered about 144 km southwest of Panguna on the PNG's Bougainville Island and 642 km west-northwest of Honiara, the capital city of Solomon Islands, according to the US Geological Survey, which monitors global seismic activity.

The Hawaii-based Pacific Tsunami Warning Centre, having initially issued a tsunami warning

for areas within 300 km of the quake's epicenter, later said there was "no longer a tsunami threat."

Chris McKee, the assistant director of the Geophysical Observatory in the PNG capital Port Moresby, told *Kyodo News* there were no immediate reports of any casualties or damage.

The remote area, one of the most seismically active on the planet, has experienced significant seismic activity in recent weeks, including at M7.5 quake that struck the PNG island of New Britain on Tuesday.

The USGS said the latest quake occurred as the result of normal faulting at the plate boundary between the Pacific and Australian tectonic plates.

Kyodo News

Lockheed F-35 gets first female pilot: Air Force



Three F-35 Joint Strike Fighters (rear to front) AF-2, AF-3 and AF-4, can be seen flying over Edwards Air Force Base in this 10 Dec, 2011 handout photo provided by Lockheed Martin.—REUTERS

WASHINGTON, 7 May — Lieutenant Colonel Christine Mau, a US Air Force pilot who was part of the first all-female combat sortie over Afghanistan in 2011, this week became the first woman to fly the Lockheed Martin Corp F-35 jet, the Air Force said on Wednesday.

Mau, deputy commander of the 33rd Fighter Wing Operations Group, on

Tuesday completed her first training flight in the single-seat stealth fighter after 14 virtual training missions in a simulator, said spokeswoman Lieutenant Hope Cronin.

Mau joined 87 F-35A pilots who have been trained over the last four years at Eglin Air Force Base in Florida.

"It felt great to get airborne. The jet flies like a

dream, and seeing the systems interact is impressive," Mau said in a statement.

She said flying with the F-35's complex helmet, which fuses all sensor data from the jet on a mounted display on the helmet rather than in the jet's cockpit, took some adjustment.

Women have served in combat aviation roles in a wide range of US aircraft for over 20 years, but they still

represent only a small fraction of US military pilots.

"Flying is a great equalizer," said Mau. "The plane doesn't know or care about your gender as a pilot, nor do the ground troops who need your support. You just have to perform. That's all anyone cares about when you're up there — that you can do your job, and that you do it exceptionally well."—Reuters

Ex-AUM cult member appeals life sentence over 1995 sarin attack

TOKYO, 7 May — A former AUM Shinrikyo cult member has filed an appeal against a life sentence given by a lower court last week for his involvement in the 1995 sarin nerve gas attack on the Tokyo subway system, according to his lawyers.

Katsuya Takahashi's defence team filed the appeal with the Tokyo High Court last Friday a day after the Tokyo District Court rejected the team's plea for an acquittal, dismissing its claim that the 57-year-old did not know about the plan to release

sarin in subway cars on 20 March, 1995.

The court ruled Takahashi knew of the plan and acted as a driver for one of the senior cult members when he released the deadly agent in the terror attack that killed 13 and left more than 6,000 people injured.

A defence lawyer said the court's fact-finding process and the outcome were not acceptable, and that the defendant's constitutional rights had been infringed upon by the court rejecting the team's call to have cult founder Shoko Asahara testify as a

witness.

Captured in Tokyo in June 2012 after 17 years on the run, Takahashi was the last to be arrested among the AUM Shinrikyo members put on the special wanted list after the subway attack, which was masterminded

by Asahara.

Takahashi has described Asahara as "guru" during the trial, suggesting that he was still under the influence of the founder's teachings. Asahara, 60, whose real name is Chizuo Matsumoto, is on death row.—*Kyodo News*

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Brad Pitt, Angelina Jolie selling new Orleans mansion

LOS ANGELES, 7 May — Hollywood couple Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie are placing their three-story French Quarter mansion in New Orleans, Louisiana on the open market with an asking price of USD 6.5 million.

The couple bought the mansion back in 2006 for USD 3.5 million in the hideous wake of Hurricane Katrina. The 7,645 square foot mansion, which has five bedrooms, five full and three half bathrooms, are finely finished with Venetian plaster walls, custom designed marble mantels and fireplaces, a grand spiral staircase plus and elevator and a “gourmet kitchen with top of the line appliances”, reported Ace Showbiz.

While no interior pictures are available online, the property also has two off-street parking spaces, on site laundry facility and a spacious, private central courtyard with a small swimming pool.

After buying the mansion, Pitt started spending a lot of time in New Orleans to help revamp homes in the Lower 9th Ward through his Make It Right foundation. He has also filmed some movies in the city including 1994’s “Interview with the Vampire” and 2008’s “The Curious Case of Benjamin Button”.—PTI



Mariah Carey to perform at 2015 Billboard Music Awards

LOS ANGELES, 7 May — Pop diva Mariah Carey is another name announced as a performer for the 2015 Billboard Music Awards.

Between her shows at Las Vegas’ Caesars Palace, the 45-year-old diva will be taking the BMA stage at the MGM Grand on 17 May, reported Ace Showbiz. This will be Carey’s first time to appear at the annual event in 17 years.

She joins previously-announced performers including Britney Spears, Iggy Azalea, Ed Sheeran, Meghan Trainor, John Legend, Kelly Clarkson, Wiz Khalifa and Sam Smith.

Carey’s residency at the Colosseum at Caesars Palace starts on 6 May and will run through 26 July. “#1 to Infinity”, a compilation album to accompany her shows, is coming out on 18 May via Epic Records.—PTI

Zac Brown Band beats Groban to take top spot on Billboard 200

LOS ANGELES, 7 May — Country group Zac Brown Band scored a third chart-topping album on the weekly US Billboard 200 album chart on Wednesday, beating singer Josh Groban to the coveted top spot.

“Jekyll + Hyde,” the fourth album by the Atlanta-based band, sold 214,000 albums, 115,000 songs and was streamed online 3.9 million times, totalling 228,000 units according to figures from Nielsen SoundScan.

Groban came in at No 2 with his latest album “Stages,” covering songs made famous in musicals such as “The Phantom of the Opera,” and “Les Miserables,” which sold 180,000 units.

The Billboard 200 chart tallies album sales, song sales (10 songs equal one album) and streaming activity (1,500 streams equal one album).

The only other new entry to crack the top ten of the Billboard



File photo of the Zac Brown band performing during The Concert for Valor on the National Mall on Veterans’ Day in Washington, on 11 Nov, 2014.—REUTERS

200 chart this week was country artist Tyler Farr’s “Suffer in Peace,” at No 4.

Last week’s chart-topper, “Sound & Colour,” by Alabama Shakes, dropped to No 7.

On the Digital Songs chart,

which measures online download sales, Wiz Khalifa and Charlie Puth’s “See You Again,” from the “Furious 7” soundtrack held steady at No 1 with a further 285,000 digital sales in the past week.—Reuters

Rolling Stones’ Jagger, Wood record Nepal quake charity single

LONDON, 7 May — The Rolling Stones’ Mick Jagger and Ronnie Wood have joined forces with British soul singer Beverley Knight to record a charity single in aid of victims of last month’s earthquake in Nepal.

The track, entitled “Look into Your Heart” will raise funds for charity Save The Children’s Nepal Earthquake Appeal.

Wood said he was “delighted” to be able to take part in the recording, which features Knight on lead vocals and Jagger on backing vocals. They are accompanied by a 100-strong assembled

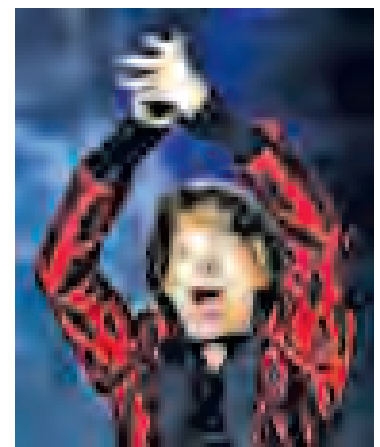
choir of the charity’s supporters.

“The terrible events in Nepal show just how vulnerable our fellow man can be in the face of nature,” Knight said.

“My hope is that the proceeds of this song will go some way to help raise urgently needed funds to repair homes and restore lives.”

The track was produced by Pink Floyd drummer Nick Mason.

More than 7,500 people were killed and hundreds of thousands left homeless by the quake, which struck on 25 April.—Reuters



The Rolling Stones’ Mick Jagger

Korean pop band Bigbang back with new single after three years

SEOUL, 7 May — Popular South Korean boy band Bigbang is back on the music scene after a three-year hiatus, with a new single delving into the stresses of daily life. The track, entitled “Loser”, has dominated South Korea’s online music charts since its release on 1 May and its video has seen more than 12 million hits on YouTube. It has also ranked top on the iTunes single charts of Hong Kong, Macau, Singapore and Taipei, where the band has many fans.

The quintet had taken time off while band members focused on their solo careers. They hope to release a single a month until August, culminating in a new album in September.

“Society is very competitive. I think the word ‘loser’ can explain many problems from competition and many people are struggling to

survive,” band member Taeyang said in an interview on Wednesday. “It is comforting that we are singing on their behalf and that is why people love this song.”

While Korean pop, known as “K-pop,” projects a wholesome image to its fans, it has also been criticised by some of the public for its cut-throat competition and the way it treats young talent, such as excessively long hours and low pay until they make it big.

“Many training places churn out the same people,” Taeyang said. “I believe music must show the identities that each of us has.”

The “Korean Wave” of music has swamped Asia, winning fans from Tokyo to Singapore and beyond but it has had little impact in Europe and the United States with the exception of Psy’s “Gangnam Style” hit in 2012.—Reuters



Former heavy weightworld champion Mike Tyson (R) and actor Donnie Yen interact with each other during a Press conference of the film “Ip Man 3” in Shanghai, east China on 6 May, 2015. Mike Tyson is expected to play a role in the film.—XINHUA

GENERAL

Social capital encouraged in water pollution control

BEIJING, 7 May — China will encourage more social investment to team up with the government in water pollution prevention and control, according to a guideline issued on Wednesday.

The efforts will first focus on drinking water sources,

and additional areas of water pollution prevention and control will be opened for public investment, said the guideline, jointly issued by the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Environmental Protection (MEP).

Water pollution prevention and control, including river protection,

drinking water safety and environmental monitoring, currently depend on government investment.

The guideline said an investment-return system should be set up to attract social capital to expand financing channels.

Expanded investment will help intensify the government's fight against water pollution and implement the Action Plan for Water Pollution Prevention and Control, which was released on 16 April, said Zhao Hualin, an MEP official.

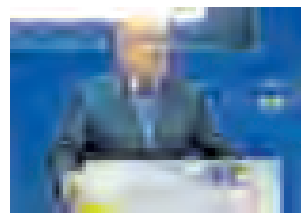
Xinhua

Israeli FA presses Blatter in effort to avert suspension

ZURICH/ JERUSALEM, 7 May — Israel's top football administrators met FIFA President Sepp Blatter in Zurich on Wednesday in an attempt to avert a vote called by the Palestinians to suspend Israel from the world body.

The Palestine Football Association (PFA) accuses Israel of hampering its activities and restricting the movement of players between the Gaza Strip and the Israeli-occupied West Bank. Israel cites security concerns for the restrictions it imposes.

Blatter met Israeli Football Association (IFA) chairman Ofer Eini and chief executive Rotem Kamer to discuss the PFA request for the vote at a FIFA Congress on 29 May. FIFA said it would host a further meeting between Eini and his Palestinian



FIFA President Sepp Blatter speaks at the 26th Asian Football Confederation (AFC) Congress in Manama, Bahrain on 30 April, 2015. —REUTERS

counterpart Jibril Rajoub in the next few days. "FIFA President Blatter reiterated his position that any member association that is fulfilling its statutory duties should not be suspended," a FIFA statement said. "This would also apply to the IFA as long as they fulfil such duties."

The statement appeared to offer hope for the IFA, who have not themselves been accused of violating

any FIFA statutes and have argued that they cannot control the actions of Israel's security forces.

Earlier, an IFA official told Reuters that Eini and Kamer would urge Blatter to use his influence to strike the PFA proposal from the Congress agenda.

If FIFA were to suspend Israel, it would bar all its teams and clubs from competing in international events, including World Cup qualifications.

Although suspensions are not uncommon, the world body has taken such action mainly when a government has intervened in its football association's affairs.

Israel is currently competing in the Euro 2016 qualifying event and its clubs will join European cup tournaments in July, when Israel is also due to host the European women's

under-19 championships. Suspension could force the event to be moved. For the Palestinian proposal to pass, it would need the approval of 75 percent of FIFA's 209 member associations.

In a letter to all FIFA members, Eini appealed for them to reject the proposal, saying it was "a flagrant move that seeks to mix politics with sport — something that is completely contrary to FIFA's vision".

Before leaving Tel Aviv he added: "Our meeting with (Blatter) is very significant as we endeavour to prevent the possibility of a vote ... it is a major part of our efforts."

The IFA official, who declined to be named, said Eini and Kamer would also meet German FA chief Wolfgang Niersbach to seek more support.

Reuters

Deep-sea microbes called missing link for complex cellular life

WASHINGTON, 7 May — Deep beneath the Atlantic Ocean between Greenland and Norway, scientists have found microorganisms they call a missing link connecting the simple cells that first populated Earth to the complex cellular life that emerged roughly 2 billion years ago.

The researchers said on Wednesday a group of microorganisms called Lokiarchaeota, or Loki for short, were retrieved from the inhospitable, frigid seabed about 1.5 miles (2.35 km) under the ocean surface not too far from a hydrothermal vent system called Loki's Castle, named after a Norse mythological figure.

The discovery provides insight into how the larger, complex cell types that are the building blocks for fungi, plants and animals including people, a group called eukaryotes, evolved from small, simple microbes, they said.

The Lokiarchaeota are part of a group called Archaea that have relatively simple cells lacking internal structures such as a nucleus.

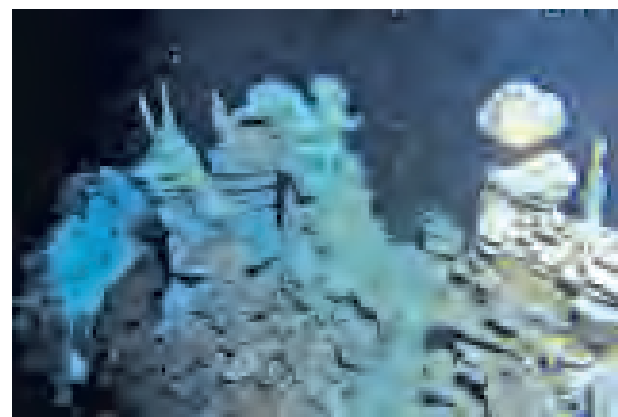
But the researchers found the Lokiarchaeota share with eukaryotes a significant number of genes, many with functions related to the cell membrane.

These genes would have provided Lokiarchaeota "with a 'starter-kit' to support the development of cellular complexity," said evolutionary microbiologist Lionel Guy of Sweden's Uppsala University.

Archaea and bacteria, another microbial form, are together known as prokaryotes.

"Humans have always been interested in trying to find an answer to the question, 'Where do we come from?' Well, now we know from what type of microbial ancestor we descend," said Uppsala University evolutionary microbiologist Thijs Ettema, who coordinated the study.

"Essentially, Lokiarchaeota represent a missing piece of the puzzle of the evolution from simple cells - bacteria and archaea, prokaryotes — to complex cells — eukaryotes, which includes us humans," Ettema added.



A hydrothermal vent field along the Arctic Mid-Ocean Ridge, close to where 'Loki' was found in marine sediments, is seen in this undated handout image courtesy of the the Centre for Geobiology at University of Bergen, Norway. — REUTERS

ma added.

Earth's wide diversity of life would have been impossible without this transition from rudimentary cells into the more complicated ones seen in multicellular life. Microbial life originated about 3.5 billion years ago. The first complex cellular life came roughly 2 billion years ago.

How cellular complexity first developed has been one of the big puzzles of evolutionary biology, Guy said.

The Lokiarchaeota were retrieved from oxy-

gen-starved sediment layers during voyages of a Norwegian research vessel, said microbiologist Steffen Jørgensen of Norway's University of Bergen.

While the Loki's Castle geothermal vents spew fluids reaching about 570 degrees Fahrenheit (300 degrees Celsius) about 9 miles (15 km) away, the Lokiarchaeota's locale was desolate, pitch dark and around the freezing point, Jørgensen added.

The research appears in the journal *Nature*.

Reuters

mitv Myanmar International

(8-5-2015 07:00 am~ 9-5-2015 07:00 am) MST

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- * Sagaing: Pe Kwel Kone Nat Festival

MRTV News Channel in Brief

(8-5-2015, Friday)

- 6:00 am**
- Paritta by Hilly Region Missionary Sayadaw
- 6:00 am**
- Physical Exercise
- 7:00 am**
- News / Weather Report
- 8:00 am**
- News / International News
- 8:35 am**
- Current Affairs
- 9:00 am**
- News / International News
- 9:35 am**
- Weekly Entertainment
- 10:35 am**
- MRTV's Youth Programme
- 11:35 am**
- Science and Technology Programme
- 12:00 noon**
- News / International News / Weather Report
- 12:35 pm**
- Clever
- 1:10 pm**
- Talk on Old Film (Part-2)
- 1:40 pm**
- Alinka Wut Yi Music
- 2:00 pm**
- Troupe (Part-1)
- Pyi Thu Ni Ti
- 2:35 pm**
- Traditional Boxing
- 3:35 pm**
- People's Talks
- 4:35 pm**
- University of Distance Education (TV Lectures) —Third Year (Chemistry)
- 5:35 pm**
- Current Affairs
- 6:00 pm**
- News / Weather Report
- 6:35 pm**
- Hyper Sports
- 7:00 pm**
- News / Weather Report
- 7:35 pm**
- Documentary
- 8:00 pm**
- News / International News / Weather Report
- 8:35 pm**
- Documentary
- 9:00 pm**
- News
- Teleplay
- Amazing World

Real Madrid top Forbes' most valuable football teams list

NEW YORK, 7 May — European champions Real Madrid are the world's most valuable football club for a third straight year, according to a Forbes poll released on Wednesday that showed the average value of the top 20 teams rose 11 percent over last year.

The Spanish club's value fell five percent to \$3.26 billion (£2.13 billion) but their \$746 million in revenue, the highest of any sports team in the world, was enough to keep them top of the list, Forbes said in a statement.

Reuters

Men's football tournament marks 700th anniversary of founding Sagaing City



SAGAING, 7 May — In commemoration of the 700th anniversary of founding Sagaing City, a men's football tournament kicked off at Sagaing Dis-

trict sports ground on 6 May, with a speech by Thiri Pyanchi U Khin Maung Myint, retired minister

for construction. Deputy Minister for Sports U Zaw Win presented Brazuca brand footballs to chairman of the organizing committee U Myint Than.

Before the match, trainees of Sagaing Education College presented bouquets to players of both teams and referees. Patron of the organizing committee Thiri Pyanchi U Khin Maung Myint kicked the ball into the ground as opening the match. Moe Min Club beat ABY Club 3-1 in the debut.

Tin Maung (Mandalay)

Mesmeric Messi nets double as Barca romp past Bayern

BARCELONA, 7 May — Two late moments of Lionel Messi magic and a goal from Neymar helped Barcelona break the resistance of Bayern Munich in a pulsating 3-0 victory in their Champions League semi-final first leg at the Nou Camp on Wednesday.

After Barca had been frustrated by the brilliance of Bayern goalkeeper Manuel Neuer for most of the match, Messi fired home after 77 minutes and then doubled the lead with a delightful chip from six metres three minutes later.

Neymar completed a resounding late burst from the hosts when he raced clear and slotted calmly home in stoppage time.

It was a disappointing evening for Bayern coach Pep Guardiola on his return to his former club.

He had warned before the game that it was impossible to stop his former prodigy Messi and it proved the case as the Ar-

gentine orchestrated Barcelona's emphatic victory that gives them a clear advantage heading into next week's second leg.

"When Messi is inspired he is unstoppable and tonight he showed his talent again," Barcelona centre back Gerard Pique told Spanish television.

"We played a fantastic game. Defensively we were very good as they didn't have shots on target and to achieve that against a team like Bayern is amazing."

Barca have evolved this season under Luis Enrique into a team that is no longer obsessed with maintaining possession and instead is allowing the forwards to be more creative.

Bayern had plenty of the ball in the second half but it was Barca's counter-attacks that proved decisive.

"We played okay for long periods of time but we were caught on the break three times. It's bit-

ter, we had our chances but we lost possession, they break and that should not happen," Bayern's Philipp Lahm told reporters.

Franck Ribery and Arjen Robben were among those sidelined in an injury crisis for Bayern, but a masked Robert Lewandowski started in attack despite fracturing his nose and jaw in his side's recent defeat by Borussia Dortmund in the German Cup. Barcelona's first clear sight of goal came after 11 minutes when Luis Suarez scampers clear of the Bayern defence and was denied by a superb block from the feet of Neuer.

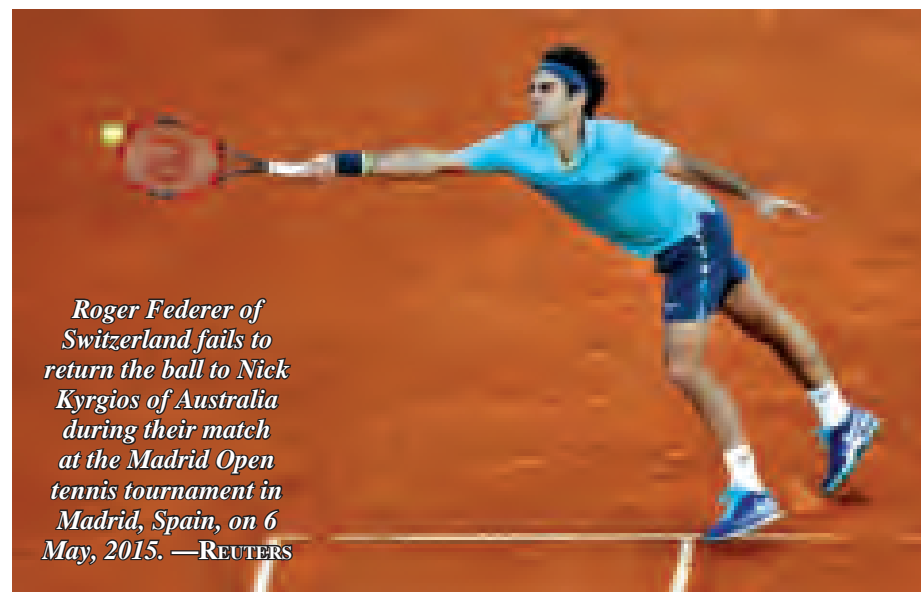
Minutes later a close range effort from Neymar was deflected wide by Rafinha.

The German champions slowly woke up and should have scored on the counter when Lewandowski slid a Thomas Mueller cross wide after 17 minutes.—Reuters



Barcelona's Lionel Messi scores their second goal during FC Barcelona v Bayern Munich, UEFA Champions League Semi Final First Leg, at The Nou Camp, Barcelona, Spain on 6 May, 2015.—REUTERS

Federer falls under Kyrgios spell in Madrid exit



Roger Federer of Switzerland fails to return the ball to Nick Kyrgios of Australia during their match at the Madrid Open tennis tournament in Madrid, Spain, on 6 May, 2015.—REUTERS

MADRID, 7 May— Roger Federer became the latest big name to get sucked up by a whirlwind called Nick Kyrgios as the Australian tyro sent the Swiss top seed spinning out of the Madrid Masters in the second round on Wednesday.

Ten months after the then 144th-ranked Kyrgios overwhelmed Rafa Nadal in the Wimbledon fourth round with a fearless brand of tennis, the Australian showed that he is a force to be reckoned with on clay too.

Now ranked 35th on the back of contesting his first ever ATP final in Estoril last weekend, Kyrgios brought an abrupt end to Federer's hopes of winning a fourth Madrid trophy with a heart-pumping 6-7(2), 7-6(5), 7-6(12) victory.

"I think he's the greatest of all time... I knew before the match that I would have to play one of the greatest matches I have ever played, I wasn't intimidated at all," the remarka-

bly composed 20-year-old said courtside following his victory in two hours 37 minutes.

"It doesn't really feel real at the moment. It's a strange feeling... it's pretty exciting."

While Kyrgios was celebrating what he called "definitely the greatest win of my career", Federer was condemned to his earliest exit in 11 visits to Madrid.

On the day he had hoped to celebrate the first birthday of his twin boys Lenny and Leo with a routine victory, the world number two was first rankled when Kyrgios broke him in the opening game of the match.

The irritation went up a few notches as he was heard snapping "We need a clown for this circus" when the second set slipped away from his grasp under a barrage of aces and crunching baseline winners.

Facing an opponent who was just eight when he won the first of his record 17 grand slam titles in 2003, Federer wasted

two match points in the tension-filled third set tie-break.

Instead Kyrgios was the one holding his arms aloft in victory after he wrapped up the contest on his sixth match point when Federer slammed a forehand wide.

Following a disappointing season in which he has claimed only one low-key title, Nadal went back to using his old racket model to record a 6-4, 6-3 win over American Steve Johnson.

He was joined in the third round by Tomas Berdych and 10th seed Grigor Dimitrov but US Open champion Marin Cilic followed Federer out of the exit door after a 6-7(5), 7-6(5), 6-3 defeat by Fernando Verdasco.

Kei Nishikori also progressed with a 6-2, 4-6, 6-4 victory over Belgian David Goffin, while second seed Andy Murray rounded out the day's action with a 6-4, 3-6, 6-0 victory over Philipp Kohlschreiber.

Reuters

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