

Dr Sai Mauk Kham calls for speedy completion of renovation work at YGH

YANGON, 17 May — Vice President Dr Sai Mauk Kham on Sunday inspected the renovation and expansion work at Yangon General Hospital, with officials expounding construction work under way.

The vice president urged Yangon Region Chief Minister U Myint Swe, Hospital's Medical Superintendent Dr Hla Myint and officials of subcommittees for speedy completion of the construction work.

Dr Sai Mauk Kham toured the hospital wards, meeting patients and fulfilling their needs. He comforted a patient whose left hand was severed from just below the arm. It took nearly six hours to reattach the severed hand.

Extensive renovations to the health facility are aimed to provide low-cost but better health care to the general public.—MNA



Vice President Dr Sai Mauk Kham views progress of installation of medical equipment at modern operation theatre at five-storey extended building of Yangon General Hospital.—MNA

INSIDE

Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann discusses regional development in Bago Region

PAGE-3

Myaungmya residents unveil Deedok U Ba Cho statue

PAGE-3

Outcome of Pang Seng conference and the true identity of UWSA

PAGE-9

SECM to announce listing criteria, securities companies for Yangon Stock Exchange

By Aye Min Soe

YANGON, 17 May — The Securities and Exchange Commission of Myanmar will announce listing criteria and securities companies for the Yangon Stock Exchange in the near future, according to SECM.

The Yangon Stock Exchange will debut in October this year.

Union Minister for Finance U Win Shein called on the commission for timely completion of selecting the companies as he made tour of inspection Sunday of a building where the Yangon Stock Exchange will be established.

Establishing the stock exchange is not just for show and the project is being implemented in the interest of the country and the peoples, said the union minister.

The Securities and Exchange Commission of Myanmar has received 57 service provider applications for the Yangon Stock Exchange, SECM chairman and deputy minister for Fi-

nance Dr Maung Maung Thein said last month.

Among the applications, 20 are for underwriters, 30 for consultants or advisers and seven for brokers and dealers.

SECM invited applications for the service licenses — underwriters, dealers, brokers and consultants — setting different levels of capital requirements for each in January.

A license for under-

writing requires K15 billion (around \$15 million); for dealing K10 billion; for brokerages K7 billion and for consultancy business K30 million as paid-up capital, according to the deputy minister.

An underwriting license, which tops the capital requirements, also allows operation in the other three businesses areas.

The four kinds of service providers are also al-

lowed to have joint ventures with foreign firms in anticipation of speeding up the development of the stock market.

The Yangon Stock Exchange, Myanmar's first, will have the abbreviation YEX.

Japan's Tokyo Stock Exchange and Daiwa Institute of Research Ltd signed an agreement with the Myanma Economic Bank to (See page 3)



People walk past the former building of the Central Bank of Myanmar which is being renovated for the Yangon Stock Exchange (YEX).

PHOTO: AYE MYIN SOE

Samsung debuts Galaxy Tab A series in Myanmar

By Khaing Thanda Lwin



YANGON, 17 May — Samsung Myanmar on Sunday has launched two new tablets in Myanmar.

Its new 8-inch and 9.7-inch Galaxy Tab A tablets are priced at K376,000 and K430,000 each respectively, but a discount and a 16-GB microSD card will be offered to buyers of the latest gadgets on 17 and 18 May.

The new tablets come with S Pens, and their 4:3 screen aspect ratio will enchant tablet users with particular interest in e-book readers, games and internet surfing, said U Zarni Win Htet, head of IM Channel at Samsung Myanmar.

2 GB of RAM, 16 GB of storage, a 5 MP back

camera and 2 MP selfie shooter are all in the new version. Both tablets can extend their external storage to up to 128 GB. The new tablets with 7.5 mm in dimension are six grams lighter than their earlier versions.

Galaxy Tab A series are available in Samsung brand shops and retail mobile shops across the country starting today. Both tablets come in two colours—white and smoky Titanium.

Samsung's latest products can draw the attention of tablet lovers as they have such functions as quick connect and smart switch, a Samsung official said.

GNLM

Diversity Conference-Myanmar contributes to ceasefire and peace process



MANDALAY, 17 May — The Myanmar-US Friendship Association held a diversity conference-Myanmar at the hall of Jefferson Centre of the US Embassy at the corner of 26th and 71st streets in Chanayethazan Township, Mandalay, from 15 to 17 May.

Treasurer U Myo Win of Myanmar-US Friendship Association extended greetings while Public Affairs Officer Mr. Satrajit Sardar of the US Embassy made a speech.

Abbot of Asia Alin-

yaung Monastery Bhaddanta Cindata from PyinOoLwin Township, Rev U Zaw Win Aung of Christian Churches, U Thein Win Aung of Islamic organizations and U Aung Naing of Hindu religious organizations exchanged views on interfaith relations.

In the afternoon, Dr Tin Maung Kyi discussed preservation of historical heritages.

The conference was aimed at solving the difficulties, exchanging views on diverse sector, overcoming challenges and contributing to ceasefire and peace process in the nation.

Thiha Ko Ko (Mandalay)

People get clean water in rural areas of Taungtha Tsp



TAUNGTHA, 17 May — As the hot summer causes drying lakes and wells one after another in Taungtha Township this year, Mandalay Region, wellwishers donate drinking water to the local residents.

On 16 May morning, township authorities and departmental officials distributed 2,100 bottles of purified drinking water to the local residents in Kyaukchaw, Byaingin, Thantan and Hsimeekan villages.

In the afternoon, the township officials supplied water to local people in Hsekon, Khozin and Wagyi-aing villages. While supplying water to the locals, the rain showered in the villages, so local people were happy in raining.

Ohawthan (Taungtha)

Literacy campaign helps local residents become literates

MYITKYINA, 17 May — A ceremony to honour those who participated in the basic literacy campaign 2015 was held at the central hall of Myitkyina University in Myitkyina, the capital of Kachin State, on 15 May morning.

On behalf of the Chief Minister of Kachin State, State Minister for Social Affairs Dr Daw Bauk Ja spoke on the occasion and presented certificates of honour to two faculty members and 17 students through Dean of Mathematics Department

Professor Dr Ohnma Aye. Kachin State Education Director U Myint Zaw reported on activities of literacy campaign in the state. The state education director presented completion certificate of teaching session to trainees through trainee Daw Kaw Bu.

Thanks to teaching of students and faculty members from Myitkyina University, a total of 156 local illiterates became literates in Myitkyina Township after the campaign.

Moe Kya (Myitkyina)

Myanmar, Japanese businessmen to cooperate in SME development in Mandalay



MANDALAY, 17 May — A delegation led by Managing Director Mr Takeshi Shiraishi of Nagata Myanmar Co., Ltd. of Japan held a meeting with Vice Chairman U Kyaw Min Oo of Mandalay Region Chambers of Commerce and Industry and party at Yadanabon Super Centre at the corner of 78th and 34th streets in Chanayethazan Township on 15 May to discuss prospects of Myanmar and Japan on business

cooperation between the two countries.

They also focused on development of small-and medium-scale industries in Mandalay.

The Japanese guests donated garbage bins to be used for beautifying Mandalay. They will cooperate with Mandalay City Development Committee in city development tasks.

Maung PyiThu (Mandalay)

Action to be taken against those who throw waste water into Taungthaman Lake

AMARAPURA, 17 May — Taungthaman Lake in Amarapura Township, Mandalay District is one of tourist attractions in Mandalay Region.

Fisheries Department releases fingerlings into the lake and conserve fish species for local food sufficiency.

On 12 and 30 April, waste water was harmful to environment of the lake, causing death of fish due to lack

of oxygen.

As a result, the Fisheries Department warned the entrepreneurs and owners of factories, industries and restaurants around the lake not to throw waste water into the rivers, creeks, lakes, dams and reservoirs. If not, action will be taken against offenders under the Fresh Water Fish Law and regional laws.

Maung Pyi Thu (Mandalay)



Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann discusses regional development in Bago Region

NAY PYI TAW, 17 May — Speaker of the Pyithu Hluttaw Thura U Shwe Mann met with local people at Ottamayon Sarthintaik monastery in Kyauktaga, Bago Region, and discussed regional development on Saturday morning.

Present at the meeting were Chief Minister U Nyan Win of Bago Region, Chairman U Thein Swe of the Pyithu Hluttaw Transport, Communication and Construction Committee, Pyidaungsu Hluttaw representatives, officials and local people.

At the meeting, the speaker urged officials to exert efforts for the development of the town as if they were natives.

Then, local people reported to the speakers on requirements for regional

development and the chief minister attended to the needs.

After the meeting, the speaker greeted local people warmly.

Before the meeting, the speaker paid homage to abbots at Ottamayon Sarthintaik and donated offertories.

Then, the speaker and party proceeded to Nyaunglebin and met with local people at Thiri Yadana Hall. At the meeting, the speaker said that he came there to listen to the voice of the public and explained the tasks and procedures of Hluttaws.

Then, officials reported to the speaker on requirements for regional development.

The chief minister and officials fulfilled the requirements.



After the meeting, the speaker greeted local people frankly.

Before the meeting,

the speaker paid homage to abbots in Nyaunglebin and donated offertories.

MNA

Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann meets local residents at Thiri Yadana Hall in Nyaunglebin.—MNA

Myaungmya residents unveil Deedok U Ba Cho statue



Deedok U Ba Cho statue in Myaungmya.—SPED

MYAUNGMYA, 17 May — Union Minister for Sports U Tint Hsan delivered an address at the opening ceremony of Deedok U Ba Cho statue and square in Myaungmya, Ayeyawady Region, on 16 May.

In commemoration of late Deedok U Ba Cho, the union minister and wife attended the ceremony to offer provisions to 344 monasteries from the township. Ayeyawady Region

minister for Finance U Win Ko Ko, Myaungmya District's deputy commissioner U Htwe Myint, Township Administrator U Myint Sein and officials unveiled the statue.

At Naungyoe Hall, the union minister met more than 2,700 education staff and teachers and village administrators, urging them to nurture students to become outstanding persons of the nation.

SPED

Government to spend over K 3.5 billion to upgrade airports in Rakhine State

NAY PYI TAW, 17 May — The government has appropriated over K 3.5 billion to upgrade airports in Rakhine State including Sittway, Kyaukpyu, Thandwe, Manaung and MraukU in 2015-2016 fiscal year.

The government spent over K 3 billion to expand

SECM to announce . . .

(from page 1)

help establish and run the exchange in December, 2014.

The market will be run

the runway of Sittway Airport so that Embraer 190-AFs and A 320-100s can land and take off from the airport during 2013-2014 and 2014-2015 fiscal years. For the safety of aircraft, Doppler VHF Omnidirectional Range (DVOR) and Distance Measuring Equip-

by Yangon Stock Exchange Joint-Venture Company, with a 51-percent stake owned by the Myanma Economic Bank under Myanmar's Finance Ministry and the remainder by the Japanese partners.—GNLM

ment will be installed at the airport. Plans are underway to construct a new airport building for the airport.

The runway of Kyaukpyu Airport has also been expanded since 2012-2013 fiscal year, spending over K 4 billion, and expansion work of the runway will be completed in 2015-2016 fiscal year.

Maintenance tasks of Thandwe Airport has been carried out for a number of years as the airport is mainly used by tourists who visit Ngapali Beach. The government will spend over K 2

billion for the airport in the fiscal year.

Manaung Airport is mainly used for travelers from far-flung areas of Rakhine State and the government spent K 3 billion to upgrade the airport in 2013-2014 fiscal year. Remaining task of the project will be implemented in 2015-2016 fiscal year.

The number of flights has also increased in Rakhine State and arrangements have been made to add more flights from and to various cities in the country.

Than Oo (Lemyathna)

125 Myanmar fishing slave workers arrive back home



NAY PYI TAW, 17 May — Indonesian and Myanmar governments cooperated in transport back of 125 Myanmar fishermen who were forcibly enslaved in human trafficking in Benjina Island of Indonesia and the first batch of the victims arrived back in Yangon on 14 May.

With the assistance of Kanbawza Bank Ltd, Myanmar fishing slave workers were transported to Yangon free of charge by MAI's chartered flight. The bank will provide assistance for transport of remaining slave workers on 17, 18 and 22 May.

Kanbawza Bank also donated cost for transport of more than 3,000 Myan-

mar victims from Malaysia to Myanmar as well as

about 500 Myanmar fishermen from Port Blair of

India to Myanmar by MAI chartered flights.—MNA



Firefighters led by Head of Township Fire Services Department U Than Htaik, totalling 50 carried out sanitation on the platform of Sakataung Pagoda in Ye, Mon State, on 13 May afternoon.

PHOTO: HTUT HTUT (YE)

Bawlakhe Township Hospital to get equipment and medicines soon

BAWLAKHE, 17 May — Union Minister for Health Dr Than Aung met health staff from Bawlakhe region at the Township People's Hospital in Bawlakhe, Kayah State, on 13 May.

Township Medical Of-

ficer Dr Hsan Win reported on common diseases in the region and requirements of hospital equipment and medicines.

The union minister kept a promise to provide assistance for improvement of health staff as much

as possible.

Also present at the meeting were Kayah State Minister for Social Affairs U Koe Rei, Tactical Operations Commander Lt-Col Hlaing Win and departmental officials.

Hla Shwe (IPRD)

Library ready to provide service to locals



NAY PYI TAW, 17 May — "Alinpya" Library was put into service in Aungthukha Village in Dekkhinathiri Township on 16 May.

Authorities, Township Administrator U Nyi Nyi, Staff Officer of Dekkhina District Information and

Public Relations Department Daw Thida Aye and library committee member U Hla Moe formally opened the library.

Deputy Director Daw Thin Thin Zin of Nay Pyi Taw Information and Public Relations Department spoke about advantages of

reading and important role of the library.

Well-wishers donated furniture and books for the library through officials.

The 22-foot-long and 15-foot-wide library was constructed with K4.2 million fund.

Shwe Kokko

Electrification improves living standard of rural people

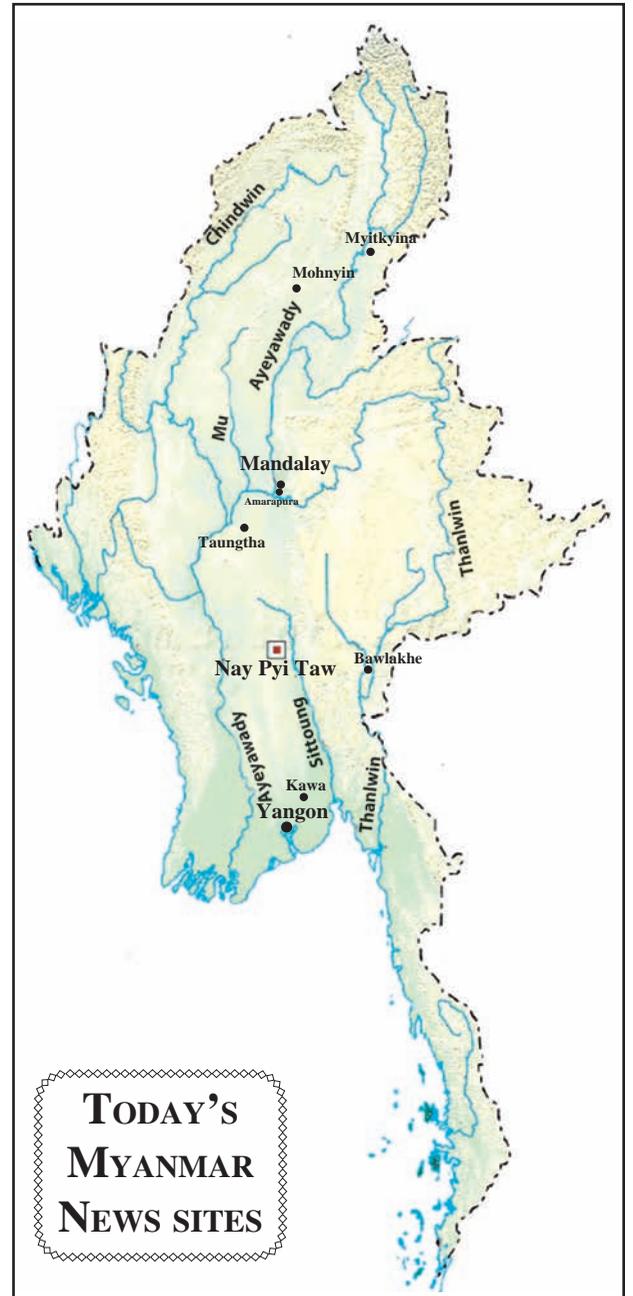
KAWA, 17 Mat — A ceremony to launch supply of electricity on a self-reliant basis was held in Aleywa Village-tract in Kawa Township, Bago Region, on 12 May.

With the assistance of Kayin State Chief Minister U Zaw Min and Bago Region Chief Minister U Nyan Win, local authorities installed two transformers to electrify 270 houses in the village, spending K180 million.

Two chief ministers and officials switched on the supply of electricity to the local residents.

Chief Minister U Nyan Win pressed the button to launch the transformers. Chairman of the electrification committee U Kyaw Naing Lwin spoke about the efforts of power supply.

Aung Thitsa (Bago)



Norwegian Ambassador visits Indawgyi Lake sanctuary in Kachin State, makes feasibility for environmental conservation

MOHNYIN, 17 May — Ministry of Environmental Conservation and Forestry of Myanmar and Norway's Ministry of Climate and Environment are jointly implementing the Norway-Myanmar environmental cooperation project.

Norwegian Ambassador Ms Annolestad and five Norwegian representatives

visited Indawgyi Lake and its surrounding villages for conservation of Indawgyi Lake sanctuary.

Sanctuary Warden U Htay Win of the lake spoke about progress of conserving the lake.

In meeting with local residents and members of social organizations in Lonton and Lonsant villages, the Norwegian Amba-

sador said that they have a plan to provide technical assistance for conservation of Indawgyi Lake and watershed forests. The ambassador stressed the need for local residents to carry out protection of natural resources, adding that a plan is underway to conduct capacity enhancement course for the locals.

GNLM-001



REGIONAL



Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi (L) unveils a plaque with Xu Ningsheng, president of Fudan University, as he attends the inauguration for the Centre for Gandhian and Indian Studies at Fudan University in Shanghai, east China, on 16 May, 2015.—XINHUA

Singapore's president kicks off state visit to France

SINGAPORE, 17 May — Singapore's President Tony Tan Keng Yam is set to make a state visit to France from Sunday to Saturday to mark the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations between the two countries.

French President Francois Hollande will host a state dinner for President Tan in Paris while French Prime Minister Manuel Valls will host a working

lunch, said Singapore's Ministry of Foreign Affairs in a Press statement.

In Paris, Singapore's President Tan will also meet President of the French Senate Gerard Larcher and Mayor of Paris Anne Hidalgo. President Tan will visit the Laboratoire Kastler Brossel, a research facility with links to National University of Singapore, Nanyang Technological University, and the "Secret Archipelago"

art exhibition, which is part of the Singapore en France — le Festival.

Singapore's President Tan will head to Bordeaux to meet Mayor Alain Juppé and attend a dinner hosted by Matthias Fekl, French minister of State for Foreign Trade, the Promotion of Tourism and French Nationals Abroad.

He will also meet Singaporean personnel and their families based at the Cazaux Air Base, which

lies just outside of Bordeaux.

President Tan's wife Mary Tan, Minister for Communications and Information Yaacob Ibrahim, Minister for Transport and Second Minister for Defence Lui Tuck Yew and members of Parliament Ellen Lee and Baey Yam Keng will accompany with President Tan during the seven-day state visit.

Xinhua

Cambodia deports Russian tycoon to Russia

PHNOM PENH, 17 May — Cambodian authorities deported a Russian tycoon back to his country on Sunday, two days after he was arrested on charges of overstaying his visa in the Southeast Asian country, a Cambodian police official told *Kyodo News*.

Sergei Polonsky, 43, was deported at 7:20 am and bound for Moscow via Vietnam, said Ouk Hai Sela, chief of the immigration department's investigation unit at the Interior Ministry.

Polonsky possessed weapons and caused disorder in the southwestern province of Sihanoukville where he reportedly owns some real estate, he said.

Sela also said authori-

ties have so far arrested 23 people who allegedly conspired with Polonsky, eight of whom are being detained at Phnom Penh's immigration department for further interrogation and could face deportation if they are found to be staying illegally in Cambodia or have committed social disorder.

The remaining 15 are detained by Sihanoukville province police, and 14 of them have presented documents and passports that show they can continue to live in Cambodia, according to provincial police chief Chuon Narin. One has yet to show his original passport.

Cambodian authorities arrested Polonsky on Friday on Koh Damlong island in

Sihanoukville together with five friends who were on a cruise to the island.

The tycoon's Cambodian lawyer, Benson Samay, hung up his phone on Sunday when contacted for comment on his client's case.

The arrest was made following a request dated 20 April made by the Cambodian Foreign Ministry to the Justice Ministry to examine Polonsky's case in response to a new extradition request by the Russian Embassy in Phnom Penh.

In April last year, Cambodia's top court denied an extradition request for Polonsky, wanted by the Russian government in an embezzlement case, as there

was no extradition treaty between the two countries. He had been arrested by the Cambodian police in November 2013, also in Sihanoukville, following a request by Russian authorities on suspicion of committing embezzlement in Moscow in 2008-2009, and was released on bail in January this year. He was on an international wanted list accused of defrauding dozens of people in a housing construction project, Russian media have reported.

According to Cambodian police sources, Polonsky swindled more than \$175 million from his partners working in construction projects in Moscow.

Kyodo News



People visit the Palace Museum, also known as the Forbidden City, in Beijing, capital of China, on 17 May, 2015. The Forbidden City will restrict the number of visitors to no more than 80,000 everyday starting from 13 June this year, or the 10th China Cultural Heritage Day, as a trial to reduce its serving pressure.—XINHUA

Vietnam inaugurates Uncle Ho's monument in Ho Chi Minh City

HO CHI MINH CITY, 17 May — General Secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam Central Committee Nguyen Phu Trong attended the inauguration ceremony of a monument dedicated to late President Ho Chi Minh here on Sunday.

Addressing the ceremony, Trong said the monument inauguration, which took place on the occasion of the 125th birthday of the Vietnamese hero of national liberalization, is an important event of political and cultural significance.

The 7.2-metre monument, including a 4.5-metre statue, is erected in front of the

office of the Ho Chi Minh City People's Committee at Nguyen Hue Square near the Nguyen Hue Street, Vietnam's sole pedestrian street.

The sculpture features the spirit and personality of Ho Chi Minh as well as his special love for local people, especially those from the city. Earlier, the statue of the late leader meeting children was relocated to the municipal Children's House.

Also on Sunday morning, party leader Trong and other Vietnamese and Ho Chi Minh City officials visited a photo exhibition themed "Uncle Ho with the South."—Xinhua

Voting begins on Osaka's metropolis plan

OSAKA, 17 May — Osaka voters went to the polls on Sunday to vote on Mayor Toru Hashimoto's proposal to reform the city administration into a metropolitan government similar to Tokyo's.

Osaka currently exists as the primary city in Osaka Prefecture and is split into 24 wards. Reform would see the city dissolved in April 2017 for reorganization into five special wards that would focus on providing welfare and other basic services, while leaving infrastructure and other wider-area services to the prefectural government.

Like those of Tokyo, the special wards would each have elected mayors and assembly members.

About 2.1 million residents of the city of Osaka are eligible to vote in the binding referendum.

A *Kyodo News* poll released last Sunday showed 47.8 percent of voters were opposed to the plan and 39.5 percent supported it.

Official campaigning for the referendum started 27



Voters fill in ballots at a polling station in Osaka's Fukushima Ward on 17 May, 2015, for a referendum on Mayor Toru Hashimoto's proposal to reform the city administration into a metropolitan government similar to Tokyo's.—KYODO NEWS

April, after a blueprint of the reform plan was approved by the prefectural and city assemblies in March.

Hashimoto, who served as governor of Osaka Prefecture from 2008 and then as mayor since 2011, has long been pushing for an overhaul of the administration in

western Japan's biggest city.

He has said the plan would cut costs by streamlining currently overlapping functions of the city and prefectural governments.

Hashimoto has vowed to retire from politics if his plan fails in the referendum. He is currently top adviser to

the Japan Innovation Party, the second-largest opposition party in the Diet.

The Osaka Restoration Association political group led by Hashimoto has said the reform could save the five special wards 270 billion yen (\$2.3 billion) over 17 years, including by privatizing the city subway and awarding garbage disposal to private contractors.

But other political groups including the country's ruling Liberal Democratic Party have insisted that many costs can be cut without reform. The parties have forecast that direct savings would be limited to about 100 million yen in a single year from merging redundant entities like the Tokyo offices of the city and prefecture.

With the transition itself thought likely to cost as much as 68 billion yen, opponents have slammed the plan as a waste of money, but Hashimoto remains adamant the costs will be easily reclaimed.

Kyodo News

Chinese president meets US secretary of state on Sept visit



Chinese President Xi Jinping (R) meets with US Secretary of State John Kerry in Beijing, capital of China, on 17 May, 2015.—REUTERS

BEIJING, 17 May — Chinese President Xi Jinping met with US Secretary of State John Kerry in Beijing on Sunday, discussing his forthcoming state visit

to the United States in September.

Recalling US President Barack Obama's visit to China in November last year, Xi said he looked

forward to continuing to talk with the US president in September in a "candid and in-depth" way on the bilateral ties and other major issues to further expand

cooperation and benefit the people of the two countries as well as the world at large.

The consensus between Xi and Obama to build a new model of major-country relationship is in the common interests of China and the United States, he said.

"In my view, the China-US relationship remains stable on the whole," Xi told Kerry during Sunday's meeting at the Great Hall of the People.

"The new type of China-US relationship has witnessed early harvest."

During the meeting he highlighted new progress on trade, investment, the number of visitors to each other's territory, energy, and military-to-military and people-to-people exchanges.

China and the United States have also been in close communication on major regional and global issues, said the Chinese

president, suggesting the two sides expand practical cooperation to make their new type of relationship more fruitful.

"Meanwhile, the two sides should manage, control and handle disputes in an appropriate way so that the general direction of the bilateral relationship will not be affected," said the president.

"The broad Pacific Ocean is vast enough to embrace both China and the United States," Xi reiterated.

He hoped that the two sides would work together to enhance mutual trust, reduce doubt, and boost cooperation through more dialogues, to ensure that the bilateral ties would consistently grow along the right track of the new type of major-country relationship.

Echoing Xi's evaluation of the bilateral ties, Kerry said the extensive cooperation between the United States and China

had shown the world the important roles of the two nations in addressing major international and regional issues.

It also proved that the two sides were able to manage their disputes in a matured manner, said the US official.

Kerry highlighted the cooperation between the two countries on climate change, fighting against Ebola and the Iranian nuclear issue, hoping for more cooperation between the two countries.

Kerry said President Obama looks forward to continuing to exchange views with President Xi on issues of common concern during his state visit to the United States in September, which the secretary of state said will be an important event for the bilateral ties.

The US will work together with China to make preparation for Xi's visit, Kerry said.—Xinhua

Plane crash kills four in US Texas

HOUSTON, 17 May — A family of four — two adults and two children — died in a small plane crash in the US state of Texas on Saturday afternoon, authorities said.

A single-engine Piper PA-24 with four people aboard crashed into a wooded area adjacent to a pet store's parking lot near San Antonio as it was departing from a private runway, a spokesperson from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) told the Houston Chronicle.

First responders arrived at the scene and found the plane engulfed in fire. Four victims, who were later identified as a family, were confirmed dead.

Local TV footage showed the wreckage mangled in a tree. Witnesses said the plane nose-dived down.

The cause of the crash remained unknown but an investigation by the Texas Department of Public Safety and FAA is underway.

Xinhua

Nepal faced with economic challenges after powerful quake

KATHMANDU, 17 May — The Nepalese government has painted a bleak picture for the country's economy, saying that almost all major economic fundamentals have been battered by the earthquake, local media reported on Sunday.

The Himalayan country's economy is expected to face a serious setback due to the powerful 7.9-magnitude earthquake which rattled the country on 25 April. The quake has killed nearly 8,500 people. "It's too early to calculate the exact damage and the impact of the earthquake on the economy. However, the economic growth target that we set earlier will be hard to achieve. The economic growth is going to fall from the projected rate," Baikuntha Aryal, joint secretary at Nepal's Ministry of Finance, told local newspaper Republica. Nepal has made a target to achieve economic growth of 4.5 percent in the current 2014/2015 fiscal year.

Immediately after the powerful quake, the Asian Development Bank revised its economic growth forecast for Nepal to 4.2 percent from its earlier projection of 4.6 percent for the fiscal year.

"The service sector including tourism and hospitality is likely to see sig-

nificant impact of the earthquake. There is no life in service sector activities till this date. The remaining two months will have significant impact of the growth target. This means it will be difficult to achieve the economic growth target in the remaining two months," said Aryal.

Similarly, inflation is expected to surpass the government target. In its growth projection for fiscal year 2014/2015, the government has set a target of containing inflation below 8 percent.

According to Ministry of Finance estimates, the quake and its subsequent flow of money as well as the supply side constraint is likely to push inflation above 8 percent. The trade deficit, which is "already very high", will also widen in the current fiscal year as agricultural as well as manufacturing production is expected to go down due to the earthquake, the report said, adding that the slowdown in manufacturing industry, and the loss of livestock and damage in arable land is likely to propel import and hit export, thereby widening trade deficit.

Meanwhile, the Nepalese government has said that the revenue collection will also suffer in the current fiscal year.—Xinhua

Abe vows to welcome tourists with more tax-free shops, speedy customs



Prime Minister Shinzo Abe answers reporters' questions during a visit on 16 May, 2015 to Mt Koya, a Buddhist pilgrimage site and tourist spot in Wakayama Prefecture. Abe said he wants to increase the number of tax-free stores in provincial cities around Japan and improve border facilities to attract more tourists from overseas.—KYODO NEWS

TOKYO, 17 May — Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said on Saturday he wants to increase the number of tax-free stores in provincial cities around Japan and improve border facilities to attract more tourists from overseas. Abe made the comments at a press conference during a visit to Mt Koya, a Buddhist pilgrimage site and tourist spot in western Japan's Wakayama Prefecture. An increasing number of for-

eign tourists are visiting Mt Koya for its key attraction Kongobuji, the head temple of Koyasan Shingon Buddhism. "I have seen how people from all over the world are coming together here, drawn by the beauty of Mt Koya," Abe said. This year marks 1,200 years since the establishment of Mt Koya by Japanese monk Kukai, who founded the Shingon school.

Abe expressed a de-

sire to expand customs and quarantine facilities at airports and seaports to speed up border procedures. The prime minister said he will instruct government agencies to include these points in an "action programme" to promote tourism. The government also aims to increase the number of overseas tourists visiting more regions of Japan under a new growth strategy to be compiled in June.

Kyodo News

US 'deeply concerned' over Mursi death sentence bid by Egyptian court

WASHINGTON, 17 May —The United States is "deeply concerned" about an Egyptian court decision to seek the death penalty for former President Mohamed Mursi, a State Department official said on Sunday.

The US criticism follows condemnations from Amnesty International and Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan after the court ruling on Saturday against the deposed president and 106 supporters of his Muslim Brotherhood in connection with a mass jail break in 2011. The ruling against Mursi is not final until 2 June. All capital sentences are referred to Egypt's top religious authority, the Grand Mufti, for a non-binding opinion, and are also subject to legal appeal.

"We are deeply concerned by yet another mass death sentence handed down by an Egyptian court to more than 100 defendants, including former President Mursi," the State Department official said, speaking on condition of anonymity. "We have consistently spoken out against the practice of mass trials and sentences, which are conducted in a manner that is inconsistent with Egypt's international obligations and the rule of law," he said.

The official, noted, however, that Saturday's death sentence ruling was "preliminary." Mursi and his fellow defendants were convicted on charges of killing and kidnapping policemen, attacking police facilities and breaking out of jail during the uprising.



Former Egyptian President Mohamed Mursi waves as he enters for his trial with other Muslim Brotherhood members at a court in the outskirts of Cairo, on 16 May, 2015. — REUTERS

Mursi, who became Egypt's first freely elected president in 2012 after the ouster of President Hosni Mubarak in a popular uprising, has said the court is not legitimate, describing proceedings against him as part of a coup by former army chief Abdel Fattah al-Sisi in 2013. Despite US lawmakers' concerns about that Egypt is lagging on democratic reforms, Egypt remains one of Washington's closest security allies in the region. Relations cooled after Mursi was overthrown by the military nearly two years ago, but ties with Sisi, his successor, have steadily improved.

In late March, US President Barack Obama lifted a hold on a supply of arms to Cairo, authorizing deliveries of US weapons valued at over \$1.3 billion.—Reuters

West clings to fraying Ukraine peace deal despite Kiev doubts

KIEV, 17 May —Western powers are clinging to a fraying peace deal in Ukraine and forcing Kiev to follow suit, even though Russian President Vladimir Putin shows no sign of wavering and NATO is warning that Moscow may be preparing for a new offensive. The United States and European Union are still backing the three-month old ceasefire, despite a growing feeling that it is in its death throes, telling Putin that sanctions will remain if he does not honour his promises.

This offers little consolation to Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko who, while under pressure at home over a steady loss of troops fighting pro-Moscow rebels in the east, has to keep in diplomatic step with the West whose political and financial help he needs. His feelings showed in Berlin on Wednesday when a German journalist suggested eastern Ukraine was relatively calm.

"I'd like to contradict that because Ukraine is paying a very high price today for this pseudo-ceasefire," he retorted, noting 83 Ukrainian servicemen had died since a second peace deal was signed in the Be-

larus capital of Minsk in February.

"Ukraine is losing heroes every day but we continue to absolutely support the Minsk agreements," he told ZDF TV.

Few people in Kiev believe Putin will lessen his support for the separatists in a conflict that has killed more than 6,100 people in just over a year. He may simply be waiting till the EU decides in June on extending sanctions on Russia's financial, defence and energy sectors before showing his hand.

While it has been sickly from birth, no-one wants to administer the last rites on the ceasefire.

"Based on the Minsk agreement from February, we have to note that we are not yet where we want to be. We still don't have a complete ceasefire," German Chancellor Angela Merkel said in Berlin alongside Poroshenko.

Lithuania's anti-Moscow president, Dalia Grybauskaitė, was blunter. "The ceasefire no longer exists," she told Reuters.

The Europeans in particular are labouring under an illusion. "They try to cling to this mirage and move things in that direc-



Russia's President Vladimir Putin (2nd L) shakes hands with his Ukrainian counterpart Petro Poroshenko, with France's President Francois Hollande (L) and Germany's Chancellor Angela Merkel standing nearby, as they take part in peace talks on resolving the Ukrainian crisis in Minsk, on 11 Feb, 2015.—REUTERS

tion," he said. "Ukraine's Western partners will not undertake anything new. They will try, to the very last, to revive the corpse called the Minsk agreements." Some commentators detected a softer tone when US Secretary of State John Kerry met Putin last week.

However, the United States has accused Russia of failing to withdraw heavy equipment such as air defence systems, tanks and artillery from eastern Ukraine in violation of the Minsk plan.

NATO's top commander, General Philip Breedlove, told the US Congress last month that

Greek PM warned lenders of not repaying IMF debt in May — report

ATHENS, 17 May — Greece's Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras had at one stage warned foreign creditors that Athens would not repay 750 million euros (546.33 million pounds) due to the IMF in May unless they provided it with immediate liquidity, the *Kathimerini* newspaper reported on Saturday.

Athens ultimately made the 12 May payment by emptying an International Monetary Fund holding account.

Citing European sources, the newspaper said Tsipras made the threat in a 8 May letter to EU Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker, IMF head Christine Lagarde and ECB President Mario Draghi.

The Greek government did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

In his letter, Tsipras said Greece was starved of domestic sources of liquidity as it has been meeting its domestic and foreign debt obligations despite not having received any aid under its 240 billion euro bailout since last August, the newspaper said.

To restore liquidity, Tsipras proposed the ECB raise Greece's treasury bill issuance ceiling; a partial disbursement of loan tranches worth 7.3 billion euros; the return of 1.9 billion euros in profits the ECB made by buying Greek bonds since 2010; and the return of 1.2 billion euros in the



Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras delivers a speech during the Economist Conference on "Europe: The comeback, Greece: How resilient?" in Athens on 15 May, 2015.—REUTERS

euro zone's bailout fund, the EFSF.

The letter was viewed as "possible bluff" and reinforced a climate of mistrust between the two sides, the newspaper said.

Greece's cash reserves are dwindling and negotiations between Tsipras's new left-led government and its lenders over a cash-for-reforms deal have been fraught with delays for months.

On Friday, Tsipras said the two sides had found some common ground, but the government would not back down from its red lines such as no cuts to wages and pensions.

Reuters

Pope Francis canonizes two Palestinian women

VATICAN CITY, 17 May — Pope Francis named two Palestinian women as saints on Sunday, in a ceremony in Saint Peter's Square just days after the Vatican formalised its de facto recognition of the State of Palestine.

The canonization of Sister Marie-Alphonsine Danil Ghattas, founder of the Sisters of the Most Holy Rosary of Jerusalem, and Maryam Baouardy, who founded a Carmelite convent in Bethlehem, was not directly connected with the Vatican's Wednesday announcement of a new accord with the State of Palestine. But the ceremony, attended by Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas and a delegation of senior clergy including the Lat-

in Patriarch of Jerusalem Fouad Twal, highlighted Pope Francis' longstanding drive to help embattled Christian communities in the Middle East.

Saint Peter's Square was decked out for the occasion with portraits of the Palestinians and two other newly sanctified nuns — the French Jeanne-Emilie de Villeneuve and Italian Maria Cristina of the Immaculate Conception Brando.

In a statement as he departed for the Vatican last week, Twal said Ghattas and Baouardy, who entered religious orders as teenagers in the late 1800s and died in 1927 and 1878 respectively, were an example for Christians, Muslims and Jews.—Reuters



General view of St Peter's square as Pope Francis leads a ceremony for the canonisation of four nuns in the Vatican City, on 17 May, 2015. —REUTERS

PERSPECTIVES

Monday, 18 May, 2015

Parliament and democracy

By Myint Win Thein

The word “parliament” literally means a group of people who are elected to make and change the laws of a country, according to some dictionaries. In addition, it also debates bills and raises questions on work of other branches of the state. For example, a parliament also works with other pillars of state like admin-

istrative and judicial branches through the checks and balances system in most democratic countries.

Therefore, it is undeniable that a parliament plays the most important role in a democracy and is the lifeblood of democracy. It can also be said that the parliament and democracy are the two sides of a coin. They cannot be strengthened separately. Therefore, it is important to pay due importance to a parliament, if a country is building a democratic system. The importance of a parliament can also be seen from the fact that most political analysts measure the strength of democracy of a country by studying how strong the country’s parliament is. They believe that the stronger the legislature, the stronger the democracy is.

Therefore, politicians are required to pay due respect to the parliament and everything said and done at parliament sessions should reflect the interests of the country and the people and truth. Otherwise, democracy will be undermined.

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.

On Turning Age 74

Tin Shein
CEO, MICPA

(Continued from 17-5-2015)

On the other hand, old age has its own compensations, too. When we reach old age, our minds have more or less matured through the life experiences we have piled up and our passions that have been burning in our younger days have already cooled. What we have thought to be important in our youth is no longer so in old age. Also, our jealousy, anger, greed, hatred, etc. that are considered as vices from the perspective of the Buddha’s teachings have gradually lessened as we grow older and older, even if they are not totally wiped out or got rid of. Once we are free from those vices, we will be able to live a more peaceful and happier life until our eyes are finally closed.

Now I would like to recount the experiences of my next-door neighbor, who was brought back from the edge of death, because he recalled one of the attributes of the Buddha. He was hospitalized at the Academy Medical Center in Yangon because of lung ailment, which had caused him labored breathing and pushed him to the very edge of death itself on the third day of hospitalization. He was taken to the intensive care unit. While in a state of semi-consciousness, he found himself in a strange place where big tongues of flames were thrown at him with such great force that he had a hard time fighting against them with sheets of glass. He also saw white-robed persons going upwards to the heaven above as well as ball-like creatures moving on a distant hill-side, which he

considered to be “pe-tas” our Buddhist monks often mentioned in their religious discourses. As he then remembered ‘Ah-ra-han’, one of the nine attributes of the Buddha, he recited it in his mind and the flames receded gradually until they disappeared totally from the scene. Afterwards he found himself in a big golden hall where he had the chance of paying homage to the sitting gilded image of the Buddha. Soon afterwards he came round to his senses. He believed that while on the verge of death when it was uncertain whether he would be allowed to live on or not, he was shown the places he would have to go to, if he were to meet his fate then — the hell, the abode of gods or the nether world. So, he was convinced that it was the very force of the merits he had gained through donations and good religious practices in the present life that had given him a new lease on life and had resolved to devote the remaining years of his life to doing meritorious deeds all the more by giving away to donation as much of his wealth as he could afford. From his experiences we must take lessons that meritorious deeds we have performed can save us even from the jaws of death at a crucial moment even in the present life. So let us resolve to do good deeds now as best we can to gain merits for passage into the world of ‘nats’(gods) after death. The other day I have had the chance to listen to a religious discourse by the Mahamyaing Sayadaw. He said that if we die with fear, we will surely go to hell; that if we die with

greed, we will be reborn in the world of ‘pe-tas’— creatures with large bodies but small mouths. Thus they suffer a constant state of starvation for as long as they are alive. And if we die with obsession with our material possessions, we will become small creatures around our house like mice, house lizards, etc. The only way to die, if we wish to escape from the lower planes of existence, is to breathe our last with thoughts of ‘dharma’. But to do so needs long years of practice in ‘vipassana’ meditation, as taught by our lord Buddha. Of course, it is a feat that can’t be achieved without hard work and strong determination and last but not least, good health. Here, I remember having read about a donation of Kyat 100,000 to Sayagyi U Thu Kha by Sayadaw Ashin Sandadika, one of the famous preachers of the Buddha’s teachings. One day that Sayadaw went to the house of U Thu Kha and donated Kyat 100,000 to him. Sayagyi was much taken by surprise that a monk should donate money to a lay man. The usual practice is for lay men to donate money or things to monks, not the other way around. Therefore, Sayagyi refused to accept the Sayadaw’s donation. At that, Sayadaw explained that as Sayagyi had pointed out in one of his books that religious practice should be pursued by any one when he was young, vigorous and in good health, he had followed Sayagyi’s advice, from which he had much benefited and that it was in appreciation of Sayagyi’s advice that Kyat 100,000

was offered in donation to him. Only then did Sayagyi U Thu Kha accept Kyat 100,000 from Sayadaw. Thus, it is clear that age 74 is already a bit too old to effectively pursue the Buddha’s vipassana meditation practice, because by that age one cannot persist in the meditation practice long enough at one sitting to attain concentration of mind that is so essential to vipassana meditation. Be that as it may, we have to engage in that religious practice as long as we are in good health, despite our age of 74 or whatever it is.

During 74 years of my life I have seen great events that have taken place in the history of the world: the Second World War, the Korean War that left Korea divided into two countries, the Vietnam War, the Middle-East conflict, the India-Pakistan War, the collapse of the Soviet Union, the rise of democracies in Eastern Europe, the Wars in Iraq and Afghanistan that

are still raging on, the rise of China to the status of a super power, to say nothing of the economic and financial crises the world has passed through occasionally. Strife and conflict are still going on in many parts of the world without any sign of their ending on the horizon. As for myself, I think it is quite fortunate that I was born and brought up in Myanmar, which is peaceable and stable enough, and in which the rule of law and order prevails, as compared with those regions mentioned above. If I were born in one of those reigns which are in a perpetual state of political unrest and racial conflict, my chances of living to see my 74th year are very slim. Another advantage of being born in Myanmar is that Buddhism — the religion that shows the way to the end of suffering — flourishes here. We would surely reap the benefits from the practice of the Buddha’s teachings, if we really pursue it with determination. It is up to us not to waste our precious time we are allowed to enjoy within the period of the Buddha’s

“sasana”. We must strive to gain the eye of wisdom or insight knowledge that will enable us to see things as they really are — i.e. that things are in a constant state of flux, arising and disappearing from moment to moment all the time and that nothing lasts forever in the natural scheme of things. That is, as far as my knowledge goes, the very essence of Buddhism. That insight knowledge can be achieved only through serious practice of vipassana meditation as taught by the Buddha. So, we must try our level best to practice it for as long as there is a spark of life left in us and do all we can to gain the eye of wisdom before death claims us, as Mogoke Sayadaw Gyi said in one of his discourses on “vipassana meditation.” But — it is a big “But” — it is one thing to make a decision, but another to put it into real practice. To get the most benefit, decision and implementation must be fused into one, which, however, may prove a harder task for most of us than we think.

Singapore firm conducts dredging to improve access to Yangon port

Kyaw The-ein (MNA)

YANGON, 17 May — Singapore-based shipping firm Starhigh Asia Pacific Pte Ltd recently completed a dredging project to improve access to Yangon Port at the inner bar known as Monkey Point, the company said.

The dredging, carried out in partnership with Myanmar Port Authority, has deepened the Yangon River near the port by 1.5 meters, from 3.5 m to 5.0 m, improving the navigability for ships and reducing traffic near the port, it said.

Vessels were previously able to exit and enter only during high tide due to the river’s shallow depth.

“We recognized that the dredging of

the river was a great opportunity to give back to the MPA and to the people of Myanmar,” said U Phone Khine Shwe, General Manager, Starhigh Asia Pacific Pte., Ltd.

The general manager said the company had conducted the dredging at its own cost as “an act of goodwill.”

“The project will also support the economic development of the country, as more ships will be able to enter and exit the port, increasing the rate of business in the country,” he added.

In addition to allowing vessels to access the port throughout the day, the deeper channel will enable entry of ships that were previously too large to enter the port.

ARTICLE

Outcome of Pang Seng conference and the true identity of UWSA

Aung Zeya

A communique was issued after the Fourth Ethnic Leaders' conference held at Pang Seng in Wa Autonomous Region from May 1-6. Much has been expected on the outcome of that particular conference by the public as a final step for nation-wide cease fire and the most probable follow-up of peace. Yet, to the dismay of all, the search for peaceful solution by the 12 ethnic armed groups reached nowhere and actually ended up in a demand for a Wa state by the UWSA.

In fact, the aim of that particular conference was to review the draft of Nation wide Ceasefire Agreement-NCA, worked out together by Union Peace Working Committee-UPWC and Nation-wide Ceasefire Co-ordination Team-NCCT and to listen to the ideas and advice of individual armed groups. Looking back at the whole peace process the UWSA- United Wa Solidarity Party was never involved in the discussion of the draft cease fire agreement and occasionally attended these meetings as an observer.

In this matter, it is quite questionable why the UWSA, which has never involved in the United Nationalities Federal Council-UNFC top level meetings, holds the conference of the final stage of the nation-wide cease fire agreement at their headquarters in Pang Seng.

It has been alarmingly reported that U Bao Yu Xiang, Commander-in-Chief of the United Wa Solidarity Army-UWSA, demanded the attending ethnic armed group leaders to recommend a notion to upgrade the Wa Autonomous Region into a Wa State. As a result, it has been reported that there were heated debates pointed out by the ethnic armed group leaders that the whole public of the Union of Myanmar and even the oppositions would never accept that notion and that this could be the start of the disintegration of the Union.

It came as a surprise that in the paragraph 4 of the communique it was written that "Myanmar Army's violation of human rights and harsh treatment on the

people in regions of Ethnic minorities, especially in war zones is strongly condemned and it is demanded that it must be controlled so that these matters do not happen again" and which is quite the opposite of the reality in accusing the Myanmar Tatmadaw in these matters. The Myanmar Armed Forces which has been protecting the state and its citizens, and would never have done such acts and the accusing party—the Wa organization—also has to consider how much of its accusations are lawful and true in the first place.

The Wa organization was formed during the waning years of the Burma Communist Party- BCP on April 17, 1989 after occupying the headquarters of the BCP at Pang Seng. At first they declared that they would make peace with the government and live in harmony with the Tatmadaw, at the same time striving to be stronger by doing legal as well as illegal businesses.

The overall strength of the Wa army was just thousands when they revolted against the BCP.

The troop strength expanded after extensive manufacturing and distribution of illicit drugs and forced recruitment of school-age children, forced conscription of the locals— against all international and national legal norms— which is a clear violation of the human rights by the Wa leaders.

The region under the control of the UWSA and Mong La Army have been quite notorious since late seventeenth century as major opium production region to a world record and it still holds the title as the biggest manufacturing area of opium and Amphetamines.

Even the leader of the UWSA U Bao Yu Xiang and 21 others have rewards in millions of US dollars on their heads by US Drug Enforcement Agency as drug kingpins.

Of all the menace to mankind, illicit drugs are the greatest and most lethal to all and that's why all kinds of drugs are deemed as common enemy by the world body. Drug growing and abuse were legacies of the colonial rule with the worst impact morally, socially, economically, and militari-

ly. Consequently, countless lives of the promising youth were ruined by the illicit drugs. The Union of Myanmar in conjunction with other international bodies has been fighting drugs as a national responsibility. Tatmadaw has been involved in the eradication of illicit drugs and regards it as the protection of national interest.

Yet, in some remote areas many kinds of drugs have been grown, manufactured and distributed by some parties who care just their own selfish interests. The Autonomous region of Wa became the largest region of manufacturing illicit drugs.

When hearing the word "UWSA", it is seen associated with all kinds of drugs by the world. If one tries to Google or yahoo or use any search engine UWSA could be seen associated with all kinds of drug related activities. UWSA leaders are still on the most wanted list by the US police with million dollar rewards.



It is quite evident that the Wa leaders who are infamous for their drug related activities try their best to cover their true identity with the Pang Seng Conference.

On the account of falsely accusing the Myanmar Armed forces members of human rights violation and harsh treatment of the minorities, it is a fact that all armed forces members have to follow the military law and discipline as well as the civilian laws and the international laws also.

Law of Armed conflict-LOAC and International Humanity Law-IHL defined that humanity means prohibition of using weapons and ammunitions as well as military tactics so as to avoid unnecessary sufferings towards the non-combatant civilians. In

war zones, Tatmadaw has always acted in accordance with these laws, by transporting non-combatants to safe areas, screening and arresting armed insurgents in the disguise of civilian non-combatants, counter attacking insurgents who did harm the national sovereignty and the livelihood of the populace. Thus, it is quite obvious that there can be no acts of human rights violations as accused and speculated.

The UWSA neither accept the formation of Border Guard Forces nor allow the 2010 nation-wide election to be held in their autonomous region area. Even for this conference the Government of the Union of Myanmar informed them not to invite the insurgent groups who has been fighting the Tatmadaw which they ignore and invited those groups.

In careful analysis of the behavior of the UWSA, it is quite evident that they are out of Central government control and with the expansion of their troop



also becoming Chinese.

Now is the time to monitor if they all are real ethnic Wa tribesmen or if they are (Chinese) people pretending to be (Was) and trying to use Wa image for their own selfish interests. UWSA is known to be running weapons manufacturing factories and also in possession of anti aircraft missile. News reports also indicated that they are in the possession of helicopters and armoured cars with the help of their friends across the border. Their army is reported to have a force of 30,000 troops with another 10,000 in reserve.



The Government allowed the Wa's an autonomous region due to their population base. Getting stronger everyday with drug money and other illegal businesses, they now have the confidence to challenge the central government by demanding for a state. With this last demand it cannot be wrong to assume that UWSA is in total defiance of the government of the Union of Myanmar and willing to engage a military challenge.

Reports have emerged about thousands of tons of illicit drugs trapped in Kokang rebel area jointly owned by UWSA, MN-DAA and NDAA because of the fightings in Laukkai where government forces are launching military operations against Kokang Rebels lead by Peng Jiasheng.

Earlier expected as a quick victory by Peng Jiasheng, the war expenses rose as the battles dragged on and mounting to USD 1.5 billion, up until now.

Recent reports indicated that to pay for medical expenses for wounded soldiers getting treatment at Namsam hospital in China and for compensation of the killed mercenaries, it became very urgent for Peng Jiasheng to sell the trapped drugs and Wa organizations have already agreed to take responsibility of selling-out the drugs. The Myanmar public has already realized that there cannot be

smoke without fire and that this news is highly probable. Ethnic Leaders' Pang Seng conference could also be a mask for (selling out and distribution) of the trapped drugs.

While all the public from all walks of life in Myanmar are happy and rejoiced for the near hope of a Nation-wide ceasefire agreement after the draft of Nation-wide Ceasefire Agreement-NCA, worked out together by Union Peace Working Committee UPWC and Nationwide Ceasefire Co-ordination Team-NCCT was signed, the erroneous behaviour of the UWSA under the pretext of the Pang Seng conference is in total contrast to the peace process of the Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

Car bomb on EU vehicle kills at least three in Afghan capital



US soldiers arrive at the site of an attack in Kabul, Afghanistan on 17 May, 2015.

REUTERS

KABUL, 17 May — A suicide car bomber rammed a European Union vehicle near the main airport in Afghanistan's capital on Sunday, killing at least three

people in the latest attack in the city, officials said.

The Taliban claimed responsibility for the attack on the European Union Police Mission in Afghanistan

(EUPOL), which advises Afghan law enforcement authorities.

The insurgents have launched a wave of attacks around the country since

the drawdown of most foreign troops last year to a small training force.

EUPOL spokeswoman Sari Haukka-Konu confirmed that one of the mission's vehicles was hit by an explosion near Kabul airport.

She said all the EUPOL personnel "are in a safe place" with non-fatal injuries, but another person traveling in the vehicle was killed. She did not give the person's nationality.

Police spokesman Ebadullah Karimi said a suicide bomber in a Toyota Corolla rammed a foreign vehicle on the road from Kabul's main airport to a NATO military installation nearby.

He said at least two Afghan civilian bystanders were killed and 18 people were wounded.

The bomber struck about 200 metres from the

main airport entrance along the road leading to NATO's adjacent base. Reuters TV footage showed the mangled remains of the car.

Rescuers carried wounded Afghan civilians from the scene, which police cordoned off.

Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid claimed responsibility saying that two vehicles were destroyed and seven foreign troops were killed. The insurgents frequently report inflated casualties in their attacks.

The capital has seen a new surge in major attacks over the last two weeks after a relative lull since January.

On Wednesday night, gunmen attacked a popular guesthouse ahead of a musical concert and killed 14 people including nine foreign citizens.

And twice in a week,

suicide car-bombers targeted buses carrying employees of the Afghan attorney general's offices, killing four people.

The Taliban claimed all of the attacks.

The insurgents seek to re-establish their hard-line Islamist regime more than 13 years after it was toppled in a US-led military intervention for sheltering the al-Qaeda planners of the 11 September, 2001, attacks on American cities.

The Taliban have been seeking to gain new ground since the drawdown of foreign forces last year to a training force of about 12,500.

The NATO-trained Afghan police and army have struggled to prevent attacks and are engaged in a standoff with Taliban fighters on the outskirts of the northern city of Kunduz.—Reuters

At least 10 killed in overnight fighting in Yemen's Taiz

CAIRO, 17 May — At least 10 people were killed in overnight battles in the Yemeni city of Taiz between Houthis and militiamen, residents and medical sources said on Sunday.

The fighting in Taiz comes despite a five-day humanitarian truce which began on Tuesday to distribute aid to the millions deprived of food, fuel and medicine by weeks of fighting. Saudi Arabia, leading a coalition of Arab states backed by the West, has pounded Iranian-allied Houthi forces and fighters loyal to Yemen's former leader Ali Abdullah Saleh since 26 March, aiming to restore President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi.

Some fighting also took place in the city of Dhalea on Saturday night

but there was no immediate information on casualties.

A conference between Yemeni political groups has been scheduled by President Hadi's government for Monday in Riyadh after the ceasefire ends.

The conference was rejected by both the Houthis and fighters loyal to former president Saleh, meaning it will not provide an opportunity for peace talks.

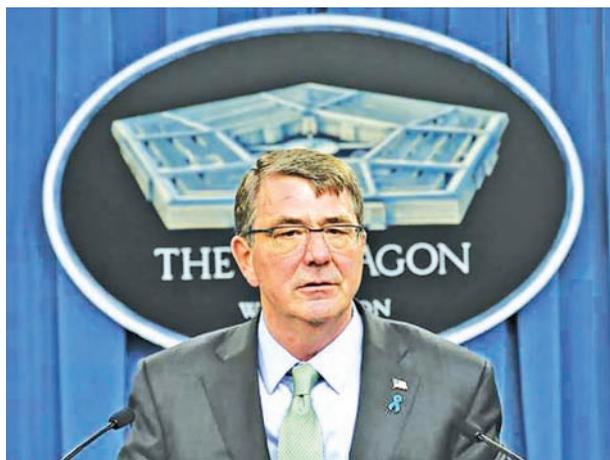
However, some leading figures from Saleh's political party, the General People's Congress (GPC), have gone to Riyadh and pledged loyalty to Hadi's government.

Those figures issued a statement late on Saturday asking for Saleh to step down as president of the GPC and declared they would take part in the Riyadh talks.—Reuters



Fighters of the Popular Resistance Committees man a checkpoint in Yemen's southwestern city of Taiz on 14 May, 2015.—REUTERS

US conducts raid in Syria, says it kills senior Islamic State leader



US Defence Secretary Ash Carter

WASHINGTON, 17 May — American special operations forces killed a senior Islamic State leader in a raid in Syria, US officials said on Saturday, an operation that marked a departure from Washington's strategy of relying primarily on air strikes to target militants there.

Delta Force commandos used UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters and V-22 Osprey tiltrotor aircraft to punch deep into eastern Syria from Iraq. They engaged in a firefight and hand-to-hand combat with Islamic State fighters, killed a key figure in the group named as Abu Sayyaf and captured his wife, US officials said.

The officials described Sayyaf, a Tunisian, as an Islamic State commander who helped manage the group's black-market sales of oil and gas to raise funds.

The officials said President Barack Obama ordered the overnight operation, which killed about a dozen Islamic State fighters and had been planned for several weeks.

It marked the first known US special forces operation inside Syria apart from a failed mission last year to rescue US and other foreign hostages held by Islamic State in northeastern Syria.

Wary of the United States getting pulled deeper into Middle East conflicts, Obama has promised not to commit major ground forces in the fight against Islamic State, which has seized swathes of Syria and Iraq. But he has left open the prospect of special forces raids.

It was not immediately clear if this one marked the start of a new chapter in Syria.

US and Arab forces have carried out almost daily air raids against hardline Islamist militant groups in Syria including Islamic State since last September, and US-led forces are also targeting the group in Iraq.

Defence Secretary Ash Carter said the operation was intended to capture Abu Sayyaf but he was killed "when he engaged US forces." His wife, Umm Sayyaf, was captured, then placed in US military detention in Iraq and was being questioned about Islamic State operations and hostages held by the group.

No US forces were killed or wounded during the operation, Carter said.

"The operation represents another significant blow to ISIL, and it is a reminder that the United States will never waver in denying safe haven to terrorists who threaten our citizens, and those of our friends and allies," Carter said, using an acronym for the Islamic State organization. Local Syrian sources contacted by Reuters said two other senior Islamic State operatives, a Syrian and a Saudi, were also killed alongside Abu Sayyaf. The raid lasted no more than half an hour, according to the sources.

The accounts could not be independently verified. US officials had no immediate comment on whether

other senior Islamic State militants were killed in the raid.

The raid in Syria came at a time when Islamic State, which has declared a caliphate in areas it controls and has carried out beheadings and massacres, has scored high-profile gains in Iraq and made advances in Syria.

Islamic State militants raised their black flag over the local government headquarters in the Iraqi city of Ramadi on Friday and claimed victory after overrunning most of the provincial capital.

If Ramadi were to fall it would be the first major city seized by the Sunni insurgents in Iraq since security forces and paramilitary groups began pushing them back last year.

US House of Representatives Speaker John Boehner said he extended his "gratitude and continued support" for the US troops involved in the Syria raid. But Boehner, a Republican, said he was "gravely concerned" by Islamic State's advances in Ramadi, which he said "threatens the stability and sovereignty of Iraq, which is vital to America's interests." Hawkish Republican critics of Obama, a Democrat, say he has not acted forcefully enough to rein in the rise of Islamic State.

Reuters

BUSINESS & HEALTH

Mozart-loving chickens may answer quest for healthier nugget

YONG PENG, (Malaysia), 17 May — In barns filled with classical music and lighting that changes to match the hues outside, rows of chickens are fed a diet rich in probiotics, a regimen designed to remove the need for the drugs and chemicals that have tainted the global food chain.

As food giants face growing pressure to offer healthier produce, Southeast Asian poultry firm Kee Song Group says its use of “good” bacteria in feed and water means it can meet one of the industry’s biggest challenges: how to mass produce drug and hormone-free poultry at a reasonable price.

A series of scandals in the last few years from melamine-tainted milk powder in China, horse meat supplied as beef in Europe and

growth drugs causing lameness in US cattle has triggered a consumer backlash over food standards and safety.

Recently, Tyson Foods Inc pledged to eliminate the use of human antibiotics in chicken by 2017, one of the most aggressive timetables yet by a US poultry firm.

The top American poultry producer, which supplies fast-food chains such as McDonald’s Corp, is among a number of groups globally incorporating probiotics into feed.

“For meat producers, reputation risks are becoming stronger driving companies to focus on safe ingredients specially in Europe and the United States,” said Pawan Kumar, director for food and agricultural research at Rabobank in Singapore.



A worker feeds chickens as classical music by Mozart play in the background at Kee Song Brothers’ drug-free poultry farm in Yong Peng, in Malaysia’s southern state of Johor on 16 April, 2015.—REUTERS

Kee Song says the cost to produce drug-free chickens using probiotics is now only 10-12 percent more than using antibiotic-fed poultry. It sells these birds at a 30 percent premium in stores, far less than expensive free-range organic chicken.

The firm annually produces around 4 million drug-free birds at its Malaysian farms in Yong Peng, 125 km north-west of Singapore, and aims to expand sales to China and the West.

“Probiotics, either alone or in combination with essential oils and

organic acids, are at the forefront of international approaches to replace antibiotics,” said Wayne Bryden, Professor of Animal Science at the University of Queensland.

Probiotics populate the gut with healthy bacteria in a bid to curb bad bacteria, while oils and organic acids are also often included in feed to aid digestion.

A team at the Australian university, partly funded by feed maker Ridley AgriProducts, have found in preliminary trials that using a probiotic can double the efficiency of use of protein from feed to boost weigh gain in livestock.

An estimated 80 percent of antibiotics used in the United States are administered to livestock with the use expected to surge by two thirds globally between

2010 and 2030.

Scientists are worried the practice could spur antibiotic-resistant superbugs.

McDonald’s has also pledged to eliminate chickens fed on human antibiotics at its US restaurants and is looking at similar steps in Asia.

“In Asia Pacific, we will be working with our supply partners and relevant experts to implement this enhanced measure,” a company spokesperson said via email.

While demand for healthier products is increasing fast in the West, some experts say that in parts of Asia customers will not be prepared to pay more for drug-free poultry, though China could be a promising market after high-profile food scares.

Reuters

Honda Motor to recall 11,381 cars in India to replace air bags



A Honda dealership sign is shown at a car lot in Carlsbad, California on 5 Nov, 2014.—REUTERS

NEW DELHI, 17 May — Honda Motor Co’s (7267.T) local unit will recall 11,381 vehicles in India to replace potentially faulty air bags, the company said in a statement on Friday, a day after its Japanese parent said it would recall 5 million vehicles for the same reason.

Honda Cars India Limited said it would replace the driver

side air bag inflator of 10,805 Accord sedans made in the years from 2003 to 2007, and passenger side air bag inflator on 2004 models of 575 CR-V sports utility vehicles and one Civic sedan.

The Indian company said no incident relating to this had been reported in the country so far.

Reuters

Gold steadies near three-month high after soft US data

NEW YORK / LONDON, 17 May — Gold held near three-month highs on Friday, heading for its biggest weekly gain since mid-January, as soft US consumer sentiment data weighed on the dollar and further diminished expectations for a near-term rise in US interest rates.

The dollar eased against the euro in the wake of the report, allowing gold to extend a three-day rally that took prices to their highest since mid-February on Thursday at \$1,227.04.

Spot gold XAU= was up 0.3 percent at \$1,224.53 an ounce at 2:33 pm EDT (1833 GMT), while US gold futures GCv1 for June delivery settled up 10 cents an ounce at \$1,225.30. Prices are up 3 percent this week.

Recent economic reports have supported market expectations that the economy is not strong enough for the Fed to start raising record-low rates from June.

Data released on Friday showed US consumer sentiment fell more than expected this month, though an earlier report showed manufacturing activity growth in New York State accelerated in May after weakening for three consecutive months.

“If the data remains soft in the United States, this rally has potential,” Commerzbank analyst Eugen Weinberg said. “When data is more on the soft side, the market will be looking for indications on when the Fed will be raising interest rates.”

Gold is sensitive to rate expectations, as higher rates increase the opportunity cost of holding non-yielding bullion, while boosting the dollar, in which it is priced.

“Our view is that the underlying data is getting weaker and it has been weak for a while but I think there are still some in the market that seem to be holding out hope that maybe we will

get a rebound in the US,” said Mike Dragosits, senior commodity strategist for TD Securities in Toronto.

“But that doesn’t appear to be the case and that’s why we’re trading at the top end of these ranges.”

Holdings in the world’s largest gold-backed exchange-traded fund, SPDR Gold Shares (GLD), fell 0.61 percent on Thursday to a four-month low of 723.91 tonnes.

Physical buying



A woman looks at a gold bangle inside a jewellery showroom at a market in Mumbai on 15 Jan, 2015.

REUTERS

China’s Internet bank launches its first loan product

SHENZHEN, 17 May — WeBank, China’s first Internet-based bank, launched its first loan product on Friday night.

The product, named “Weilidai”, provides small credit loans to us-

ers free of guarantee or collateral, said Chen Jing, an executive at WeBank.

It could provide 24/7 service via QQ wallet, a mobile payment service, and allows users to borrow and repay the money any-

time with a daily interest of around 0.05 percent.

The Internet bank does not specify the loan ceiling of this service. Currently, the service on trial is not available to all users.

Chen said WeBank will expand its use gradually in the future.

The bank will control default risks via big data collected by social networking platforms or by the third party.

In the next step, WeBank will launch more services related to money management and payment to meet the demands of users, said Chen.

Based in the southern city of Shenzhen, WeBank

has registered capital of 3 million yuan (482,276 US dollars). Tencent, which operates the popular messaging apps WeChat and QQ, holds a 30 percent majority stake in it.

Xinhua

Congratulations!

We would like to congratulate

U Aung Ko Win,

Chairman of Kanbawza Bank Ltd.,

on his achievement of **President's Special Honourary Award for Excellent Performance (Highest Taxpayer First Prize)** for three consecutive years, and

Daw Nang Lang Kham,

Chairperson of the Myanmar Brighter Future Foundation of the Kanbawza Group of Companies,

who has been awarded **President's Award for Excellent Performance (Best Philanthropic Organization Award)** at the Ceremony of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar President's Awards for Excellent Performance in Nay Pyi Taw on 15 May, 2015. We believe that both of you continue to be the highest taxpayers in the years to come and contribute toward the betterment of the society and the development of the country.



**Chairman and Working Committee
Myanmar Banks Association**

ADVERTISEMENT & GENERAL

MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION AND FORESTRY
MYANMA TIMBER ENTERPRISE
EXPORT MARKETING & MILLING DEPARTMENT
INVITATION FOR OPEN TENDER

1. MYANMA TIMBER ENTERPRISE WILL SELL TEAK & HARDWOOD ROUND LOGS AND SAWN TIMBERS BY OPEN TENDERS IN US DOLLARS. PARTICULARS OF THE OPEN TENDER SALES ARE AS FOLLOWS:

- (a) DATE & TIME - (22-5-2015) (12:00)Noon
(25-5-2015)(13:00)PM
- (b) COMMODITIES & VOLUME - TEAK LOGS (1626)TONS
TEAK HANDSAWN & CONVERSION (208) TONS
HARD WOOD LOGS
PADAUK (455) TONS
PYINKADO/TAUNG THAYET/HNAW/
THITYAR/INGYIN/IN-KANYIN/SAGAWA /
THINGAN/TAUKKYAN/YEMANE ABOUT (18444)TONS
HARDWOOD HANDSAWN CONVERSION
PADAUK/TAMALAN/THINWIN ABOUT (756)TONS
- (c) PLACE - TAW WIN HALL, GYOGONE , INSEIN
TOWNSHIP, YANGON

2. FOR FURTHER DETAILED INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT MYANMA TIMBER ENTERPRISE HEAD OFFICE AND ALSO VISIT MYANMA TIMBER ENTERPRISE WEB-SITE (www.myanmar-timber.com.mm).
Contacts:Office Ph:01528771,
E-mail:Marketing 1 ppy@gmail.com

OPEN TINDER COMMITTEE
MYANMA TIMBER ENTERPRISE

WEATHER REPORT

BAY INFERENCE: Monsoon is moderate in the Andaman Sea and Southeast Bay and weather is partly cloudy to cloudy elsewhere in the Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL EVENING OF THE 18th May, 2015: Rain or thundershowers will be isolated in Magway Region, scattered in Lower Sagaing and Mandalay Regions, Shan, Chin, Kayah and Rakhine States, fairly widespread in Upper Sagaing, Bago, Yangon and Ayeyarwady Regions, Kachin and Kayin States and widespread in the remaining Regions and States. Degree of certainty is (80%).

Advertise with us!

Please email
wallace.tun@gmail.com

For inquiries to place an advertisement in the GNLM,

(+95) (01) 8604532

Ground level in Mt Hakone's volcanic area rises by up to 12 cm

Mito, (Japan), 17 May — The ground level in the Owakudani hot spring area of Mt Hakone has risen by up to 12 centimetres from mid-April, days before volcanic activity intensified in the popular tourist spot, according to a geographical survey institute.

The alert level for Mt Hakone, some 80 kilometres southwest of Tokyo, has been raised to 2, which advises against entry to areas around the volcanic vent, from 1, or a "normal" situation.

An analysis of satellite data found that the ground level has been lifted by up to 12 cm between 17 April and 15 May, the Geospatial Information Authority of Japan said on Saturday on its website.

So far, the agency has observed the ground raised by crustal deformation in an area around 200 metres in diameter in the volcano's Owakudani district, but it said the scope of such activity has not changed drastically.

The number of volcanic earthquakes at Mt Hakone has spiked since 26 April, leading the Japan Meteorological Agency to advise local residents and tourists to stay on alert against a possible steam eruption.

Kyodo News

China-Nepal highway reopens after quake damage

LHASA, 17 May — Vehicles carrying quake relief goods started to enter Kathmandu, the Nepalese capital, from China's border on Sunday afternoon, after China's armed police successfully removed quake debris blocking the China-Nepal Highway in Nepal. Chinese armed traffic police entered Nepal at the beginning of the month to aid in earthquake relief. Their first mission was to reopen the road connecting the border pass between Zham in Tibet and Kathmandu.

General Fu Ling of the traffic police and his Nepalese counterpart jointly announced traffic had resumed on Sunday. Fu said a total of 500 Chinese police officers using 180 pieces of heavy machinery had cleared the road on 8 May. However, a strong aftershock on 12 May triggered more landslides and road damage.

Police officers have braved falling rocks to remove 160,000 cubic metres of debris and repair the 48 km long highway. On Sunday, the police helped transport 2.5 tonnes of rice as well as other fast food from Zham to Kathmandu.

Fu said his team will continue to monitor highway traffic.

The China-Nepal Highway, with a total length of 943 kilometers including 829 km in Tibet, was severely damaged in the earthquake on 25 April.

The death toll from Nepal's latest 12 May quake climbed to 136, bringing the total death toll from both major earthquakes to 8,485 and the number of injured to 101,182, said Nepal's Ministry of Home Affairs in its latest update.—Xinhua

Japanese shiitake mushrooms introduced at world expo in Milan

MILAN, 17 May — Japanese growers of shiitake mushrooms introduced on Saturday their production and cooking methods for dried shiitake at the food-themed world exposition that opened earlier this month in the northern Italian city of Milan.

Nobuyuki Tanaka, 66, head of the Beppu Shiitake Growers' Association in Oita Prefecture, gave a presentation in which he noted that his southwestern prefecture has the largest yield of shiitake in Japan.

Tanaka, who has been growing shiitake for 47 years, showed video images to explain how growers plant the fungus in woods. Shiitake mushrooms produced in Beppu are known for being meaty and firm.

A 32-year-old company worker from France, who lives in Milan, said after tasting shiitake stewed in soy sauce and sake at



A woman serves ginger candy, produced by a confectionary maker with a 300-year history in Izumo in western Japan's Shimane Prefecture, to visitors at Japan's pavilion during the world exposition in Milan, Italy on 16 May, 2015. The food-themed Expo Milano 2015 will run for six months through 31 October.

KYODO NEWS

the Japan pavilion that the mushroom was savory and tasted good.

Ginger candy was also

provided at the pavilion by a confectionary maker with a 300-year history in Izumo in western Japan's

Shimane Prefecture. The Expo Milano 2015 will run for six months through 31 October.—Kyodo News

Lion shot dead after attacking trainer at east China zoo

JINAN, 17 May — A lion was shot dead at a zoo in east China's Shandong Province on Sunday, after it attacked a trainer and broke out of the cage.

The management committee of the Taishan Scenery Area said the attack happened at 6:20 am on Sunday in Tai'an Tiger Mountain Park in the scenery spot, when the trainer entered the lion's cage for cleaning.

The trainer died in the hospital.

The zoo called police to shoot the lion in order to ensure the safety of

tourists.

Police are still probing into the incident.

A similar animal attack happened in another Chinese zoo just in March, when a zookeeper was mauled by a tiger at a zoo in east China's Jiangxi Province.

In addition to pouring sympathy on zookeepers, the public also questioned the zoo management. Zookeepers and cleaners should follow the procedure to keep carnivores in a separate place when cleaning the animal cages.

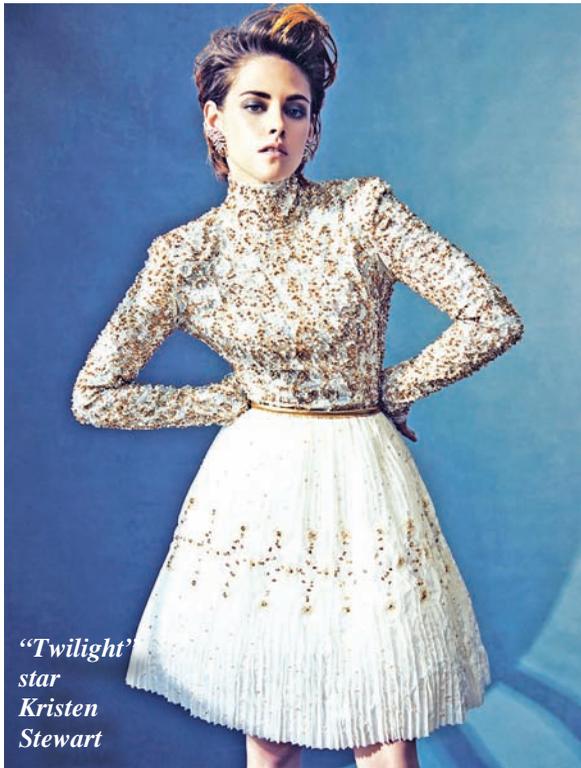
Xinhua



Photo taken on 16 May, 2015 shows fireworks in the sky over the Juzizhou Bridge in Changsha, capital of central China's Hunan Province. A musical firework show was held in Juzizhou on Saturday night.

XINHUA

Kristen Stewart would love to be caterer, if not actor



“Twilight” star
Kristen
Stewart

LOS ANGELES, 17 May — “Twilight” star Kristen Stewart says she would have been a caterer, if not an actress.

Stewart, 25, spoke about her alternative career choice to her friend and assistant Suzie Rimer in candid “Conversations”, a YouTube series, reported Aceshowbiz.

“I’d probably be catering and hoping to get into props, and writing my first screenplay thinking that I was gonna change the world of cinema,” she said before adding, “That’s a hypothetical.”—PTI

Kore-eda’s contemplative style is Palme d’Or material

CANNES, (France), 17 May — Japan’s Hirokazu Kore-eda has an unhurried, contemplative way of telling stories — a choice that could well earn him the Palme d’Or at the Cannes Film festival for “Umi-machi Diary”.

Speaking to *Reuters* on Saturday, Kore-eda, who won the Jury Prize at Cannes two years ago, explained that he deliberately stripped his scenario of the tension that often holds a film together.

In “Umi-machi Diary”, three sisters living in the old seaside city of Kamakura travel to the funeral of their estranged father and invite their younger half-sister to live with them.

“There is one conflict between the elder sister (Sachi) and the second sister (Yoshino), they are having an argument about the latter’s boyfriend but I did not want to show them fighting,” Kore-eda, often considered as the late master Yasujiro Ozu’s spiritual heir, said.



Director Hirokazu Koreeda (C), cast members Suzu Hirose (L) and Haruka Ayase pose during a photocall for the film “Our Little Sister” (aka Umi-machi Diary) at the 68th Cannes Film Festival in Cannes, southern France on 14 May, 2015.—REUTERS

“Maybe a more conventional way of telling that story would have been more dramatic, with ups and downs. I did not want to do it that way.”

Kore-eda takes us through Yoshino and Sachi’s dating lives without the slightest touch of drama, his way of filming reminiscent of that of Taiwanese Hou Hsiao Hsien, also in competition in Cannes with “The Assassin”.

He films gatherings at the dinner table, peaceful walks on the beach as the sisters glide through the season as if time had no grip on them in a long, poetic stare at Japan’s values.

The elder sister, Sachi (played by the magnetic Haruka Ayase) “acts like their mother, she teaches them discipline, telling them how to sit, how to hold their chopsticks,” said Kore-eda.—*Reuters*

Van Sant not too fazed by harsh reviews on ‘The Sea of Trees’

CANNES. (France), 17 May — “The Sea of Trees”, Gus van Sant’s metaphysical tale set in Japan’s ‘suicide forest’, got a harsh reception from the critics at the Cannes Film Festival, but the Palme d’Or winner seemed unperturbed by the few boos that greeted his latest oeuvre after Friday’s press screening.

In “The Sea of Trees”, an American, played by Matthew McConaughey, travels to Japan to enter the Aokigahara forest and kill himself after his wife’s (Naomi Watts) death. There he meets a Japanese (Ken Watanabe) and both start a journey of self-reflection and survival.

“It’s an isolation to get to salvation, how facing death helps you find life,” McConaughey told a news conference on Saturday.

The effort was dubbed a ‘dishonest tear-jerker’ by *The Guardian* and *Variety* called it a “risibly long-winded drama”.

Van Sant, who won the Palme d’Or with “Elephant” in 2003, did not appear too concerned.

Academy Award winner McConaughey put on



Journalists take pictures with their mobile phone as cast members Naomi Watts (C) and Matthew McConaughey (R), and director Gus Van Sant (L) arrive to attend a news conference for the film “The Sea of Trees” in competition at the 68th Cannes Film Festival in Cannes, southern France on 14 May, 2015.—REUTERS

a relaxed face, too, telling a news conference ahead of Saturday’s public premiere: “Anyone has as much right to boo as they do to ovate.”

Van Sant said: “I read one review this morning and it was very definitive. I was imagining everyone was the same person as the one who wrote it and I was like now I know where we

stand — it was kind of nice but then I got nervous later.”

“Elephant” also had a mixed reception from the press before winning the highest distinction.

“I remember... there was some kind of fight after Elephant’s screening, there was a fistcuffs about whether it was good or bad,” said Van Sant.

“They were punching each other and that was at Cannes.”

Lionsgate/Roadside Attractions has acquired US rights to “The Sea of Trees”, an opus that is more reminiscent of Van Sant’s “Gerry” than his more acclaimed “Good Will Hunting” or “Milk”, before the Cannes Festival.

Reuters

Matt Bomer to star in ‘The Magnificent Seven’

LOS ANGELES, 17 May — ‘White Collar’ alum Matt Bomer has joined Denzel Washington and Chris Pratt in “The Magnificent Seven”, a remake of the 1960 western film.

The film centres on a woman (Haley Bennett), who hires a disparate group of gunslingers to protect her town from rampaging bandits that are led by a robber baron.

Bomer will star as the woman’s husband, a man who tries to stand up to the robber baron, said

The Hollywood Reporter.

Washington plays a bounty hunter, Pratt portrays a magician turned gambler, Vincent D’Onofrio stars as a mountain man, who used to be a killer, Wagner Moura will be seen as a caballero, Ethan Hawke as a sharpshooting war deserter and Jason Momoa as one of the villains.

Antoine Fuqua directs the movie while John Lee Hancock rewrites the script which was originally written by “True Detective” writer Nic Pizzolatto.



Matt Bomer

It is scheduled for a release on 13 January, 2017.—PTI

Sarah Silverman to star in Andy Samberg’s movie



Sarah Silverman

LOS ANGELES, 17 May — American stand-up comedienne Sarah Silverman will be seen in an untitled film by American comedy group “The Lonely Island”.

Silverman will play a rapper’s sharp and sarcastic publicist, who has to suffer many indignities, reported Aceshowbiz.

The 44-year-old satirist will join the comedy trio comprising Andy Samberg, Akiva Schaffer and Jorma Taccone.

The film is set to take place somewhere “in the world of music.”

Besides, it will feature parodies of some music hits such as pop stars Justin Bieber’s “Never Say Never” and Katy Perry’s “Part of Me”.—PTI

GENERAL

Man United reject Henriquez stays hot in Croatia

ZAGREB, 17 May — Chile striker Angelo Henriquez produced his best performance for Croatian champions Dinamo Zagreb after scoring a second-half hat-trick in a 4-0 home rout of traditional rivals Hajduk Split on Saturday. The 21-year old was signed by Manchester United in 2012 but has never played for the Premier League giants and was loaned to Dinamo last year after spells at Wigan Athletic and Spanish side Real Zaragoza.

Dinamo, who won their 10th successive league title this month with games to spare, took an early lead through 17-year-old forward



File photo of Celtic's Efe Ambrose and Dinamo Zagreb's Angelo Henriquez (R) jump for the ball during their Europa League Group D soccer match at Stadion Maksimir in Zagreb on 11 Dec, 2014.

REUTERS

Ante Coric who is already being sized up by leading European clubs.

The youngster set up Henriquez to make it 2-0 shortly after the break and the Chilean turned in a cross by Algeria forward El Arbi Soudani. Henriquez took his league tally of the season to 20 goals with another simple finish after good work by midfielder Josip Pivacic.

With two games remaining, Henriquez has a chance to finish as the league's top scorer although he still trails former Rijeka striker Andrej Kramaric, who joined Leicester City in January, by one goal.

Reuters

PSG clinch third French title in a row

PARIS, 17 May — Paris St Germain clinched a third successive Ligue 1 title, with a game to spare, and stayed on course for an unprecedented domestic treble with a 2-1 win at Montpelli-

er on Saturday.

The Qatari-owned club needed only a point but ended the night eight points clear of their closest rivals Olympique Lyonnais who were held to a 1-1 home

draw by Girondins Bordeaux.

The title kept Laurent Blanc's side on course for a sweep of domestic honours, with the Parisians already winners of the League Cup and facing second tier AJ Auxerre in the French Cup final at the end of the month.

Monaco stayed third on 68 points, four adrift of Lyon, after beating Metz 2-0 in the principality while Olympique Marseille and St Etienne also won to stay tied on 66 in the battle for a place in next season's Champions League preliminary round.

Evian Thonon Gaillard joined Racing Lens and Metz in being relegated after losing 2-1 to St Etienne.

"I love watching the scenes of joy, whether on the field or in the locker

room," said a delighted Blanc. "The players on the field earn the titles, we play a small part."

"We must let the players express themselves and the coach must always be behind them. It's not up to him to be at the front of the stage."

Midfielder Blaise Matuidi put PSG ahead in the 17th minute, slotting past goalkeeper Jonathan Ligali after a defence-splitting pass from Adrien Rabiot.

Ezequiel Lavezzi made it 2-0 in the 25th minute, from a cross by Serge Aurier, his eighth league goal of the season but Montpellier pulled one back five minutes before the breakthrough Anthony Mounier's shot into the top corner.

Reuters



Paris St Germain's Ezequiel Lavezzi (hidden) celebrates with team mates after scoring against Montpellier during their French Ligue 1 soccer match at the Mosson Stadium in Montpellier, France on 16 May, 2015. — REUTERS

Guyana swears in new president after multiracial bloc wins vote

GEORGETOWN, 17 May — Former army brigadier David Granger was sworn in as Guyana's new president on Saturday after his multiracial opposition coalition narrowly won a national election, heralding a new chapter in the ethnically-divided South American nation.

Granger's APNU+AFC coalition, a recent fusion between the traditional black party and a smaller third party, broke the ruling Indo-Guyanese PPP party's 23 year grip on power in Monday's election. Thousands flocked to Georgetown's Parliament Square to cheer on Granger, a 69-year-old Afro-Guyanese who has vowed to crack down on corruption and govern for citizens of both Indian and

African descent.

"I shall be a good president for all the people of Guyana," Granger said after taking the oath of office for his five-year term.

Indo-Guyanese politician Moses Nagamootoo, who defected from the PPP, was tapped as prime minister.

The full cabinet will be unveiled on 26 May, when the former colony celebrates 49 years of independence from Britain. The coalition will have a one seat majority in the 65-seat legislature.

"I am beyond happy," said Asef Balmacoon, a 28-year-old marketing manager who was celebrating in Georgetown. "I, like many others, longed for a better Guyana and a country where all its peoples

can come together and live as one." Former President Donald Ramotar, however, said he was "disappointed, hurt and aggrieved" by the outcome of the election, which was triggered by his suspension of parliament in November to avoid a no-confidence vote.

The veteran PPP politician has alleged the elections were rigged, though diplomats from the United Kingdom and the United States said they were free and fair.

Ramotar's government was dogged by accusations of corruption and nepotism, putting a damper on Guyana's economic growth buoyed by the gold, diamond and bauxite sectors.

The new administration plans to spearhead anti-money laundering leg-



File photo of David Granger, then leader of Guyana's opposition A Partnership for National Unity (APNU) coalition, speaks during a rally in Georgetown on 14 Nov, 2014.—REUTERS

islation, a constitutional reform committee, and fight crime during its first 100 days in power.

Granger has a degree in history and received military training in Nigeria, Brazil and the United Kingdom. He is the founder of a security consultancy, also worked as magazine publisher, and enjoys collecting coins. —Reuters

mitv Myanmar International

(18-5-2015 07:00 am~ 19-5-2015 07:00 am)

- * News
- * Myanmar Handicrafts
- * News
- * Director: Maung Myo Min (Yin Twin Pyit)
- * Chanmyay Yeiktha Meditation Centre-Chaw Dwin Gone
- * Myanmar Puppet
- * News
- * Flying Without Wings-My Great Limitless Adventure - Mandalay & Sagaing
- * Ywar Thit's Monhinkhar
- * News
- * Youth Filmmaker: Khin Su Kyi
- * Products of Myanmar — Seashells Products
- * School for the Blind
- * News
- * A Day out With Sarah (EP-5)
- * Today Myanmar "Rattan Export"
- * News
- * Taste of Myanmar (Shan Noodle Salad)
- * Entrepreneur: Nan Ei Ei Zar
- * News
- * Mogok: The Colourful Land of Rubies
- * My Tour around Hopone City
- * A Girl Guide
- * News
- * Bollywood Actress "Laila Khan" Born & Raised in Myanmar (Part-2)
- * A Tea Business Pankwan (Part-1)
- * News
- * A Journey to Southern Shan State (Ep-1)
- * Creative Costume of Kayah Nationals
- * News
- * Making of Nawarat Rings
- * Fantastic Orchid Garden From The Flower City
- * The Photographer (Portraiture)

MRTV Entertainment Channel

(18-5-2015, Monday)

- 6:00 am**
 - Mono Classical Songs
- 6:15 am**
 - Myanmar Series
- 6:50 am**
 - Fashion Show
- 7:20 am**
 - TV Drama Series
- 8:05 am**
 - TV Drama Series
- 8:40 am**
 - Pyi Thu Ni Ti
- 9:00 am**
 - Musical Programme
- 9:15 am**
 - ASEAN CULTURAL FAIR (2014)
- 9:35 am**
 - Pyi Thu Ni Ti
- 9:55 am**
 - Musical Programme
- 10:05 am**
 - Myanmar Video

MRTV News Channel in Brief

(18-5-2015, Monday)

- 6:00 am**
 - Paritta by Hilly Region Missionary Sayadaw
- 7:00 am**
 - News / Weather Report
- 7:35 am**
 - Weekly Entertainment
- 8:00 am**
 - News / International News
- 9:35 am**
 - Documentary (ASEAN)
- 10:30 am**
 - Head Line News
- 11:35 am**
 - MRTV's Youth Programme
- 12:00 noon**
 - News / International News / Weather Report
- 12:35 pm**
 - Tasty Trip
- 1:10 pm**
 - Gitadagale Phwintbarohn
- 1:55 pm**
 - Teleplay (Htar)
- 2:35 pm**
 - Documentary
- 3:35 pm**
 - People's Talks
- 4:35 pm**
 - University of Distance Education (TV Lectures) — Third Year (Myanmar)
- 5:35 pm**
 - Documentary (Women in Myanmar Society)
- 6:35 pm**
 - Socio Economic Scenes
- 7:00 pm**
 - News
- 8:00 pm**
 - News
- 9:00 pm**
 - International News / Weather Report
- 9:00 pm**
 - News / International News / Weather Report
- 9:00 pm**
 - Hluttaw Image
- 9:00 pm**
 - Sport

Djokovic moves up a gear to reach Rome final

ROME, 17 May — On 16 May, For the first time this week Novak Djokovic needed only two sets to triumph at the Rome Masters, beating Spain's David Ferrer 6-4, 6-4 as he reached the final to close in on a 24th Masters 1000 title.

The world number one will face Roger Federer or Stanislas Wawrinka in Sunday's final at the Foro Italico where he will be bidding for a fourth title in this event.

In the women's tournament there was better fortune for a Spanish player with Carla Suarez Navarro defeating Romania's Simona Halep 2-6, 6-3, 7-5 to reach her ninth career final.

Suarez Navarro next meets twice Rome champion Maria Sharapova who downed Russian qualifier Daria Gavrilova 7-5, 6-3.

Djokovic's winning streak now stands at 21

matches but he has been made to work hard this week with close-fought victories over Nicolas Pietrangeli, Thomaz Bellucci and Kei Nishikori.

He seemed to move up a level against Ferrer with a clinical display. The top seed needed two breaks of serve to clinch a ninth consecutive win over the Spaniard.



Novak Djokovic of Serbia celebrates after winning his semi-final match against David Ferrer of Spain at the Rome Open tennis tournament in Rome, Italy on 16 May, 2015.—REUTERS

"I played the best match of the week," Djokovic told Sky Sports Italia. "I'm satisfied with the way I played and happy to be in another final in Rome."

Djokovic's only frustration was the state of the Centrale court and he repeatedly complained about the condition of the clay.

"That's the one thing I could have handled better.

I should've been less nervous as there was nothing I could do about the court," he said.

Sharapova had to work extremely hard to defeat fellow Russian Gavrilova who left the court after the 11th game for treatment to an abdominal muscle injury and was clearly hampered on her return.

"She was obviously affected by it when serving," Sharapova said. "But once you got into the rallies she moved and defended very well."

Suarez Navarro is the form player on the WTA Tour this year with 31 wins but she was two points away from losing in the 10th game of the final set before turning the tide.

"It was such a tough match from a physical standpoint," she said. "The biggest improvement I've made this year is in my mind."—Reuters

Gerrard feels the Liverpool love as he bows out



Liverpool's Steven Gerrard as he walks on the pitch after his final game at Anfield during their Barclays Premier League at Anfield on 16 May, 2015.—REUTERS

LONDON, 17 May — Steven Gerrard spoke of dread, devastation and defeat on Saturday as the Liverpool captain said farewell to an adoring and emotional Anfield crowd after 17 years and more than 700 appearances. Even if Crystal Palace denied him a fairytale ending, with Gerrard unable to perform any heroics in a 3-1 defeat, the famous Kop end rose to salute one of their own in a match where the result was secondary.

"I've been dreading this moment," he told the crowd over the public address system. "I am going to miss it so much.

"I've loved every minute of it and I'm absolutely devastated I'm never going to play in front of you supporters again."

The pre-match music set the mood — 'Simply The Best', 'Heroes', 'Nothing Lasts Forever', 'The End Of The World As We Know It', and a nod to his Los Angeles Galaxy future with 'Kids In America'.

Even if the former England skipper has heard the chant of 'You'll Never Walk Alone' more often than he can remember, the fans gave him an unforgettable rendition as he stood with his three daughters on the field. The refrain was echoed on countless banners, the supporters thank-

ing him for some of their greatest memories including an unforgettable 2005 Champions League success, as the 34-year-old midfielder emerged from the tunnel to a guard of honour from both sides. High-fiving each Palace player as he moved down the line, Gerrard applauded the stands on his 354th appearance at Anfield in all competitions.

"The first time you ever play for Liverpool Football Club is a dream come true," he said later. "Everything else after that was a bonus for me. "Before I go, before the tears come...I've played in front of most supporters around the world but let me tell you, you are the best," he told the crowd as the cheers rose to a crescendo.

Manager Brendan Rodgers promised it would be a match players would tell their grandchildren about and there could be no doubt about that, even if much of the action was far from memorable.

"I asked members of staff if they could describe Steven Gerrard in one word, what word would that be," he added. "It's Liverpool. Not just Liverpool as a football club but Liverpool the supporters and Liverpool the city. "He's a wonderful symbol for the people here and is an icon of the club."

Reuters

Soccer-Saints' Mane grabs fastest top-flight hat-trick

LONDON, 17 May — Southampton's Senegal forward Sadio Mane scored the fastest English top-flight hat-trick in an extraordinary 6-1 win over relegation-threatened Aston Villa at St Mary's on Saturday.

His treble was timed at two minutes and 56 seconds breaking Scotland forward Graham Leggat's record of three minutes for Fulham in a club record 10-1 win over Ipswich Town in 1963.

It also broke a 20-year-old Premier League record for the fastest treble scored by Robbie Fowler in four minutes and 33 seconds for Liverpool against Arsenal on 28 August 1994.

"Really? It is the fast-

est Premier League hat-trick?" said an amazed Mane. "The most important thing today is the victory."

Saints manager Ronald Koeman added: "It was incredible from Sadio Mane. A player like him, to get that kind of space, he will punish you. The whole team did a good job and I'm proud."

Mane, who shook hands with some of the delighted Southampton fans at the end of the game before walking around the pitch with the match ball, struck in the 13th, 14th and 16th minutes.

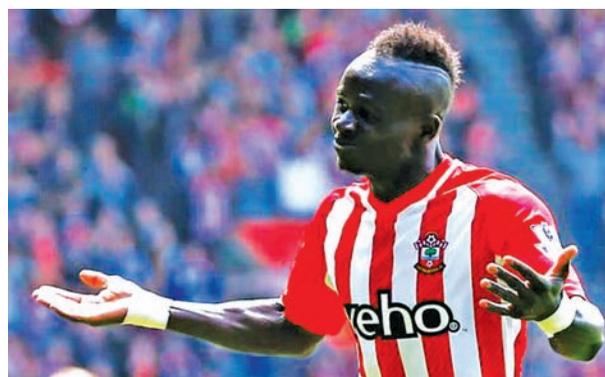
It was the earliest a player has scored three goals in a Premier League game, beating the 22 min-

utes registered by Dwight Yorke for Blackburn Rovers in 2003.

Mane is the third Southampton player to score a Premier League hat-trick after James Beattie and Matt Le Tissier.

Southampton strik-

er Shane Long grabbed a double in the 26th and 38th minutes to put Southampton 5-0 ahead before Villa got a consolation just before the break but Saints' Italian striker Graziano Pelle added a sixth goal in the 81st minute.—Reuters



Southampton's Sadio Mane celebrates scoring their third goal.—REUTERS

Phelps finishes distant seventh in 200 butterfly

CHARLOTTE, 17 May — Michael Phelps endured a difficult return to the 200 metres butterfly on Saturday by finishing a distant seventh, more than three seconds behind the winner, at the Arena Pro Swim Series meet in Charlotte, North Carolina.

Competing in the event for the first time since the 2012 London Games, the 18-times Olympic gold

medallist came home in a time of 2:00.77, more than three seconds adrift of winner Chase Kalisz.

Phelps, who took silver in the event in 2012, had said he knew he needed to be in optimum condition to compete in the gruelling race again. The most decorated Olympian of all time, Phelps retired after London but has made a comeback and is eyeing a spot at the

Rio Games next year. He dropped out of his scheduled 100 backstroke earlier on Saturday to focus on the butterfly but the move did not pay off. Phelps is competing in his second meet following a six-month ban for drunk driving and has endured mixed results.

On Friday he finished third in the 100 butterfly and failed to qualify for the 200 freestyle. Phelps is also

expected to swim in the 200 individual medley and 100 freestyle.—Reuters

Michael Phelps swims 1:58.74 in a 200m individual medley heat to advance to the final in the 2014 USA National Championships at William Woollett Jr Aquatics Complex, Irvine, CA, USA on 10 Aug, 2014.—REUTERS

