

## President U Thein Sein accepts golden rice award for promoting rice production

NAY PYI TAW, 20 May— President U Thein Sein received golden rice award from the International Rice Research Institute Wednesday at a ceremony coinciding with the launch of Myanmar's strategic plan on the development of rice production.

The dual ceremony was held at Agriculture Research Department in Nay Pyi Taw, and was attended by Vice President U Nyan Tun, union ministers, deputy ministers, officials from the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation, UN agencies, international agencies, NGOs, Director General Dr Robert Stewart Zeigler of IRRI and guests.

At the first session of the ceremony, Dr Zeigler conferred the award to President U Thein Sein for his guidelines on promotion of rice cultivation.

The president then made opening remarks for the second session, saying the sufficiency of food and



President U Thein Sein accepts golden rice award from Director General Dr Robert Stewart Zeigler of IRRI.—MNA

nutrition is a global concern, as half of the world's 7.7 billion people, in-

cluding 90 percent of the Asia-Pacific region's population, consume rice as a

staple. IRRI has been co-operating with Myanmar in promoting the country's

rice production sector since 1960.

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## Low pressure persists over Bay of Bengal

By Aye Min Soe

YANGON, 20 May — A low-pressure zone is persisting over the East Central Bay and adjoining Southeast Bay of Bengal, the Department of Meteorology and Hydrology said Wednesday.

Strong monsoon conditions are present in the Andaman Sea and Southeast Bay, while the weather is partly cloudy to cloudy elsewhere in the Bay of Bengal.

The government weather bureau forecast for Wednesday predicts rain or thundershowers to be isolated in Upper Sagaing Region and Kachin State and scattered in Lower Sagaing and Magway regions, as well as Shan and Chin states.

Rain or thundershowers are predicted to be fairly widespread in Mandalay Region, as well as Rakhine and Kayah states, and widespread in the remain-

ing regions and states.

Yangon, Ayeyawady and Taninthayi regions, as well as Rakhine and Mon States, are forecast to receive heavy falls with an 80 percent degree of certainty.

The forecast also predicts occasional squalls with rough seas offshore and along Myanmar's coasts. Surface wind speed in squalls may reach 40 miles per hour.

The southwest monsoon has already entered the southern part of the country and is currently advancing into the deltaic areas, the forecast said.

Isolated rain or thundershowers are expected Thursday over Nay Pyi Taw and Mandalay, and one or two rain or thundershowers are expected over Yangon and neighboring areas, with 100 percent degree of certainty.

GNLM

## Operators of Yangon's first taxi call service aim to launch service soon

By Ye Myint

YANGON, 20 May— The founders of Yangon's first taxi call service presented their business plan Wednesday to more than 1,500 people including cab drivers and owners at the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry building in Yangon.

The Taxi Call Centre expects to launch soon with a fleet of 1,500 call cabs in the commercial capital.

The founders— an entrepreneur, a famous private teacher and well-known movie star Wai Lu Kyaw—invited taxi operators and drivers to join the service and said business partnership with the centre presented numerous benefits.

"The centre will provide its taxi users with the services of safety and convenience," said Ko Win Swe Oo, one of the founders, adding that the TCC will help alleviate the city's

busy traffic situation and reduce fuel consumption could be reduced, as its call taxis will remain stationary when they are not carrying passengers.

For taxi owners who rent their cabs out to the centre, they will be provided with maintenance and insurance for their cars under the management of the

centre.

The centre will run its call taxi service with hire cars, offering K300,000 per month, and recruit drivers with at least three-years' experience, paying a monthly salary of K180,000-350,000.

The centre's operators said taxi drivers currently earn much less than

K10,000 a day, excluding fuel cost and rent paid to the owners, while driver-cum-owners earns less than K20,000 a day, excluding fuel cost, inviting them to sign up with the centre.

Yangon is believed to have more than 50,000 taxis on the road in 30 townships.—GNLM



Yangon's first on-call taxi service is set to launch soon, with 15,000 cars operating around the commercial capital, according to the company's founders.—PHOTO: YE MYINT

## Coal fired power plant projects to go ahead

NAY PYI TAW, 20 May — Coal fired power plant projects will not be cancelled as electricity consumption in Myanmar is increasing by 13 to 15 percent annually, said Deputy Minister for Electric Power U Aung Than Oo to Pyithu Hluttaw session on Wednesday.

MP Daw Tin Tin Yi

from Kyunsu constituency asked the government's plan whether the coal fired projects would be cancelled amidst the protest of local people.

Myanmar has 43 power stations with installation capacity of 4,987 MW generated 69 percent from hydropower, 29 percent from natural gas and 2 per-

cent from coal, while only 30 percent of households across the country get electricity.

The deputy minister said Myanmar needs to construct more power plants to be able to generate 23,594 MW in 2030-2031 to distribute electricity the whole country.

Regarding query of

Myanaung constituency's Pyithu Hluttaw MP U Aung Sein about electricity distribution to Myanaung township from national grid, U Aung Than Oo said preliminary surveys are being carried out to construct a 33-KV power station by using bio-fuel and wind powers alternatively.

He added that the pro-

ject will be implemented depending on budget allocation and low-interest from local or foreign loans.

Myanaung township is about five nautical miles from nearest Yanbye Township.

Deputy Minister for Labour, Employment and Social Security U Htin Aung replied to the query

of Kanpetlet constituency MP Thura U Aung Ko whether Myanmar seafarers could join shipping companies in Taipei (China).

U Htin Aung said Myanmar sailor associations can also practice similar trend like the Myanmar Seafarers Federation.

MNA

## Myanmar educationalist brings honorary doctorate home



YANGON, 20 May — Myanmar education expert U Than Oo arrived back home on Wednesday after receiving the Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters conferred by the University of Hawaii in the United States.

For his lifetime commitment to education reform processes of Myanmar, the veteran educationalist was conferred the award at the 104<sup>th</sup> Annual Commencement Exercise held on May 16. He is currently an ad-

viser at the Ministry of Education and President of the Myanmar Academy of Arts and Science.

U Than Oo, 88, was welcomed by the members of the Myanmar Literacy Supporting Centre and the Pyin-nyar-Tazaung Special Publication at the Yangon International Airport.

U Than Oo received a master degree of education at the 52<sup>nd</sup> Convocation of the university.

Ohnma Thant  
Photo: Ye Htut

## ABU Radio Song Festival 2015 on 29 May

NAY PYI TAW, 20 May — Myanma Radio and Television under the Ministry of Information and Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union (ABU) will jointly

arrange the ABU Radio Song Festival 2015 at the National Theatre, here, from 6 pm to 9 pm on 29 May.

Vocalists from Asia and Pacific region countries as well as those of Myanmar will present songs and dances to the audiences. Enthusiasts may enjoy entertainment of the festival free of charge.

For further information, may call MRTV on 09-5188504, 09-448542595 and 067-79374, fax:067 79205 and email: radiooffice2014@gmail.com.—MNA

### Correction

Please read Certificate Course in Basic Diplomatic Skills opens instead of Certificate Course in Basic Diplomatic Skills concludes in the headline of the news on page 2 in this daily issued on 19-5-2015.

GNLM

## Ho Chi Min City Trade, Services and Tourism Expo 2015 opens

YANGON, 20 May —The Investment and Trade Promotion Centre of Ho Chi Min City organized the Ho Chi Min City Trade, Services and Tourism Expo 2015 at Tatmadaw Convention

Hall in Dagon Township on Wednesday, with speeches by Chairperson of People's Committee of Ho Chi Min City Madam Nguyen Thi Hong and Yangon City Development Committee Secre-

tary U Kyaw Soe.

Chief Minister of Yangon Region U Myint Swe, Madam Nguyen Thi Hong and officials cut the ribbon to open the expo and visited there.

The expo showcas-

es medicines, chemicals, agricultural machinery, foodstuffs, personal goods and construction materials manufactured by Vietnam at 85 booths till 24 May.

In the afternoon, the chief minister received the Chairperson of People's Committee of Ho Chi Min City and party at his office.

MNA

### Information for Public Remonstrations

1. 88 New Generation Democracy Party headquartered at No. 133 on Ngantay Road in Mawlamyine in Mon State has submitted its application for the registration as a political party to the Union Election Commission on 20 May, 2015 in accord with Section 5 of the Political Parties Registration Law, along with the following party's name, flag and seal.
2. It is hereby announced that those who want to remonstrate with the UEC about the party's name, flag and emblem they may submit a complaint along the strong evidences within seven days starting from issuance of this announcement in line with the Section 14 (d) of the Political Parties Registration Rules.

Union Election Commission

#### Flag of 88 New Generation Democracy Party



#### Emblem of 88 New Generation Democracy Party



## 88 New Generation Democracy Party applies for registration as political party

NAY PYI TAW, 20 May — The Union Election Commission has been scrutinizing and passing the applications for registration as a political party. 88 New Generation Democracy Party applied for registration as a political party to the UEC on Wednesday.—MNA

### Republic of the Union of Myanmar Union Election Commission Nay Pyi Taw Notification No.12/2015

3<sup>rd</sup> Waxing Day of Nayon, 1377 ME  
(20 May, 2015)

### Guiding Star Party allowed to register as political party

The Union Election Commission announced Wednesday that Guiding Star Party headquartered at No. 1536, 6<sup>th</sup> Street, Alinyaung Ward 1, Bago, Bago Region, has been allowed to register as a political party as of 20 May in line with Section 9 of the Political Parties Registration Law.

The party's registration number is 83.

By order,

(Tin Tun)  
Secretary

Union Election Commission

### Republic of the Union of Myanmar Union Election Commission Nay Pyi Taw Notification No.13/2015

3<sup>rd</sup> Waxing Day of Nayon, 1377 ME  
(20 May, 2015)

### Red Shan (Tailai) and Northern Shan Ethnic Solidarity Party allowed to register as political party

The Union Election Commission announced Wednesday that Red Shan (Tailai) and Northern Shan Ethnic Solidarity Party headquartered at No. Dha-1/70-B, Gangaw Street between 40<sup>th</sup> and 41<sup>st</sup> streets and 67<sup>th</sup> and 68<sup>th</sup> streets, Mahamyang Ward 1, Mahaangmye Township, Mandalay Region, has been allowed to register as a political party as of 20 May in line with Section 9 of the Political Parties Registration Law.

The party's registration number is 84.

By order,

(Tin Tun)  
Secretary

Union Election Commission

## Vice President urges Rakhine State authorities to stop human trafficking, transnational crimes



Vice President Dr Sai Mauk Kham inspects progress in construction of Point Amusement Station in Sittway.—MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 20 May— Vice President Dr Sai Mauk Kham, the chairman of the central committee for development and

stability of Rakhine State, urged local authorities to do their utmost to prevent human trafficking and transnational crimes in the

state, where economic development is gaining momentum.

The vice president held talks with the members of

the committee Wednesday in Sittway, Rakhine State, over the socio-economic development of the state.

During the meeting, U

## President U Thein Sein...

(from page 1)

U Thein Sein added that the award was aimed at honouring farmers and agricultural experts for their coordinated efforts on promotion of rice production.

He also asked donors and partners for laboratory apparatus and financial assistance to conduct further research on paddy production.

The strategic plan is aimed at developing 7.7 million hectares (19 million

acres) for paddy cultivation, to be able to produce 9.9 million metric tonnes for domestic consumption and 6 million metric tonnes for export in 2030 with a yield of 4.1 metric tonnes per hectare.

The president then viewed hybrid paddy seeds, rice samples, crops for edible oil, groundnuts, and hybrid corn varieties displayed at the Agricultural Research Department.

MNA

Maung Maung Ohn, Chief Minister of Rakhine State, discussed providing job opportunities and shelter to people in relief camps.

The commander of Danyawady Naval Region Command Headquarters discussed efforts to stop human trafficking in Myanmar's sea territories and along the Rakhine coast.

The Head of Rakhine State Police Force clarified efforts to enforce the rule of law in the state and prevent transnational crimes and drug trafficking at the border areas.

Vice President Dr Sai

Mauk Kham expressed delight at the improvement of the situation in Rakhine State, which has gained momentum for peace, stability and development.

He also stressed the need to promote cooperation between the regional government and international non-governmental organizations to be able to boost development of the region. During his tour, Dr Sai Mauk Kham also met with local people at Thakepyin relief camp and Thechaung relief camp and view round urban development tasks.—MNA

## Public Expenditure Management Network in Asia kicks off

NAY PYI TAW, 20 May—The Public Expenditure Management Network in Asia was established with Budget Communities of Practice-B.Cop and Treasury Communities of Practice-T.Cop to share experiences among member countries, Union Minister for Finance U Win Shein told the annual plenary meeting of the network at Myanmar International

Convention Centre-II, here, on Wednesday.

Country Director Mr Ulrich Zachau of World Bank made a speech while Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Finance U Maung Maung Win discussed reform process in public financial management in Myanmar.

Delegates of member countries discussed reform process in public financial

management, relationship between projects and budgets, drafting medium-term financial frameworks, drawing of budget, monetary management and treasury affairs.

The meeting will run till 22 May. According to the request of World Bank and PEMNA, Myanmar hosted the plenary meeting of the network.

MNA



Union Minister for Environmental Conservation and Forestry U Win Tun addresses reception to mark Constitution Day of Norway at residence of Norwegian Ambassador in Hline Township on 20 May.—MNA

## JCGV cinemas commissioned in Mandalay



The opening ceremony of cinemas of JCGV in progress in Mandalay.

TIN MAUNG & AUNG THURA

MANDALAY, 20 May— Union Minister for Information U Ye Htut, Mandalay Region Minister for Finance Dr Myint Kyu, Chairman of Myanmar Motion Picture Organization U Lu Min, CEO of JCGV Mr Kim Min Kyu and JCGV Present of Board Daw Sanda Tun formally opened three cinemas of JCGV on the third floor of Mingala Mandalay Ocean Super Centre in Mandalay

on Wednesday.

CEO of JCGV Mr Kim Min Kyu and Chairman of MMPA U Lu Min spoke on the occasion.

The union minister and guests enjoyed movies to be shown at No 1 cinema.

Cinemas of JCGV are the first of its kinds in Mandalay and ninth in the nation. No 1 cinema can give 169 seats to the guests, No 2 cinema 157 and No 3 cinema 117. Ticket for en-

trance fee are ranged from K1,000 to K6,500.

The cinema show four movies a day and five movies on Friday and Saturday.

The cinemas were built last two years along with the Mingala Mandalay housing project. At present, the housing project gains development momentum with apartments, shops and shopping mall.

Tin Maung and Aung Thura

## Outstanding trainees in Buddhist cultural course honoured in Myanaung

MYANAUNG, 20 May — A ceremony to present prizes to winners in the first Buddhist cultural course was held at Parahita Myoshwe Monastery in Ward 4, Myanaung, Ayeyawady Region, on 18 May.

Altogether 92 trainees sat the examination organized by Myanaung Township Lineage and Buddhism Preservation Committee and Myanmar Wunthanu Rekkhita Association.

Officials presented K100,000 to the first prize winner, K70,000 to the second, K50,000 to

the third, K30,000 to the fourth, K20,000 to the fifth and K10,000 each to 87 trainees.

The ceremony was also attended by the chairman of the Township Sangha Nayaka Committee and member Sayadaws.

*Nay Win Zaw (Myanaung)*

## MWEA holds annual general meeting



YANGON, 20 May — The Myanmar Women Entrepreneurs' Association held its 20<sup>th</sup> annual general meeting at Novotal Yangon Max Hotel on Pyay Road in Kamayut Township on 17 May.

Founder of the association, retired professor Dr Daw Yee Yee Myint, spoke on the occasion

while chairperson Daw Hla Wady extended greetings.

General Secretary Daw Hnin Wai read out the report of executive committee for 2014-15 fiscal year and financial consultant Daw Khin Htay Yu explained the financial report. The chairperson presented certificates of honour to those who contributed to founding the association.

*Aung Thura*

## IPRD officials donate book for village libraries

NAY PYI TAW, 20 May — Deputy Director Daw Thin Thin Zin and officials of the District and Township Information and Public Relations Departments, as well as personnel from the Township Immigration and National Registration Department, donated books and publications to libraries in Aungthiri and Thabyesan villages in Pobbathiri Township on 19 May.

In Thabyesan Village-tract, Deputy Director Daw Thin Thin Zin gave talks on the benefits of reading and longevity of libraries.

Head of Township IPRD Daw Theint Theint Myo spoke about disadvantages of narcotic drugs.

*Shwe Ye Yint*



## Farmers and agricultural staff take course in climate-friendly agriculture

NAY PYI TAW, 20 May — Thirty-two trainees are undertaking a climate-friendly agriculture (CFA) course at the hall of Tatkon Township Agriculture

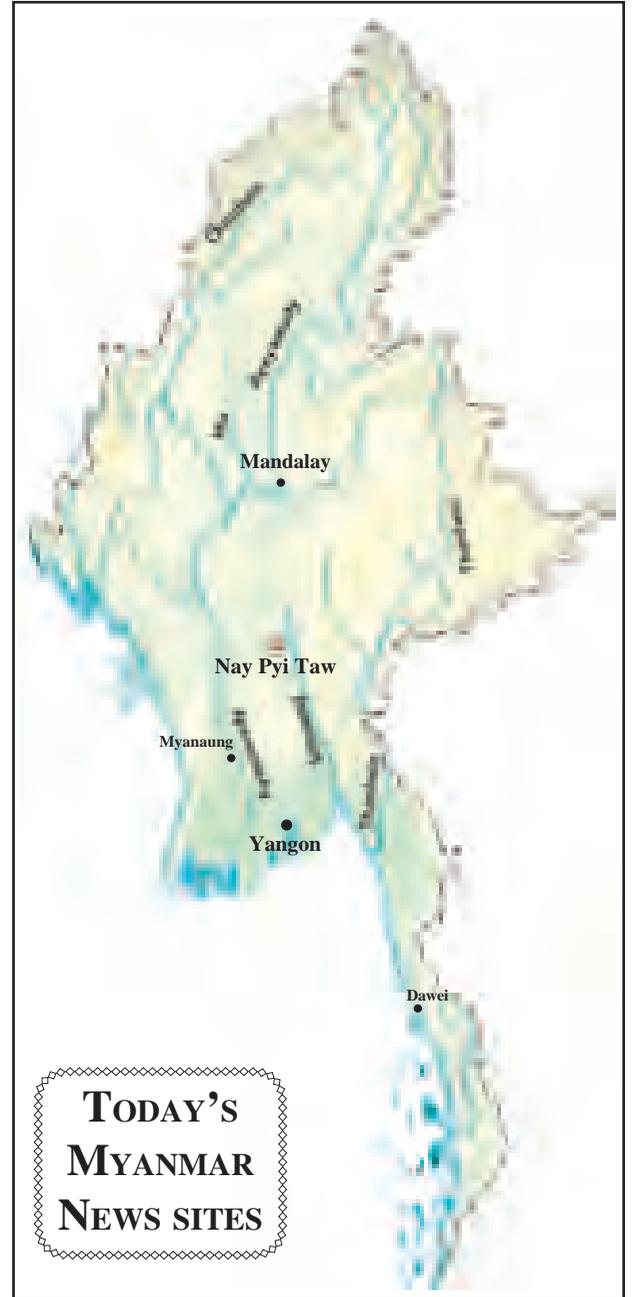
Department from 18 to 22 May.

Deputy Director U Htin Aung Shein and officials of Department of Agriculture (Head Office) give lectures

to the trainees.

The training course aims to teach farmers skills in the production of organic vegetables and fruit.

*Ko Pauk (Okkar Myay)*



TODAY'S MYANMAR NEWS SITES

## Teaches attend scout instructor course in Taninthayi Region



DAWEI, 20 May — A scout instructor course of Taninthayi Region was conducted at No 3 Basic Education High School in Dawei.

On 19 May, Chief Minister of Taninthayi Region U Myat Ko gave instructions to the trainees.

Veteran scouts presented gifts to the chief minister. The girl guides section No 4 of Dawei BEHS No 3 handed over its third prize in the PyinOoLwin scout

gathering 2015 to the chief minister.

The chief minister presented certificates of honour to the joint secretary of the Myanmar Scout Committee and members who gave training to the youths.

Altogether 60 trainees including school heads and teachers of BEHSs in Taninthayi Region attended the scout instructor course from 16 to 20 May.

*Po Shwe Thun (Dawei)*

### Correction

Please read "Dr. Michael McGarry of Canada" instead of "A Canadian government representative" in the second line of the first paragraph in first column of the news and please read "Canadian citizen prepares to assist Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association" in the headline and "Dr. Michael McGarry is inspecting clinics, delivery rooms and pre-primary schools of the MMCWA to provide assistance for the facilities" in last paragraph of the news on page 4 of this daily issued on 16-5-2015.

*GNLM*

## REGIONAL

## Vietnamese National Assembly's 13<sup>th</sup> tenure convenes for 9<sup>th</sup> session



The ninth session of the 13th tenure of Vietnam's National Assembly is opened in Hanoi on 20 May, 2015. The session, to last till 26 June, is expected to review and adopt 11 law bills and have the first reading for other 15 bills. —XINHUA

HANOI, 20 May — The ninth session of the 13<sup>th</sup> tenure of Vietnam's National Assembly (NA) convened in capital Hanoi on Wednesday, with a focus on law

building and decision for key socio-economic issues.

Speaking at the opening ceremony, Nguyen Sinh Hung, NA chairman said the ninth session is taking place amid complicated world political and harsh global economic situation while Vietnam is facing new opportunities and challenges.

The session is of great importance for Vietnam to review the country's current situation in socio-economics, defence, security, foreign affairs, and justice among others, said Hung.

At the session, Vietnam will also determine what to do immediately to fulfill socio-economic targets in 2015 set by the NA.

During the ongoing session, the NA will review and pass 11 law bills as well as give comments on other law bills, said Hung.

In addition, the NA will review the government's reports on supplement evaluation to result of the implementation

of the 2014 socio-economic development plan and state budget as well as the implementation of those in the first months of 2015, according to the NA chairman.

Another content that will be reviewed and decided during the session is the policy to invest in Vietnam's southern Long Thanh International Airport.

This is an important project to Vietnam's southern economic region as well as to the whole country, with impacts on various sectors and areas, as well as draws great attention of local voters, said Hung.

The NA chairman added that investment phases and effectiveness of the project should be well calculated to ensure feasibility and possibility of investment mobilization, and make sure the project is in line with Vietnam's aviation development.

The ninth session of the 13<sup>th</sup> tenure of Vietnam's NA is expected to last till 26 June.

Xinhua

## Nine killed in dust storm in western India

NEW DELHI, 20 May — At least nine people were killed in a dust storm that hit the western Indian state of Rajasthan Tuesday evening, a senior police official said Wednesday. "The dust storm lasted for one hour. While five people died in the state's Bharatpur district, two persons died in Dholpur and two others in Bikaner. Some deaths happened due to wall collapse because of the storm and strong winds," he said, on condition of anonymity.

Rajasthan's Chief Minister Vasundhara Raje has announced a compensation of 400,000 rupees (8,000 US dollars) for the families of each of the victims. Dust storms are common in Rajasthan because of the desert there.

Xinhua

COLOMBO, 20 May — Sri Lankan President Maithripala Sirisena on Wednesday said that he will not allow international investigators into the country to probe allegations over the war. Speaking to newspaper editors, Sirisena said that a domestic system will be in place by June to investigate the allegations and local laws will be used to take

## Sri Lanka denies int'l investigators to probe war allegations

action against anyone found guilty.

"We have had talks with the UN on the investigations. As a government we have told them we will not allow foreign investigators coming into Sri Lanka. However we will take advice from the UN and conduct a domestic investigation," the president said.

The UN Human Rights

Council is expected to submit a report on Sri Lanka at its September sessions.

"We need to brief the Human Rights Council in September on the domestic mechanism. So the mechanism will be in place by June. We will ensure our sovereignty is protected in the human rights investigation," Sirisena said.

Sri Lanka defeated the

Tamil Tiger rebels after a 30 years war in May 2009 but was accused of committing grave human rights violations during the final stage of the battle.

The former Sri Lankan government had rejected most of the allegations on human rights abuses and also refused to allow international investigators into the country.—Xinhua

## Abe becomes 6<sup>th</sup> longest-serving prime minister in postwar Japan

TOKYO, 20 May — Prime Minister Shinzo Abe became the sixth longest-serving prime minister in postwar Japan on Wednesday, surpassing the tenure of his grandfather and former Prime Minister Nobusuke Kishi with 1,242 days in office.

"I have a long way to go. What is important is not the number of days in office but what I have achieved," he told reporters at the prime minister's office. "I will devote myself to tackling our policies." After first becoming prime minister in September 2006, Abe abruptly stepped down in September 2007 due to what he later described as an intestinal disease. The leader of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party began his second term in December 2012, and his tenure includes the 366 days he spent as prime minister during his first term.

The longest-serving prime minister in postwar Japan is Eisaku Sato, who logged 2,798 days in office. He is followed by Shigeru Yoshida at 2,616 days, Junichiro Koizumi at 1,980 days,



Prime Minister Shinzo Abe enters his office in Tokyo on 20 May, 2015, becoming the sixth longest serving postwar Japanese leader having been in power for a total of 1,242 days over his first and second stints in office. He told reporters, "The important thing is what I have achieved, rather than how long I have stayed in office."

KYODO NEWS

Yasuhiro Nakasone at 1,806 days and Hayato Ikeda at 1,575 days.—Kyodo News

## Two killed by Abu Sayyaf men in S Philippines

MANILA, 20 May — Two civilians were killed and another was wounded when they were fired upon by Abu Sayyaf terrorists off the waters of Maimbung town in Sulu Province of southern Philippines on Tuesday afternoon, a military commander reported on Wednesday.

Col Allan Arrojado, chief of the Joint Task Group Sulu, said the victims were aboard a motor-

ized boat, cruising between the seaways of Tiomabal island in Maimbung town and Tapul town, around 3 pm when they were fired upon by Abu Sayyaf men aboard another boat. Arrojado said, the victims were attacked "without any apparent reason."

Arrojado said the Abu Sayyaf men may be trying to avenge the death of their five comrades during the failed kidnapping of

businesswoman Guan Kim Mautjon last 6 May in Laminusa island. The 400-strong Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG), founded in the early 1990s by Islamic extremists, is a violent Muslim terrorist group operating in the southern Philippines. The ASG is notorious for a series of kidnappings, bombings and even beheadings in southern Philippines over the past decades.—Xinhua



Hiroshima municipal officials place lists of the 292,325 victims of the 1945 US atomic bombing in the sun at the Peace Memorial Park in the city on 20 May, 2015 to remove moisture ahead of the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the tragedy.—KYODO NEWS

## With nuclear deal in sight, Iran drives harder bargain in Indian trade talks

NEW DELHI, 20 May — Iranian trade negotiators have become more assertive with Indian counterparts as hopes rise of international sanctions on Teheran easing later this year, sources said, and Indian companies fear they may lose business as more countries bid for projects. The push back from the Iranians came as a surprise to India, which has enjoyed special dispensation from Teheran as one of only a handful of countries willing to do business with it while it faced Western economic sanctions.

Under a tentative framework agreement reached between six major powers and Teheran in April, Iran agreed to limit its nuclear activity in return for sanctions relief. A final deal could be reached by 30 June. That prospect appears to have emboldened Iran, said sources familiar with trade negotiations with India, including in its handling of a sizeable deal to import railway tracks.

The \$233 million contract, signed last October, was for India's State Trading Corp (STC) to facilitate exports of rail tracks from SAIL Ltd and Jindal Steel and Power Ltd to Iran's railways. But Iran told Indian negotiators that it had offers from other countries, including Turkey, to supply the equipment at a cheaper cost, the sources said.

Last month, New Delhi sent trade secretary Rajeev Kher to persuade Teheran to



A worker walks atop a tanker wagon to check the freight level at an oil terminal on the outskirts of Kolkata 27 Nov, 2013. REUTERS

adhere to the original terms, but he came back "empty handed", according to one of the sources. "They are no longer the same Iranians that came to us last year for signing the deal," the source said. "They were polite this time, but had an upper hand in the negotiations."

India has cut the value of the deal by about 7 percent to \$217 million, the sources said. They added that they worry the Iranians may seek further cuts, and could split the order with other countries.

STC chairman Rahim Khaleel declined to comment. Kher, Iran Rail, SAIL and Jindal Steel did not respond to requests for comment. It was not immediately clear whether other countries that trade with Iran have seen a similar hardening in Teheran's stance. Oil refinery sources in Japan said they had not seen any change yet.

Iran said it wanted to renegotiate the rail contract,

because the euro had declined against the dollar and steel and iron ore prices had fallen significantly since the deal was first struck in 2014. Indian negotiators said price and currency risks were incorporated into the original agreement, but they had to give in, the sources said. It was a large order for the Indians and the spectre of competition from other suppliers loomed large, they added. "Earlier they were standing in line to offer us deals," one source said. Now, they ask the Indians to "wait in line and wait your turn."

The supply contract is expected to kick off within six months, and, under the renewed terms, India will supply 250,000 tonnes of rails to Iran over 18 months through STC. The shift in Iran's stance has also been visible in the vital energy sector. The National Iranian Oil Company has told Indian refiners, for example, that it would withdraw

some of the discounts and free shipping it had been offering them on crude sales to maintain its oil output, oil industry sources said. The sources added that the state oil firm anticipated ramping up exports once the nuclear deal was finalised, after which there would be many more buyers for its crude.

In 2013, the then Iranian Oil Minister Rostam Qasemi visited India to offer development rights for a gas field on a production sharing basis, after getting special permission from parliament on a deal that would normally contravene Iranian law.

India did not sign the deal for the Farzad B gas field, as international sanctions barred investment in Iran's hydrocarbon sector, an Iranian diplomat said.

Now, Teheran has withdrawn the offer, according to Iranian media. Iran plans to auction the field instead, one report said.—Reuters

## Third nuclear plant in Japan clears major hurdle for resumption

TOKYO, 20 May, — An idled nuclear reactor owned by Shikoku Electric Power Co on Wednesday cleared a major hurdle toward resumption, giving another boost to the government's plan to revive nuclear power following the 2011 Fukushima meltdowns.

With the approval of the Nuclear Regulation Authority for its enhanced safety measures against earthquake and tsunami hazards as well as other severe accidents, the No 3 unit of the three-reactor Ikata plant in western Japan has joined a total of four reactors at two other nuclear plants in obtaining safety approval based on tighter post-Fukushima regulations.

The decision will likely be finalized after soliciting technical comments from the public for a month. But the reactor is not expected to go back online before winter, as Shikoku Electric has yet to gain local approval and finish other necessary procedures.

The utility said it will aim to bring the reactor back online by the end of this year.

Shunichi Tanaka, chairman of the NRA, said the regulator had "heated exchanges of opinions" with Shikoku Electric over the plant's safety before giving its approval.

Shikoku Electric applied for the safety screening of the Ikata No 3 unit in Ehime Prefecture, which began commercial operation in 1994, as soon as the tighter regulations were introduced in July 2013.

At the regulator's be-

hest, the utility set tougher quake-resistance safety criteria for the plant's facilities and enhanced safety measures, including the construction of a new quake-proof, emergency response facility.

Currently, all of Japan's 43 commercial reactors remain offline amid safety concerns raised by the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear accident.

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe is seeking to reactivate reactors that have cleared the regulator's safety screening, saying it is necessary to lower electricity bills and boost economic growth.

Nevertheless, the outlook remains uncertain due to a prolonged regulatory screening process and other hurdles.

Two reactors at Kyushu Electric Power Co's Sendai plant in Kagoshima Prefecture, which became the first last year to meet the new safety requirements, are seen as the closest to restarting. But the plant is not expected to go back online before late July as the utility still needs to finish pre-operational checks.

Safety clearances were also obtained in February for two reactors at Kansai Electric Power Co's Takahama plant in Fukui Prefecture, but a recent court decision that has banned their restart also clouds the government's bid to revive atomic power.

A total of 24 reactors at 15 nuclear plants, including the Ikata unit, are currently undergoing the regulator's safety screening process.

Kyodo News



People stage a protest in front of a building housing the Nuclear Regulation Authority in Tokyo on 20 May, 2015, as a reactor at Shikoku Electric Power Co's Ikata nuclear power plant in Shikoku, one of Japan's main islands, cleared a major safety hurdle toward resumption. —KYODO NEWS

## North Korea 'modified' submarine missile launch photos, says US official

SEOUL, 20 May — Photos showing a North Korean missile launched from a submarine were manipulated by state propagandists, and the isolated country may still be years away from developing the technology, a top US military official said on Tuesday.

North Korea, heavily sanctioned by the United States and United Nations for its missile and nuclear tests, said on 9 May it had successfully conducted an underwater test-fire of a submarine-launched ballistic missile (SLBM) which, if true, would indicate progress in its pursuit of building missile-equipped submarines.

On Wednesday, the

North warned Washington not to challenge its sovereign right to boost military



North Korean leader Kim Jong Un watches the test-fire of a strategic submarine underwater ballistic missile (not pictured), in this undated photo released by North Korea's Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) in Pyongyang on 9 May, 2015. REUTERS

deterrence and boasted of its ability to miniaturise nuclear warheads, a claim it has made before and which has been widely questioned by experts and never verified.

But Pyongyang is still "many years" from developing submarine-launched ballistic missiles, US Admiral James Winnefeld told an audience at the Centre for Strategic & International Studies (CSIS) in Washington on Tuesday.

"They have not gotten as far as their clever video editors and spinmeisters would have us believe," said Winnefeld, who is vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Analysis seen by Reuters from German aer-

ospace engineers Markus Schiller and Robert Schmucker of Schmucker Technologie appeared to support Winnefeld's statement.

The Munich-based pair said photos of the launch were "strongly modified", including reflections of the missile exhaust flame in the water which did not line up with the missile itself.

North Korea, which regularly threatens to destroy the United States, had a track record of offering faked proof to claim significant advances in missile technology, Schiller and Schmucker said, such as poorly built mockups of missiles on display at military parades in 2012 and 2013.—Reuters

## WORLD

## US willing to change pro-democracy programmes in Cuba

WASHINGTON, 20 May — The United States on Tuesday indicated its willingness to change pro-democracy programmes which it organizes in Cuba and which are condemned by Havana, removing one of the biggest impediments to restoring diplomatic ties.

A senior State Department official, speaking to reporters before talks with Cuban representatives on Thursday, said the sides had narrowed differences over reopening embassies since an agreement was reached in December to renew diplomatic relations.

The official said another obstacle had been removed after Cuba found a US bank that would handle the accounts of a restored Cuban embassy in Washington. The official declined to name the bank.

M&T Bank Corp canceled its services with Cuba's Interests Section in Washington in 2013 and Havana blamed the move on US sanctions.

The official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the democracy programmes "have changed over time, and they will continue to change over time to reflect a reality, whether that reality is on the ground in Cuba or in the United States." The programmes include courses in journalism and information technology at the US mission in Havana. The United States sees



Cuba's president Raul Castro talks to the media next to Cuba's Foreign Minister Bruno Rodriguez (L) during the departure of French President Francois Hollande at Jose Marti airport in Havana on 12 May, 2015.

REUTERS

them as normal diplomatic functions, but Cuban President Raul Castro said last week that they were "illegal" training for government opponents.

The official said the programmes have already been adapted but the United States would not halt them because they were the most direct way of supporting ordinary Cubans.

The talks in Washington on Thursday are the fourth round since US President Barack Obama and Castro agreed on 17 December to restore diplomatic relations, which were severed in 1961 during the Cold War. They will focus on upgrading the "interests sections" in Washington and Havana to embassies. Washington also wants an end to restrictions on the movement of its diplomats in Havana and the remov-

al of Cuban security police around its premises.

Cuba signaled on Monday that it was ready to move ahead, saying it did not see any obstacles.

In the US Congress lawmakers who oppose and support close ties with Havana introduced Cuba-related legislation.

Two Republican senators who oppose normalizing ties, Marco Rubio of Florida and Louisiana's David Vitter, introduced a bill that would make ending restrictions on travel and trade conditional on Cuba resolving billions of dollars in claims over property seized during the island's communist revolution. Another group of senators introduced a bill that would open the way for US telecommunications and Internet companies to provide services and devices in Cuba. —Reuters

## Train strike spreads to German passenger routes, millions delayed

BERLIN, 20 May — Millions of commuters faced long delays in Germany on Wednesday after train drivers walked off the job to demand higher pay and negotiating rights.

Two in three long-distance trains and hundreds of commuter services were cancelled after the small but powerful GDL union extended its open-ended strike to passenger routes. Freight trains were halted on Tuesday.

The walkout is the ninth in 10 months to hit rail operator Deutsche Bahn and industry has warned that the strike could cost Europe's biggest economy up to 100 million euros (£71.57 million) a day, hurting its image as an industrial and

logistics hub.

The scope of the action has alarmed politicians, businesses and other unions in a country known for relatively harmonious labour relations.

It drew sharp criticism from both the BDA employers association and the DGB union umbrella organization.

"To put it mildly, this is going too far," DGB head Reiner Hoffmann told the *Tagesspiegel* newspaper, questioning the readiness of GDL chief Claus Weselsky to find a compromise deal.

The BDA said the damage caused to the economy overall was "completely disproportionate" with the steel, engineering and car sectors

among those hardest hit because of their reliance on freight services.

"The GDL is taking Deutsche Bahn customers hostage for egoistical reasons to get more power," said BDA president Ingo Kramer. GDL, a member of the DGB, has been trying to poach members from other unions and strengthen its hand.

The GDL union has not said when the stoppage will end, just that it will be longer than the last strike which lasted nearly a week and was the longest in Deutsche Bahn's 21-year history.

Analysts say a 10-day strike could shave 0.1 of a percentage point off gross domestic product growth in the second quarter.

The GDL union, with 20,000 members, wants a 5 percent pay rise for its members, a shorter working week and the right to represent other workers in the company, such as train stewards.

Deutsche Bahn, with 200,000 employees, has offered a 4.7 percent pay rise plus a one-off payment of 1,000 euros, but it has refused to let the GDL negotiate for other workers.

Politicians, including Chancellor Angela Merkel, have urged the two parties to enter mediation.

Reuters



Members of train drivers union GDL picket outside the main station in Berlin, Germany on 7 May, 2015.

REUTERS

## US House Benghazi panel subpoenas former Clinton White House aide

WASHINGTON, 20 May — Congressional investigators have issued a subpoena demanding that former Clinton White House adviser Sidney Blumenthal testify next month before the US House of Representatives committee investigating the 2012 attack on US diplomatic facilities in Benghazi, Libya.

The subpoena, a copy of which was made available to Reuters, demands that Blumenthal appear before the House committee on 3 June to give a deposition. The subpoena is dated on Monday but carries a notation indicating an unnamed deputy US marshal served it on Blumenthal's wife on Tuesday.

The copy of the subpoena contains no further details about the subject matter of the deposition.

"I can confirm Mr Blumenthal has been called

for a deposition by the committee," Jamal Ware, a spokesman for Republican Representative Trey Gowdy, the Benghazi committee chairman, said in response to a Reuters query.

More than two years ago, a set of emails sent by Blumenthal to Hillary Clinton while she served as secretary of state were posted on the Internet by a hacker who called himself Guccifer. Blumenthal did not work for Clinton when she was secretary of state and sent those emails as a private individual.

The emails included detailed private intelligence reports on events in Libya sent to Blumenthal by Tyler Drumheller, a former senior CIA officer. Some of the emails were sent around the time of the Benghazi attacks and discussed information Drumheller's sources gave

him about the attack.

On Tuesday, *The New York Times* published a handful of emails showing that Clinton had passed on some of the private intelligence reports to aides and other State Department personnel.

The messages show that at least one of the private intelligence reports

made its way to a recipient who appears to have been Christopher Stevens, the US ambassador to Libya who was killed by militants during the 11 September, 2012, Benghazi attacks.

The emails, part of a batch of around 300 messages related to Libya that the State Department turned over to Gowdy's

Benghazi committee earlier this year, show Clinton herself tersely expressing interest in some of the private intelligence reports and scepticism about others. In one email to an aide, Clinton, referring to one of the reports supplied by Blumenthal, wrote: "This strains credulity. What do you think?"

People familiar with the set of Clinton emails turned over by the State Department to Gowdy's committee said that the emails leaked to *The New York Times* were not a complete set of messages related to what Blumenthal sent Clinton.

Blumenthal is a former journalist who served in the Clinton White House as one of the most loyal defenders of both Hillary Clinton and her husband, former President Bill Clinton. During the congressional investigation into Bill Clinton's relationship with White House intern Monica Lewinsky, Blumenthal was accused by a longtime friend, the late British writer Christopher Hitchens, of spreading defamatory information about Lewinsky. Blumenthal denied the allegation.

Reuters



Demonstrators celebrate after burning a car they say was full of ammunition as they stormed the headquarters of the Islamist Ansar al-Sharia militia group in Benghazi on 21 Sept, 2012.

REUTERS



Thursday, 21 May, 2015

## Sustainable strategy vital to ecotourism development

By Aung Khin

Myanmar possesses diverse forests and green zones inhabited by a wide variety of flora and fauna, providing an ideal setting for nature-oriented ecotourism.

However, the ecotourism sector can only flourish once proper infrastructure is developed. Ecotourism focused on Myanmar's forest resources can play a key role in improving the socio-economic life of the people, but it is impor-

tant that the sector is developed in a way that preserves these important resources.

The quantity and quality of Myanmar's forest coverage has declined significantly over the past 30 years. It is therefore vitally important that more protected areas are developed.

Improper land use, illegal hunting, introduction to invasive species, infrastructure development and climate change are the main threats to the country's biodiversity and must be tackled.

The country presently has several different categories of protected areas and each serves a specific function according to legislation and operating objectives.

In neighbouring countries, convenient transportation, electricity supply and other facilities are set up together with the development of ecotourism sites.

Poverty and increased consumption spurred

by economic growth pose challenges to the ecotourism sector, as does increasing demand on natural resources from neighbouring countries.

Livelihoods of local people should not be neglected in the push to promote the ecotourism sector and conserve biodiversity. If they are able to gain income without damaging natural resources, the country can sustainably grow the revenue from this sector.

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## The Challenge of Change

Sonu Trivedi

Myanmar's growing rapprochement with the West has significantly challenged China's interest by changing the bilateral balance of power in the region. It has opened a window of opportunity for other countries to reach out to Myanmar which is considered as one of the virgin markets in Asia. Accelerated by loosening of sanctions and establishment of quasi-civilian regime after November 2010 elections, investments are pouring in from different directions.

After ending years of isolation, Myanmar's new foreign policy of proximity with the West offers immense opportunities. Myanmar has developed substantially different relationship with the United States and Western Europe in recent times with the easing of sanctions and reform process which was initiated after the new regime took charge in 2011. United States have been supportive of the reform process in Myanmar and USAID has been an active agent for initiating developmental partnership with the country. Strategically, it is viewed that a stable Myanmar in the region would provide impetus to the rebalancing strategy of the United States in the Asia-Pacific.

Transition and reforms in Myanmar has also brought about increased economic engagement with the European Union. After lifting its sanctions in April 2013, except the arms embargo, the European Union has sought active collaboration with the Government of Myanmar to assist reform process and to contribute to

the political, economic and social development. The European Union is committed to the reform process in Myanmar and has agreed to a Comprehensive Framework which outlines its support to political, social and economic development, fostering respect for human rights and assisting the government in re-building its place in the international community.

Given the growing rapprochement of Myanmar with the West, in the light of the complex relationship of United States with China, such heightened economic engagement may affect the Myanmar-China bilateral relationship. China was the key player in Myanmar after the economic sanctions were imposed by the United States and the European Union since 1988, but easing of Western sanctions has increased competition and challenged the monopoly and dominance of Chinese presence. Obama's foreign policy of 'pivot' to Asia-Pacific has been a cause of concern for the growing Chinese presence in the region. It has prompted Chinese anxiety and heightened regional worries, which are now faced with a tough dilemma to choose between the United States and China. In this regard, Myanmar's regular dialogue with US leadership and high level visits have raised alarm bells for China.

Transition in Myanmar has also led to the opening up and its growing importance for the existing and newer regional powers. The mounting Japanese assertiveness in Myanmar sends a warning signal for China's growing influence in the country. Japan's assistance

in the country's effort for democratization and building up of a future Myanmar has now deepened its partnership. Japan's geo-political ambitions and expanding economic opportunities is posing a strong challenge to the traditional regional powers in Myanmar. It has offered economic aid to support development of country's infrastructure in the hope of improving the investment climate for business. The coming together of Japan and Thailand in Myanmar on the much-awaited multi-billion-dollar Dawei megaproject and India's invitation to Japan to invest in and build overland infrastructure in the Northeast is going to outplay Chinese dominance in the region. Furthermore, Japanese entry into developing the Chennai port and an attempt to link it with Dawei port in Myanmar is an indication of Japan-India and Thailand coming together and forming an axis in a bid to confront China in Myanmar.

So far as India's interest in Myanmar is concerned, it is stepping up its development cooperation in the light of Myanmar's continuing reform process and its historical and cultural ties. India is regarded as a land of opportunity and a benign power, given the competitions that exist from the existing players and other potential stakeholders. In this regard, focus on 'commerce, culture and connectivity' by the Indian Prime Minister offers tremendous opportunities for boosting up trade and strengthening bilateral ties between the two countries. He regards Myanmar as "a valued friend and priority area". In-

dia is trying to leverage on 'soft' power diplomacy and fostering deeper economic and business links. As compared to Chinese loan which are more commercial in nature, India and Japan have kept their focus more on infrastructural development, capacity building and humanitarian assistance. Thus, India has been particularly instrumental in setting up of Centres for industrial training and enhancement of IT skills and other capacity building programmes.

There has been an enormous growth in China's influence in Myanmar, significantly, after the sanctions since 1989. The armed forces of Myanmar depended largely on Chinese assistance. Furthermore, the support of China has been crucial in diplomatic forums such as the United Nations Security Council. Increasing Chinese access to Myanmar's energy resources has been a matter of concern for regional powers because of its strategic implications. Due to growing Sino-Myanmar energy ties, China is investing heavily in developing ports in Myanmar, gaining greater access to the Indian Ocean. In the wake of sanctions which had for long blocked Western investments, China emerged as Myanmar's biggest ally, investing in infrastructure, mining projects, hydropower dams and twin oil-and-gas pipelines to help feed southern China's growing energy needs. However, it is noteworthy that Myanmar occupies a vital space on China's south-western flank. It is important as a trading outlet to the Indian Ocean for its landlocked inland provinces of Yunnan. Companies from Yunnan are big investors in mining, rubber and other industries in the bordering state of

Kachin in Myanmar. Owing to its strategic location, Myanmar's market is essential to Yunnan's export economy. Besides, China's strategic interest is also guided by keeping its border trade routes secured and maintaining stability in the border regions.

Myanmar is also critical to China in its recent strategy of implementing 'Belt and Road Initiative' to enhance regional connectivity which includes the 'Silk Road Economic Belt' and '21st Century Maritime Silk Road'. It is expected that this initiative would speed up financial integration, trade liberalization, eliminate investment barriers, facilitate investment climate and people to people connectivity. The new maritime silk road aims at enhancing maritime partnership against the backdrop that China's geopolitical ties with its Southeast Asian neighbours brings both opportunities for cooperation and challenges from territorial disputes. It has been regarded as the central focus of China's foreign policy in the year 2015.

The economic and strategic outcome of the political transition and changes taking place in Myanmar has generated immense attention and interest and has also initiated debates regarding China's strategic, economic, geo-political interest in the country. Since 2011, due to space for the parliamentary debate, the unquestionable supremacy of the Chinese investments in the major three of China's largest investment projects in the country have faced intense criticism. Two projects—the massive Myit-sone dam on the Ayeyawady River and the Letpadaung copper mine—were suspended after locals protested against environmental and

social impacts like flooding and pollution, though work on the Copper mine project was resumed subsequently, after the profit sharing agreement was revised. However, the pipeline to deliver oil and gas across Myanmar to China has survived, notwithstanding intense criticism. Nevertheless, its plan to build a high-speed railway line by 2015 which would allow people and cargo to travel from Kyaukpypu passing through Mandalay to Yunnan has been put on halt. Resentment against China is widespread in Myanmar, and the discontentment about the rail project was of great concern to the present regime which faces elections later in 2015.

Myanmar-China relations have also been marred by the resumption of recent conflict in the Kokang region. It has been regarded as one of the bloodiest conflict country has ever seen. Instability at the borders has been a cause of security concern for both the countries. Besides, security concern, the Kokang conflict has become a controversial issue for China.

In spite of sensitivity about China's growing strength and influence in the region, the relationship in contemporary period between China and Myanmar is characterized by strong bilateral trade and investment—ranking at the top so far as the bilateral trade and investment is concerned. Given the long term strategic and commercial interest of China in Myanmar, it seeks to resolve the conflict peacefully without undermining its own stake and the nationalist sentiments.

(Sonu Trivedi teaches at Delhi University)

LOCAL NEWS

## Housing for low-income families under construction in Aungmyethazan Tsp



MANDALAY, 20 May — Mandalay Region Minister for Development Affairs, Mandalay Mayor U Aung Moug, together with officials on Monday inspected the progress of a housing construction project in Nyaunggwe Ward of Aungmyethazan Township.

Myanmar V Pile Company is carrying out construction of a six-storey building on block 444/2. The mayor and party viewed construction of foundations for the housing by Farmers Development Public Company. Officials

of Mandalay City Development Committee and the construction company briefed the mayor on the progress of construction.

MCDC plans to build 20 buildings, with apartments to be rented to low-income families. The committee will rent 1,440 apartments of the buildings to the public at fair prices.

At present, five construction companies are building housing to be completed within a six-month period.

*Thiha Ko Ko (Mandalay)*

## Trainees receive caps and coats at Meiktila Nurses Training School



MANDALAY, 20 May — Nurse trainees received their caps and coats at a ceremony in Meiktila, Mandalay Region, on 18 May morning.

Speakers at the ceremony at Meiktila Nurses Training School under the Department of Health Professional Resource Development and Management included Meiktila District's deputy commissioner U Tint Wai Thone and Principal Daw Mar Mar Myint.

The principal presented caps to 62 female trainees and coats to two male trainees.

The deputy commissioner and officials presented prizes to outstanding trainees.

Medical Superintendent Dr Myat Khaing of Meiktila District Hospital, Township Administrator U Myo Hlaing, nursing officers of No 1 Military Hospital (500-bed), and officials attended the ceremony.

The training school has graduated 465 nurses.

*Tin Maung (Mandalay)*

## Myanmar, Vietnamese businessmen focus on investment, trade and tourism sectors

MANDALAY, 20 May — The Viet Nam-Myanmar Conference on Trade Investment, Tourism Promotion 2015 took place at Mandalay Hill Resort in Aungmyethazan Township on 19 May.

Vice Chairperson of People's Committee of Ho Chi Minh City Mrs Nguyen Thi Hong of Vietnam spoke about economic cooperation between Myanmar and Vietnam, investment opportunities and development of the tourism industry.

Mandalay Region Minister for Planning and Economy U Aung Zan extended greetings while Secretary of Mandalay Region Chambers of Commerce and Industry Dr Maung Maung explained opportunities in economic cooperation in Mandalay Region



and small-and-medium-scale industries. They discussed distribution of agricultural produce, foodstuff, textiles, personal goods, slippers and medicines to

the upper Myanmar market, and opportunities for running daily flights between Myanmar and Vietnam.

Speakers at the ceremony included Myanmar and Vietnamese officials.

*Thiha Ko Ko (Mandalay)*

## Modern technology for cement production introduced

MANDALAY, 20 May — A ceremony to introduce a new, environmentally friendly cement production process was held at Mandalay Hill Resort Hotel in Aungmyethazan Township on 19 May, with engineers and entrepreneurs from Mandalay and Kyaukse industrial zones in attendance.

Experts from Native

Power Technology Co., Ltd. of Denmark explained modern technology for production of cement with the use of natural resources.

The Denmark company established the Thayet cement plant to produce cement with the use of modern kilns for the first time in Myanmar.

*Maung Pyi Thu (Mandalay)*

## Myanmar, Israel discuss economic cooperation

MANDALAY, 20 May — Chairman of Mandalay Region Chambers of

Commerce and Industry U Aung Than, Vice Chairman U Kyaw Min and secretary Dr Maung Maung held a meeting with Israeli Ambassador Mr Daniel Zonshine at Yadanabon Super Centre in Chanayethazan Township, Mandalay, on 19 May.

They discussed economic cooperation between Myanmar and Israel, investment opportunities, assistance for development of agricultural technology and sending of scholarship students to Israel.

*Maung Pyi Thu (Mandalay)*



## Saudi jets pound army bases, depots in Yemen capital

CAIRO, 20 May — Warplanes from a Saudi-led coalition carried out the most sustained bombardment of Yemen's capital Sanaa in nearly two months of air strikes on Tuesday night, residents of the city said, hitting army bases and weapons depots.

It was the first time air strikes continued from morning until after midnight since the campaign began on 26 March, residents said, and led to terrifying blasts across the city.

Yemen's exiled government in Riyadh, backed by the coalition, said on Tuesday it would not agree to talks with rebels until they withdrew from cities and surrendered weapons, meaning peace talks to end the civil war seem unlikely soon.

The coalition restarted strikes late on Sunday after a five-day humanitarian pause, waving away pleas for an extension by the United Nations by pointing to what it said were repeated abuses of the ceasefire by rebels.

The rebels, an alliance of the Houthi militia and army forces loyal to former president Ali Abdullah Saleh, control most of the populated west of Yemen, and have been fighting local groups in the cities of Aden, Taiz, Marib and al-Dhala.

The Houthis and Saudi forces exchanged artillery and rocket fire across the border on Wednesday night and coalition warplanes bombed the group's stronghold of Saada, the rebels said.

Sunni Muslim Saudi Arabia regards the Houthis as a proxy of its regional foe Shi'ite Iran, although many analysts say Tehran's ties to the group fall short of that, and wants to restore the government of President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi.

An Iranian ship en route to Yemen's Hodaida port, which is controlled by Saleh and the Houthis, is due to dock on Thursday night, carrying activists and a cargo of aid, and has said it will not submit to searches by the coalition.

The United Nations Security Council last month passed resolution 2216 imposing an arms embargo on the Houthis. It also demanded militia abandon areas they have captured and return weapons seized



An explosion is seen at the Noqum Mountain after it was hit by an air strike in Yemen's capital Sanaa on 19 May, 2015.—REUTERS

from the army. Saudi jets this month struck Sanaa airport's runway to stop an

Iranian cargo plane, which Teheran said was carrying a Red Crescent aid ship-

ment, from landing without having been inspected by it or the UN.—Reuters

## Iraqi forces say thwart Islamic State attack east of Ramadi



Displaced Sunni people, who fled the violence in the city of Ramadi, arrive at the outskirts of Baghdad on 19 May, 2015.—REUTERS

BAGHDAD, 20 May — Iraqi forces said they fought off an overnight attack by Islamic State militants east of the city of Ramadi, which the insurgents overran at the weekend in the most significant setback for the government in a year.

The insurgents attacked government lines in Husaiba al-Sharqiya, about

halfway between Ramadi and the Habbaniya military base, said police and pro-government forces.

"Daesh (Islamic State) attacked us around midnight after a wave of mortar shelling on our positions," Amir al-Fahdawi a leader of the pro-government Sunni tribal force in the area, told Reuters.

"This time they came

from another direction in an attempt to launch a surprise attack, but we were vigilant and, after around four hours of fighting, we aborted their offensive," he added.

Islamic State militants are seeking to consolidate their gains in the vast desert province of Anbar, where only small pockets of territory remain under gov-

ernment control, strung out along the Euphrates river valley and the border with Saudi Arabia and Jordan.

The Habbaniya base is roughly midway between Ramadi and the town of Fallujah, which has been under Islamic State control for more than a year and is just 50 km (32 miles) from the Iraqi capital.

Reuters

## Israeli police say Arab driver shot dead after ramming attack

JERUSALEM, 20 May — Israeli police shot dead a driver in a Palestinian neighbourhood of East Jerusalem on Wednesday after he rammed them with his car, injuring two of them, a police spokesman said.

Describing the driver as an "Arab terrorist", the spokesman said two policewomen had been lightly hurt in the incident.

Palestinians want East Jerusalem, and other territories captured by Israel in the 1967 Middle East war, for their future state. With US-backed peace talks stalled for more than a year, Jerusalem has seen a surge in violence.

Reuters

## Burundi president delays parliamentary elections by 1 week



Protesters show bullet casings during a protest against Burundi President Pierre Nkurunziza and his bid for a third term in Bujumbura, Burundi on 19 May, 2015.—REUTERS

BUJUMBURA, 20 May — Burundi's President Pierre Nkurunziza has signed a decree delaying parliamentary and local council elections by one week to 2 June because of the political crisis gripping the east African state, his adviser said on Wednesday.

Willy Nyamitwe told Reuters Nkurunziza had made the decision after a recommendation by the election commission and following requests from opposition politicians and the international community for a postponement.—Reuters

## Egypt appoints Brotherhood critic as new justice minister

CAIRO, 20 May — Egypt appointed judge Ahmed el-Zend, a fierce critic of the Muslim Brotherhood, as justice minister on Wednesday, the president's office said in a statement, angering opposition politicians.

Zend, head of a group that represents judges

across the country, has regularly condemned the now outlawed Brotherhood, the Islamist movement removed from power in mid-2013.

In a speech from last year posted on YouTube, he also condemned the 2011 uprising that ousted veteran autocrat Hosni Mubarak

for letting the Brotherhood reach power a year later.

While the courts have been gradually absolving Mubarak-era officials, they have been handing down lengthy sentences to liberal and Islamist activists on charges ranging from protesting to committing acts of violence. Some online

commentators tweeted "No to Zend as justice minister" and shared videos of his past statements.

Former justice minister Mahfouz Saber resigned on Monday after he was branded snobbish for saying that the son of a garbage collector would be unworthy to serve as a judge.—Reuters

## Apple, Android app makers cool to Microsoft overtures

SEATTLE, 20 May — Microsoft's plan to make its new version of Windows a mobile hit by letting it accept tweaked Apple and Android apps has met an obstacle: some of the software developers the company needs to woo just aren't interested.

Windows phones accounted for just 3 percent of global smartphone sales last year, compared with about 81 percent for devices with Google's Android system and 15 percent for Apple and its iOS system, according to research firm IDC. One reason is that Windows doesn't run as many or as attractive apps as its rivals.

To boost sales of its phones and new operating system, Microsoft said last



A Microsoft representative shows a smartphone with Windows 10 operating system at the CeBIT trade fair in Hanover in this file photo from on 15 March, 2015.

REUTERS

month that it would provide tools to software developers to make it easier to design apps for Windows based on apps that run on Android or Apple. But be-

cause so few people use a Windows phone, most developers remain focused on the more popular systems and don't see a need to develop apps for Windows.

They also said they doubt how easy the new tools will be to use.

"Windows phone will have to gain a significant share of the market before this becomes something that saves us time and/or money," said Sean Orelli, a director at app development firm Fuzz Productions in New York, which makes apps related to Citibank, the New York Post, and Conde Nast, among others.

For Microsoft, the world's biggest software company, there's a lot at stake this summer as it rolls out Windows 10, the first operating system designed to run on PCs, tablets and phones. If developers don't embrace the new platform, it will seriously damage the

prospects of the new operating system, which Microsoft hopes will power one billion devices in two or three years.

Interviews with more than a dozen developers found just one planning to move an app from Apple or Android to Microsoft (MSFT.O).

That's King.com, which ported its popular Candy Crush Saga game from iOS to Windows 10 "with very few code modifications" and will be installed automatically with upgrades to Windows 10, according to Microsoft. King.com confirmed the move but declined to comment further.

Eight developers said they aren't planning to develop for Windows 10 at

all. Four who already have Windows apps said they would continue to do so.

Because Microsoft hasn't actually unveiled its new set of tools to turn apps into a Windows format, developers did not rule out any move, and a Microsoft spokesman said that "it is still early" and many software companies want to explore the tools over the coming months.

More and better apps might attract more people to buy a Windows phone or tablet, Microsoft reasons. Only six of the top 10 free apps on iPhone are available for Windows phone, and of those, two are made by Microsoft itself. In the past Microsoft has paid developers to create Windows apps.—Reuters

## China to spend \$182 billion to boost Internet by end of 2017

BEIJING, 20 May — China will spend more than \$182 billion to boost Internet speeds by the end of 2017, a top government body said, as Beijing moves towards a more service-driven economy to boost growth.

The State Council said the government will invest more than 430 billion yuan (\$69.3 billion) this year on network construction, with at least another 700 billion yuan (\$112.8 billion) spent over the following two years. The goal is to accelerate the development of fibre optic broadband and high speed 4G mobile networks, the governing body said on its website.

China ranked 82<sup>nd</sup> in the world for average Inter-



People use laptops at Baidu's headquarters in Beijing on 17 Dec, 2014.—REUTERS

net connexion speed, slower than Malaysia, Thailand and Taipei, according to cloud computing services provider Akamai's State of the Internet report for the fourth quarter of 2014.

Improving that standing is crucial for the world's

second largest economy, which is experiencing the slowest growth in decades and is seeking to diversify away from low-tech manufacturing and development.

On Tuesday, China unveiled a vision for the next stage of its economic

ascent, moving from low-tech manufacturing to advanced industry in areas such as space, e-commerce, green energy and bioengineering by 2025.

Premier Li Keqiang has also already identified the Internet and technology as vital catalysts for the shift towards an economy centred around services.

China's three state-owned wireless carriers are also on board. Last week, China Mobile Ltd, China Unicom (Hong Kong) Ltd and China Telecom Corp Ltd said they would cut mobile data prices and boost data speeds this year, potentially spurring a mass migration of customers to more lucrative 4G contracts.—Reuters

## Eye-tracking tech makes virtual reality hands-free

LONDON, 20 May — An advanced virtual reality headset could be a game-changer for the entertainment industry and give people with certain disabilities new powers of communication and interaction, according to the developers. The FOVE headset uses eye-tracking technology to give the wearer an immersive and completely hands-free virtual reality, where all of their actions can be controlled by their eye movements.

Virtual reality technology has been touted as the next social and communications platform, with companies like Oculus VR one of the market leaders with their "Oculus Rift" virtual-reality glasses. But FOVE's co-developer and chief technology officer Lochlainn Wilson says their unique technology offers an immersive experience like no other.

"Eye-tracking is game-changing in VR. It allows for much more complex and subtle interaction than has been possible previously. By knowing exactly where the user is looking, characters in virtual reality can react to your gaze and return it naturally or avoid it or respond or question," he said, adding: "But what really sets us apart is eye-tracking, of course. So, with eye-tracking we enable a whole new world of interaction in VR. We enable really sensitive emotional experiences that could only otherwise be ex-

perienced in real life."

FOVE's eye-tracking technology uses two in-built cameras in the head mount to recognize the users' eye movement. At present users perform a short calibration sequence, where the device scans the user's eye and tracks the movement of their iris. The team says the next version of the device will use iris recognition to load user profiles.

Wilson says the device delivers an experience previously only possible in science fiction.

"In the control sense, we enable science fiction-like user interfaces like Tony Stark's Ironman and Jarvis; just at a glance user interface respond and updates information, targets an enemy, hits another button and they're blown up. It's pretty cool in that sense. In a more technical side of things, we enable what is known as foveated rendering; where you focus the processing power exactly what the user is looking at. By doing this, we drastically reduce the computing power required to deliver a believable scene."

The Tokyo-based start-up was founded by Wilson alongside CEO Yuka Kojima. And while they clearly have the games industry in their sights, the makers of FOVE say their device could also bring virtual reality to cinema, allowing viewers to interact inside the headset with objects and characters.

Reuters

## Chinese researchers help paper plant realize zero waste discharge

NANJING, 20 May — Chinese researchers have achieved the breakthroughs necessary for zero waste paper plants, significant for environmental protection.

Xu Nanping of the Chinese Academy of Engineering, told Xinhua that treatment film filtering technology has turned the 32,000-tonnes of waste water discharged by Jiangsu Oji Paper Co, Ltd each day into clean water, industrial salt and dried mud.

It took Xu and his team from Nanjing Technologi-

cal University nine months to design the equipment. Xu is also deputy governor of east China's Jiangsu Province and head of the provincial department of science and technology.

The project is managed by a local water treatment firm and has been running successfully since January 2014. "Zero discharge of pulping waste water is unprecedented," said Oshima Tadashi, deputy general manager of Jiangsu Oji, a Japanese company with an investment of nearly two

billion US dollars.

Paper plants are major polluters worldwide and it is common practice to discharge waste into rivers or the sea after treatment. The Oji plant once planned to discharge waste water into the Yellow Sea via a pipeline but the project was canceled due to protests by people living along the coast. The recycling project cost half as much as the pipeline was expected to and its operation costs are 30 percent lower. Currently, Oji Paper buys back 12,000 tonnes of

reclaimed water from the treatment company every day. The recycled water is also bought by other companies. The quality of the water is better than that taken directly from the Yangtze or even tap water in terms of major quality indices, said Wang Chaohui, director of the area's environmental protection bureau. "The reuse of reclaimed water is of great value, especially for the Yangtze basin and regions short of water," said Xu.—Xinhua

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We all make dearest wishes you could proceed  
unwavering supports in the interest of Myanmar more  
than ever before.



**Chairman and members of Central Executive Committee  
Myanmar-Japan Association**

## Indonesia sentences Japanese man, 73, to life for drug smuggling

JAKARTA, 20 May —A 73-year-old Japanese man caught last year trying to smuggle drugs into Indonesia was on Wednesday sentenced to life behind bars.

Reading out the verdict of the judicial panel of the Pariaman District Court, Presiding Judge Jon Effreddi said Masaru Kawada was found “clearly and convincingly guilty” of trafficking more than 1 kilogram of drugs. Prosecutors had demanded a 16-year prison term.

According to the judges, witness testimony and evidence proved that Kawada committed the crime.

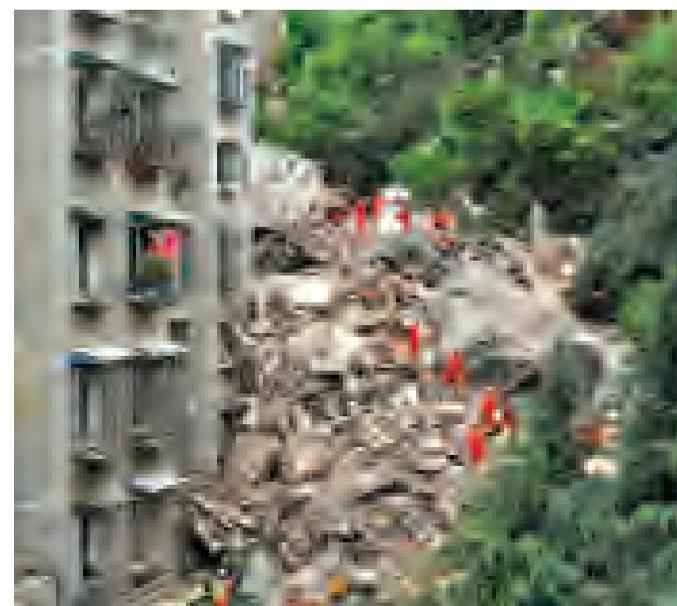
Upon hearing the verdict, Kawada’s lawyers said he will appeal to a higher court. The prosecutors indicted Kawada,

who comes from Aichi Prefecture, of trying to smuggle 2.35 kg of methamphetamine into the country.

Kawada was arrested at Minangkabau International Airport in the West Sumatra provincial capital of Padang on 22 November after customs officials found the drugs in his luggage. Kawada has steadfastly maintained his innocence, saying he was duped into carrying the drugs.

In court, he said a Chinese woman he met in Macao asked him to deliver the bag in which the drugs were later found to a friend in Padang, and that he only realized he was carrying methamphetamine after customs officials in Padang arrested him.

*Kyodo News*



*Rescuers search for survivors at a residential building collapse site in Guiyang, capital of southwest China’s Guizhou Province, on 20 May, 2015. A nine-storey building collapsed in Guiyang on Wednesday. Rescuers have confirmed that there are people trapped inside, but casualties are not known yet.*  
XINHUA

**ADVERTISEMENT & GENERAL**

**Press Release**

AYA Bank (Head Office), 14<sup>th</sup> May 2015: AYA Bank and Myanmar Post and Telecommunication (MPT) take a first step to initiate the Telebanking system on May 14, 2015. AYA Bank and MPT signed a Memorandum of Understanding which allows consumers to Top-Up by way of AYA Bank's mBanking platform with convenience. This service is available to all, 24 hours a day and 7 days a week. AYA Bank's mBanking application offers an enhanced banking experience, enabling rural consumers to easily Top Up via AYA mBanking application service.



AYA Bank has pioneered, as one of the first of many to offer Top-Up service with the aim to largely facilitate rural customer's needs. In strategic view, this service will support the union government plan to improve the socio-economic life of the rural people and alleviating poverty program by creating more opportunities in rural areas. What more is that, AYA bank's mBanking service will, in part, help create a convenience for consumers.

AYA Bank, one of the leading private banks in Myanmar, has 111 branches and 222 ATMs, providing and serving with an aim to develop communities we serve across the nation. AYA Bank is the first bank to optimize the centralized core banking system in Myanmar. Along with it, the bank has innovative products and by using centralized core banking system which enables AYA Bank to continue offering outstanding services.

Jointly with VISA, AYA Bank has introduced Visa Prepaid Card, World Travel VISA Card to Myanmar consumers. By deploying new technology, AYA Bank introduced mBanking product in January of 2015.

As "Your Trusted Partner" AYA bank welcomes new customers and appreciates existing customer, encourage to use AYA Bank's services supported by updated technologies. AYA Bank reassures that the services are safe, trust and easy to use every time, everywhere!!

**Ministry of Energy  
Myanma Petroleum Products Enterprise  
Invitation for Opened Tender (4/2015)**

1. Open tenders are invited for supply of the following respective items in United State Dollars (CIF Yangon) and Myanmar Kyats.

Sr.No	Tender No	Description	Qty	Remark
(1)	MPPE/MCY/CAP/T/1 (2015-2016)	120 IGPM Fuel Transfer Centrifugal Pump (Engine Driven)	3 Sets	USD
(2)	MPPE/MCY/CAP/T/2 (2015-2016)	400 IGPM Fuel Transfer Centrifugal Pump (Motor Driven)	4 Sets	USD
(3)	MPPE/MCY/T/1 (2015-2016)	Oil Suction & Discharge Rubber Flexible Hose	8 Items	USD
(4)	MPPE/MCY/T/2 (2015-2016)	Gate Valve	4 Items	USD
(5)	MPPE/AV(LUB)/T/1 (2015-2016)	Aviation Lubricating oil and Grease	9 Items	USD
(6)	MPPE/AV/T/1 (2015-2016)	Aviation Gasoline 100LL	96,000 Ltrs	USD
(7)	MPPE/LP/MCY/T/1 (2015-2016)	Stainless Steel Dipping Tape	2 Items	Kyats
(8)	MPPE/LP/TTS/T/1 (2015-2016)	Tyre with Tube & Flap	2 Items	Kyats
(9)	MPPE/LP/MCY/T/2 (2015-2016)	Battery	2 Items	Kyats
(10)	MPPE/LP/CHEM/T/1 (2015-2016)	Shell Water Detector Capsules	400 Boxes	Kyats

2. Tender Closing Date & Time - 18 - 6 - 2015, 12:00 Hrs

3. Tender documents are available at our office starting from 19 - 5 - 2015 during office hours and for further detail please contact: Phone : 067-411487.

Planning Department

Myanma Petroleum Products Enterprise

Ministry of Energy, No(6) Complex, Nay Pyi Taw

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**UYE NOOS (Advocate) 5341 YE NOOS & ASSOCIATES (Law Firm)**  
For JUPITER FOODS PTE. LTD. ([ye.noos1@gmail.com](mailto:ye.noos1@gmail.com))

**WEATHER REPORT**

**BAY INFERENCE:** According to the observation at (15:30) hrs MST today, the low pressure area over East Central Bay and adjoining Southeast Bay of Bengal still persists. Monsoon is strong 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 21<sup>st</sup> May, 2015:** Rain or thundershowers will be isolated in Upper Sagaing Region and Kachin State, scattered in Lower Sagaing and Magway Regions, Shan and Chin States, fairly widespread in Mandalay Region, Rakhine and Kayah States and widespread in the remaining Regions and States with isolated heavy falls in Yangon, Ayeyarwady and Taninthayi Regions, Rakhine and Mon States. Degree of certainty is (80%).

**STATE OF THE SEA:** Occasional squalls with rough sea will be experienced off and along Myanmar Coasts. Surface wind speed in squalls may reach (40) mph.

**OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS:** Likelihood of advancement of South-west monsoon into the Deltaic areas.

**CLAIMS DAY NOTICE  
MV THIGAYU VOY NO (03/15)**

Consignees of cargo carried on MV THIGAYU VOY NO (03/15) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 21.5.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of S.P.W(1) where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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

Phone No: 2301186

**CLAIMS DAY NOTICE  
MV BANGSAOTONE VOY NO (171)**

Consignees of cargo carried on MV BANGSAOTONE VOY NO (171) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 21.5.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of S.P.W(4) where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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

Phone No: 2301186

**CLAIMS DAY NOTICE  
MV SILVER FERN VOY NO (0007S)**

Consignees of cargo carried on MV SILVER FERN VOY NO (0007S) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 21.5.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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Ph: +95-9-5128853

Dated; May 21, 2015

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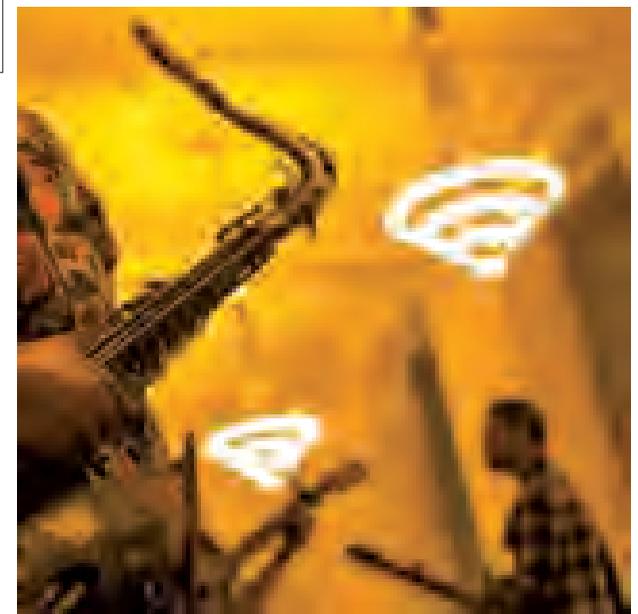
Dated: May 21, 2015

**Draft Myanmar Companies Law**

In order to modernize the Myanmar Companies Act 1914, the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA) is currently preparing the new Myanmar Companies Law with the assistance of the Asian Development Bank (ADB). Please be advised that the draft Myanmar Companies Law has now been published in both English and Myanmar languages on DICA's website (www.dica.gov.mm) for review by interested parties.

Directorate of Investment and  
Company Administration

## Musicians, from opera to blues, seek to play New York subways



**Musicians line-up in Grand Central Terminal's Vanderbilt Hall to take part in the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) 28<sup>th</sup> annual auditions for Music Under New York in Midtown Manhattan on 19 May, 2015.—REUTERS**

NEW YORK, 20 May — It may not be the lights of Broadway but subway stations aren't a bad gig either, according to scores of musicians who auditioned on Tuesday to play in New York City's bustling underground terminals.

The auditions, attracting players of classical music, cabaret, opera, blues, reggae and even cartoon tunes, are hosted by the city's Metropolitan Transportation Authority to select performers allowed to play, or busk, in subway stations from Times Square to Yankee Stadium.

The conditions may be raw and the acoustics tricky, but the underground venue is like no other, the striving musicians said.

"It's a direct link into people's everyday lives," said Sebastian Lopez, 27, an accordion player auditioning with his pan-Latin band Yotoco.

"It's a way to share our music with people in a very casual environment and kind of surprise them as they're going about their daily lives," he said.

A panel of artists,

transit officials and others judge the music for quality, variety and appropriateness, the MTA said. About 70 musicians or groups tried out and a third of them will get picked, it said.

Whilst musicians are allowed to play in the city subways if they follow MTA rules, these winners get choice spots and support from the MTA's Music Under New York programme.

"I'm excited about the exposure that it would allow us to have, meeting new people and finding new places to perform," said Judy Minkoff, 36, the leader of an all-female a cappella group called Stiletta.

New Yorkers get the benefit of good music, said Gregory Morgan, a 35-year-old drummer with the Sunnyside Social Club jazz band. Average weekday ridership on the subway system is 5.6 million, according to the MTA.

"The world needs more good food and good music. When you have those two, everyone's happy," Morgan said.—Reuters

## 'Sicario' with Emily Blunt as FBI agent brings drug wars to Cannes

CANNES, (France), 20 May — A film that Canadian director Denis Villeneuve says is meant to break "a cover of silence" about the brutality of the Mexican drug trade and the complicity of users in the violence that feeds their habits blasted its way into Cannes on Tuesday.

"Sicario", which means hitman in Latin America, is an action-packed thriller in which agents cross territorial and legal boundaries.

Emily Blunt plays FBI agent Kate who gets recruited into a high-risk CIA-led drug operation across the border.

Josh Brolin is Matt, the CIA team leader, whilst Benicio Del Toro, who played a conflicted cop in the 2000 narcotics-trade hit "Traffic", co-stars as a Colombian who has a role with the CIA team that does not become clear until the end.

The film, in competition for the top Palme d'Or prize, is filmed by Roger Deakins who creates a hellish Juarez, Mexico, where



**(L-R) Cast members Josh Brolin, Emily Blunt, director Denis Villeneuve, cast member Benicio Del Toro pose on the red carpet as they arrive for the screening of the film "Sicario" in competition at the 68<sup>th</sup> Cannes Film Festival in Cannes, southern France on 19 May, 2015.—REUTERS**

cartels turn the town into a war zone. A tunnel search scene with night-vision effects is a particularly superbly shot. Villeneuve said he had been drawn to the script, in which many of the characters, except Kate, seem to be lacking any kind of moral compass, because it brought out the moral ambiguities of the war on drugs and the violence of the narcotics trade.

"As a North American

I know that I share a part of the responsibility for that, and that violence is — from what I understood — under a cover of silence and I think that violence is horrible but violence under silence is more horrible," Villeneuve told a news conference.

Blunt said she had discovered after she took the role of Kate that there had been pressure to change her character to a man — a move that Villeneuve said

he would not have accepted.

"I found this character quite damaged and vulnerable and she's struggling with this world of being a female cop — and certainly with the morally questionable things she's coming to experience with these guys," Blunt said.

"So you see this girl going through pretty much the worst three days of her life, she tries to maintain face for most of it so ... I didn't really think about adjusting it to make it more masculine," she said.

Brolin, who played US President George W. Bush in Oliver Stone's "W.", said he'd originally turned down the part of Matt but was glad that friends had convinced him to change his mind.

He said the wisecracking cynic Matt helps to lighten the tone, so the intensely dramatic moments have greater impact.

"My job in the movie is to be as anti-profound as possible," he said.

Reuters

## Cementing stardom, actor Dwayne 'The Rock' Johnson thanks Spielberg



**Actor Dwayne 'The Rock' Johnson poses with his hands in cement during his hand and footprints ceremony in the forecourt of the TCL Chinese Theatre in celebration of his new movie 'San Andreas,' in Hollywood, California on 19 May, 2015.—REUTERS**

LOS ANGELES, 20 May — Actor Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson gave a shout-out to director Steven Spielberg on Tuesday as he imprinted his hands and feet into the concrete outside the historic TCL Chinese Theatre in Hollywood.

The wrestling champion-turned-actor called Spielberg one of his idols and thanked the Oscar-winning director for sending him a congratulatory note "out of the blue." "This man who has inspired me over the years, inspired movie-making and created characters that I loved...this man told me: 'you're going for it, and just keep going for it,'" he said.

Johnson is set to star in the disaster movie "San Andreas," in which he plays a search-and-rescue helicopter pilot who must save his daughter after an earthquake devastates the California coast. The film opens in US theatres on 29 May. Johnson, 43, has become one of Hollywood's most bankable stars, thanks in part to his recurring role in the "Fast and Furious" franchise. The most recent film, "Furious 7," has earned more than \$1.4 billion at the worldwide box office.—Reuters

GENERAL

## Tokyo DisneySea to open new ride themed on “Finding Nemo” in 2017

TOKYO, 20 May —The operator of the Disney theme parks in Japan will open a new attraction featuring the Disney/Pixar “Finding Nemo” animated film series at the Tokyo Dis-

neySea Park in spring 2017. According to Oriental Land Co, the indoor attraction in the Port Discovery area will enable visitors to explore the underwater world of the 2003 “Finding

Nemo” film as well as the upcoming “Finding Dory” film to be released in 2016 “by using a ride system that seamlessly blends visuals from the films with a motion system.”

With the opening of the new attraction, which will have a five-minute ride duration, StormRider will close permanently around mid-May 2016, Oriental Land said.—*Kyodo News*

## Rio de Janeiro construction strike affects work at Olympic sites



A view of the construction site of the Rio 2016 Olympic Aquatic sports venue at the Rio 2016 Olympic Park in Rio de Janeiro on 7 May, 2015. — REUTERS

RIO DE JANEIRO, 20 May —Heavy-construction workers in Rio de Janeiro, many involved in work for the 2016 Olympic Games, have begun a strike, the union representing the workers said, threatening to slow completion of projects that are already behind schedule.

About 70 percent of the 12,000 Rio de Janeiro-region members of the Intermunicipal Union of Heavy Construction Workers, known by their Portuguese-language acronym Sitraicp, put down their tools

on Monday, the union said. They plan to strike until at least Friday, the date set for an arbitrator to decide on conflicting demands from workers and management.

The union wants an 8.5 percent pay raise plus a 40 real (\$13.29) increase in a monthly food subsidy. Employers have offered a 7.3 percent increase.

If the strike is resolved Friday, work on stadiums and transportation infrastructure projects should not be seriously affected, Sitraicp president Nelson Duarte

told *Reuters* late Monday.

“If it is not resolved, then we will go on strike indefinitely, Duarte said. “If there is a 10- to 15-day stoppage, there will be a negative impact on (Olympic) work.”

The workers’ demands come as Brazil’s economy slows but inflation remains stubbornly above the Brazilian government’s target of 4.5 percent a year, plus or minus two percentage points.

Brazilian consumer prices were 8.17 percent

higher in April than a year earlier according to Brazil’s statistics agency IBGE.

Talks between union and management began in February, but construction and engineering companies rejected an initial demand for a 15 percent raise.

The Rio Mais consortium, which is responsible for work on 2016 Olympic projects, said the strike has not affected work on the Olympic Park, where major events such as track and field are scheduled. The Rio de Janeiro organizing committee declined to comment on the strike.

The companies say they are being pressured by the economic downturn and the fallout from a giant corruption scandal at Brazil’s state-led oil company, Petrobras, Duarte said.

Many of two dozen companies barred from working with Petrobras, formally known as Petroleo Brasileiro SA, because of a price-fixing, bribery and political kickback scheme are also involved in work on Olympic- and Olympic-related projects.—*Reuters*

## Out of Africa? Texans offer sanctuary to endangered rhinos

SAN ANTONIO, 20 May — In the Texas grassland, home to white-tailed deer and rattlesnakes, outdoorsman Charly Seale sees a vast sanctuary of open spaces that could be used to protect the wild African rhino from its biggest enemy — poachers in search of the animals’ valuable horns.

Seale is part of an ambitious project organized by animal welfare groups in the United States and African countries to bring hundreds of orphaned baby southern white rhinos to the south Texas grasslands, whose climate and geography are similar to their native South African veld.

That is if governments will let them and the Texans can afford a transportation bill that could run tens of millions of dollars, all paid for by private donations.

“This is not for the faint of heart or for the faint of checkbook,” said Seale, head of the Texas-based Exotic Wildlife Association’s Second Ark Foundation, pointing out no public money will be sought for the effort, which is still in its early stages. Rhino poaching hit a

record in South Africa last year, home to almost all the rhinos in Africa, with 1,215 killed in 2014, according to South Africa’s Environment Ministry.

International crime syndicates are after rhino horns, which are used in traditional Asian medicine



A white rhinoceros and her calf walk in Pilanesberg National Park in South Africa’s North West Province in this 19 April, 2012 file photo. —REUTERS

and sell at prices higher than gold to the newly affluent in places such as Vietnam, where a belief, with no scientific basis, exists that they can cure cancer.

In January, South Africa said it had moved about 100 rhinos to neighbouring states to combat poaching. In 2015, another 200 rhinos will be moved to what Environment Minister Edna Molewa said are “strongholds” where the animals will be safer from poaching.

Some have ended up in Botswana, a country that allows the shooting of poachers on sight.

But what about Texas? If the plan goes forward — and there are many issues yet to be resolved — it would likely be the largest attempt outside of Africa to move rhinos out of harm’s way.—*Reuters*

## mitv Myanmar International

(21-5-2015 07:00 am~ 22-5-2015 07:00 am)

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## California, international leaders sign climate change agreement



California Governor Jerry Brown (C) holds a signed agreement with Minister-President Winfried Kretschmann (L) of the German state of Baden-Wuerttemberg, Mexican Baja California Governor Francisco Vega de Lamadrid (R) and nine other international states and provinces to limit the increase in global average temperature to below two degrees, in Sacramento, California on 19 May, 2015.—REUTERS

SAN FRANCISCO, 20 May — California and leaders of 11 states and provinces signed an agreement on Tuesday to limit their output of heat-trapping greenhouse gases 80 to 95 percent by 2050, a goal they hope will help prevent runaway climate change. The target, which is based on a 1990 benchmark, will allow the individual governments, which collectively represent more than \$4.5 trillion in GDP and 100 million people, to tailor reduction plans to fit their regional needs. Called “Under 2 MOU” for a Memorandum of Understanding designed to help keep global temperature increase below 2 degrees Celsius, the pact seeks to provide a template for countries to follow to cut emissions.

The temperature mark is the warming threshold at which governments say climate change could become catastrophic and irreversible.

Later this year at a United Nations climate change conference in Paris, negotiators will attempt to reach an international agreement for nations to cut emissions.

“This global challenge requires bold action on the part of governments everywhere,” California Governor Jerry Brown said on Tuesday. “It’s time to be decisive. It’s time to act.” Signatories of the agreement were Acre, Brazil; Baden-Wuerttemberg, Germany; Baja California, Mexico; Catalonia, Spain; Jalisco, Mexico; Ontario, Canada; British Columbia, Canada; Wales, and the US states of Oregon, Vermont and Washington.

Ontario Environment Minister Glen Murray described the agreement as one of the strongest of any under international negotiations and gives sub-national governments a common voice at the Paris conference.—*Reuters*



Rory McIlroy holds up the championship trophy during the final round at Quail Hollow Club on 17 May, 2015; Charlotte, NC, USA. —REUTERS

## Confident McIlroy targets two more majors this year

LONDON, 20 May — Rory McIlroy is confident he can add two majors to his trophy haul this year after a successful 12 months in which he has proved himself to be the world's best player.

At Wentworth this week to defend his PGA Championship title, McIlroy on Tuesday picked up the European Tour Golfer of the Year and Players' Player of the Year awards.

The world number one, who has won four majors so far in his career,

clinched his third tournament of 2015 on Sunday with a seven-shot win at the Wells Fargo Classic.

The 26-year-old, who claimed the WGC Match Play title two weeks ago, has been in superb form and now has six top-10 finishes in his last eight PGA Tour starts.

"There are three majors left and I feel two of those venues could suit me — St Andrews (The Open) and Whistling Straits (US PGA Championship)," he told Sky Sports.

"Chambers Bay at the US Open is a bit of an unknown quantity. But there are two great opportunities for major titles and a lot of other opportunities for wins."

"I'd also like to increase my lead in the world ranking," said McIlroy, who already has a lead of almost 200 points over Jordan Speith followed by Sweden's Henrik Stenson and Speith's fellow Americans Bubba Watson and Jim Furyk.—Reuters

## Serie A criticised over fixture confusion

MILAN, 20 May — Juventus appears to have surprised Serie A organizers by reaching the Champions League final, forcing last-minute changes to the domestic fixture list.

Lega Serie A appeared to be caught out when Juve also qualified for the Coppa Italia final in Rome which had originally been scheduled for 7 June, one day after the Champions League showdown with Barcelona in Berlin.

Organizers have responded by bringing forward the Coppa Italia final — between Juventus and Lazio — by more than two weeks to Wednesday. This has only caused further complications in a snowball affect.

Lazio were due to play neighbours AS Roma on Sunday in a match crucial to both sides' hopes of qualifying for the Champions League and asked for the game to be moved to Monday to give them

more time to recover.

Lega Serie A agreed, despite opposition from Roma, but that upset Napoli, who are also in the race for the Champions League, and, according to Italian media, have asked for their match against Juventus on Saturday to be played at the same time as Lazio-Roma on Monday.

It has led Giovanni Malago, head of the Italian Olympic Committee (CONI), to wonder why organisers did not see the pitfalls in the first place.

"Something has been underestimated and you have to realise that when you move one piece, it alters the whole system," he told reporters on Wednesday.

"There was a chance all this could have happened and it should have been foreseen."

He said that switching the Lazio-Roma match "undermines the credibility of the football system in front of public opinion." Roma's managing director Mauro Baldissoni was also critical.

"It's in the interest of Serie A to sell itself properly abroad and attract interest. And I don't think moving such an important game to Monday does that," he told the club's website. (asroma.it)

"It's probably not in the interests of those who invest money in the game, buying the TV rights in Italy and abroad.

"It might not be in the interests of the fans who have bought a ticket and who perhaps can't go to the game on Monday.

"Then there's the interests of the city itself, which will see an area understandably closed off for reasons of public order on a week day.

He added: "There have always been cup games on Wednesday and league matches on Sunday and no one has ever thought it strange. Juventus are playing on Wednesday too and they'll be back in action on Saturday."—Reuters



Juventus' players celebrate their win against Inter Milan at the end of their Italian Serie A soccer match at San Siro stadium in Milan on 16 May, 2015.—REUTERS

## Casillas turns 34 with Real future uncertain



Real Madrid's Iker Casillas

MADRID, 20 May— Real Madrid goalkeeper and captain Iker Casillas turned 34 on Wednesday with uncertainty still clouding his future with the European champions and Real reportedly lining up David De Gea as his replacement.

Casillas has been blamed by some fans for Real's woes this season, when they failed to win any of the three major trophies, while arch rivals Barcelona are on the verge of a treble of Champions League and Spanish league and Cup titles.

The Spain international has suggested he wants to see out his contract, which runs until the end of the 2016-17 season, but he has been visibly irritated by his treatment at the Bernabeu in recent weeks.

While some sections of fans clearly back him, others have roundly whistled him, along with coach Carlo Ancelotti and Wales winger Gareth Bale.

Madrid-based sports dailies Marca and As both reported on Wednesday that Real had let Casillas know the club wants him to stay on next season.

Reuters

## Sterling should be embarrassed, says Carragher

LONDON, 20 May — Liverpool winger Raheem Sterling has come under a withering attack from two of the club's former stalwarts over his apparent reluctance to sign a reported 100,000 pounds (\$155,340) per week contract.

The 20-year-old England international's future at Liverpool is clouded in uncertainty with British media reports on Tuesday suggesting Sterling is poised to request a transfer.

Manchester City are one of the club's being

linked with a move for Sterling who, according to Liverpool manager Brendan Rodgers has been offered an "incredible" new contract.

With Liverpool insisting Sterling is not for sale, the saga is bound to rumble on into the summer and Jamie Carragher, now a television pundit, said he should be embarrassed to walk into training this week and suggested a change of agent.

"I'd be embarrassed to walk into training tomorrow and show my face to

everyone; even the lady on the reception," former Liverpool defender Carragher told Sky Sports.

"Raheem Sterling is a great kid. He's not some flash young kid. He's not loud, he's not in people's faces. He loves his football.

"He needs to change his agent. That's the one thing he needs to change.

"For a 20-year-old kid to be taking on Liverpool Football Club, there's nothing worse.

"Raheem Sterling will obviously move on

at some stage. Brendan Rodgers has said he won't be leaving this summer but it looks like he's trying to force the club's hand."

Carragher said Sterling still had to prove he was worth the kind of salary enjoyed by the Premier League's biggest names.

"If you want trophies and big money they won't be given to you, you have to earn them," Carragher said.

"What did Liverpool win this year? Nothing."

Former Liverpool winger John Barnes, who

Sterling has been compared to, echoed Carragher's comments.

"Raheem has not achieved anything, he has not won anything," Barnes told the BBC.

"Does anyone believe that if he goes to Manchester City he will be the first name on the team sheet or are they just signing him because they need English players?"

"Raheem has great potential, but Liverpool gave him an opportunity and he should stay for a couple of years."—Reuters