NAY PYI TAW, 17 May—Vice-President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Dr Sai Mauk Kham received a delegation led by United Nations Development Program-UNDP Assistant Secretary General and Director of Regional Bureau of Asia and the Pacific Mr Ajay Chhibber at the Credentials Hall of Presidential Palace here at 4.30 pm today.

At the call, they cordially discussed drawing and implementation of a project on resuming UNDP regular programmes and environmental conservation tasks, providing of technical assistance for upgrading legislative and executive skills, implementation of assistance tasks worth US$ 144 million under a three-year project starting 2013 and opening of United Nations Development Program branch office in Myanmar.

Present at the call together with Vice-President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Dr Sai Mauk Kham were Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs U Maung Myint, Deputy Minister for National Planning and Economic Development Dr Kan Zaw, Deputy Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement U Phone Swe, departmental heads and officials.

Vice-President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar cordially shakes hands with UNDP Assistant Secretary General and Director of Regional Bureau of Asia and the Pacific Mr Ajay Chhibber at Credentials Hall of the Presidential Palace.

Vice-President Dr Sai Mauk Kham of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar received Assistant Secretary General of United Nations Development Program.

Vice-President Dr Sai Mauk Kham receives Special Advisor to the United Nations Secretary-General and Special Envoy for HIV/AIDS in Asia and Pacific Dr Nafis Sadik and party at Credentials Hall of the Presidential Palace.

Vice-President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Dr Sai Mauk Kham receives Special Advisor to the United Nations Secretary-General and Special Envoy for HIV/AIDS in Asia and Pacific Dr Nafis Sadik and party at Credentials Hall of Presidential Palace.

Vice-President Dr Sai Mauk Kham receives United Nations Secretary-General’s Special Envoy for HIV/AIDS in Asia and Pacific
Customer satisfaction

We all know that our tourism sector has many prospects as almost all the destinations of Myanmar are still unspoiled generally more fascinating and captivating than their foreign counterparts which have been already frequented by a large number of global vacationers since a number of years ago.

Naypyidaw, Bagan, Lake Inlay or Shwedagon Pagoda may be famous in the world, but many of our tourist attractions are unknown to global market until now even through they have all the capacities and features required by an internationally recognized destination.

For instance, we have NgweSaung and Chaungtha beaches in the western coast of Ayeyawady Division facing the Bay of Bengal which in reality are as enchanting as the Ngapali in beauty and serenity of the white sands and the blue waters. Another bonanza is these two are not far from Yangon, the main gateway to Myanmar for all visitors coming on business, diplomatic missions or pleasure trips.

We have another Bagan-like place like MrakOo in the northern part of Rakhine State a coastal region also bordering the Bay in the west. There many ancient pagodas are still standing as the proof of local people’s deep devotion to Buddhism since the birth of their civilization. The interesting part is that the designs and architectural features of these religious edifices including Shitthoung and Koethoung stupas are totally different from their Bagan counterparts although they all are representing the Lord Buddha.

What’s more we have wonderful parks such as Khakaborazi, Hukaung valley, Alaungdaw Kassapa, and so on where visitors can touch the unspoiled natural splendors the world can offer best.

With reforms going on well in the country, we are developing the services and facilities directly or indirectly linked to the smokeless industry which will be one of the main sources of income for the country through customer satisfaction. Without customer satisfaction, the industry cannot develop.
Iran nuclear output seen steady before
Baghdad talks

VIENNA, 17 May—Iran is installing more centrifuges in an underground plant but does not yet appear to be using them to expand higher-grade uranium enrichment that could take it closer to producing atom bomb material, Western diplomats say.

They say Iran’s production of uranium refined to a fissile concentration of 20 percent, which it started two years ago, seems to have remained steady in recent months after a major escalation of the war in late 2011 and early this year.

Progress in Iran’s controversial nuclear programme is closely watched by the West and Israel as it could determine the time the Islamic Republic would need to build nuclear bombs, should it decide to do so.

Getting Iran to stop the higher-level enrichment is expected to be a priority for world powers when they meet with Iran in Baghdad next week in an attempt to restart the decade-old dispute over Teheran’s ambitious ambitions.

"It is still going strong. I hear it is unchanged," one diplomat accredited to the UN nuclear watchdog, which regularly inspects Iran’s declared atomic sites, said about the country’s most sensitive nuclear activity.

"But with installation work going on, at some point there will be an increase," Teheran took a big step towards the capability of making nuclear weapons material after a previous attempt at diplomacy failed when, sparking UN demands to halve all enrichment, it started up uranium processing to 20 percent purity.

That provoked the West to impose crushing sanctions on its banks and oil exports.

A UN nuclear report published in February showed Iran trebling output of 20 percent uranium since late 2011 after starting up production at the Fordow underground plant near the Shi’ite Muslim holy city of Qom and later increasing it.—Reuters

Nine people wounded in bomb attacks
in Iraq

BAGHDAD, 17 May—Nine people, including security members, were injured on Wednesday in separate bomb attacks in central and eastern Iraq, the police said.

In Iraq’s east, province of Diyala, a roadside bomb went off near a police patrol in the City of Jalawla, some 150 km northeast of Baghdad, injuring four policemen, a provincial police source told Xinhua on condition of anonymity.

Iraqi security forces cordoned off the scene and found another roadside bomb which exploded later and wounded a police explosive expert as he was trying to defuse it, the source said.

Also in Jalawla, a boy was injured when a homemade bomb hidden in a garbage container detonated near his house, the source added.

In central Iraq,gunmen blew up a bomb planted at an under-construction medical center in Baghdad’s southern district of Doura, wounding three construction workers, an Interior Ministry source anonymously told Xinhua.

Four pilots killed, five injured in plane crash in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD, 17 May—At least four pilots were killed and five people were injured when two Pakistan Air Force (PAF) trainer planes crashed after bumping into each other on a training mission on Thursday morning, army and police sources said.

PAF confirmed, in a short statement following the incident, the death of all the four pilots on the two planes, and said an inquiry had been ordered.

Muhammad Hussain Khan, District Police Officer of Nowshera where the crash took place, said five people on the ground were also injured in the incident.

The crash took place at about 10.20 am local time when two PAF trainers hit each other in the air while on a routine training flight over the Rashakai area of Nowshera, a district lying some 100 kilometers northwest of the country’s Capital Islamabad.

One plane crashed into the field while another came down on a house in a residential area of Rashakai. Huge fire erupted in the residential area following the plane crash. Rescue team and fire fighters were called in following the crash.

The injured have been rushed to nearby hospital. Conditions and identities of the injured are not known at this moment.

The two planes hit each other in the air during the training mission after they took off from a PAF air base in Risalpur, a neighbouring town lying less than ten kilometres to the north of Nowshera, said police.

It is the second crash of PAF aircraft in a week.

On 11 May, a Mirage jet fighter of PAF crashed near Karachi. PAF now operates a fleet of the French-built Mirage III and Mirage V aircraft procured between 1968 and 2000. The Mirage fleet has suffered a total of seven crashes since their induction into the PAF. Pakistan has been trying to phase out the older generations of its Mirage fleet with the newer JF-17 Thunder aircraft, jointly developed by Pakistan and China.

Nearly 40 injured in Brazil subway crash

SAO PAULO, 17 May—About 40 passengers were injured on Wednesday when two subway trains collided in the Brazilian city of Sao Paulo, the city’s Fire Department said.

The collision occurred at 10 am local time (1300 GMT) between the stations of Vila Carrao and Perua, both on Line 3 of Sao Paulo’s underground transportation network. Line 3, an east-west link and with 18 stops, is one of the system’s most heavily used lines, carrying nearly a million passengers daily.

The Fire Department said the trains collided along a segment of the track that runs above ground, allowing most of the passengers to exit the cars without the help of rescue workers.

Two of the injured were in serious condition and taken to hospital, having suffered loss of blood and possible head trauma, but most had only minor cuts and bruises, the department said.

It was the second subway crash of 2012 in Sao Paulo, the city’s Fire Department said.

People watch a overturned bus at a village of Chadoora in Badgam District, 32 kilometres southwest of Srinagar, summer capital of Indian-controlled Kashmir, on 16 May, 2012. Two persons were killed and 37 injured in the accident. —Xinhua

Four pilots killed, five injured in plane crash in Pakistan

A general view of the Bushehr main nuclear reactor, 1,200 km (746 miles) south of Teheran, on 21 August, 2010.—Reuters

Putin, Medvedev discuss issues related to G8 summit

MOSCOW, 17 May—Russian President Vladimir Putin and Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev on Wednesday discussed issues related to the upcoming Group of Eight (G8) summit, the Kremlin Press service said.

However, the press service didn’t reveal details about the meeting between Putin and Medvedev.

Earlier, Putin declined the invitation to the G8 summit in Mexico, the Kremlin’s Press service said.

The meeting came on the day Putin and Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev arrived in Brazil, on 16 May, 2012. Two subway trains crashed into each other on Wednesday morning in Sao Paulo, Brazil, leaving at least 33 injured.—Xinhua
Supernova shows secrets of its brightness

CAMBRIDGE, 17 May—A NASA orbiting telescope has observed the first evidence of a supernova shock wave breaking through a cocoon of gas around the star, astronomers say.

The findings by the Chandra X-ray Observatory may help explain why some supernova explosions are more powerful than others, a release by the Chandra group at Harvard University reported on Tuesday.

The supernova in a galaxy about 160 million light years from Earth was first spotted by astronomers on 3 Nov, 2010, and was one of the most luminous that has ever been detected in X-rays, the researchers said.

In the first Chandra observation of the supernova, the X-rays from the explosion’s blast wave were strongly absorbed by a cocoon of dense gas around the supernova formed by gas blown away from the massive star before it exploded.

In a second observation almost a year later, there was much less absorption of X-ray emission, indicating that the blast wave from the explosion had broken out of the surrounding cocoon. This findings suggest some unusually luminous supernovas are caused by the blast wave from their explosion ramming into the material around it, astronomers said.

Apple seeks outside help on OS X security

CHICAGO, 17 May—Apple has asked Russian computer security company Kaspersky Lab to analyze its OS X operating system to improve its security, a Kaspersky official says.

“Why official says.

The corporation denies a vulnerability in Java, which was a target for a major botnet, because of their relatively low market share, but that hackers would eventually turn their attention to the Apple platform.

“Market share brings attacker motivation,” Kaspersky Labs said in April.

For example, Oracle closed anulnerability in Java, which was a target for a major botnet, several months ago.”

Researchers have long argued Macs were infected by Flashback thanks to a then-unpatched Java vulnerability.

Mac OS is really vulnerable, and Apple recently invited us to improve its security. We’ve begun an analysis of its vulnerabilities, and the malware targeting it,” Grebennikov told Computing News.

“Our first investigations show Apple doesn’t pay enough attention to security,” Grebennikov said.

“Expect more drive-by downloads, more Mac OS X malware.”

Eye retina implant can restore vision

PALO ALTO, 17 May—Tiny solar-panel-like cells implanted in the eye may someday restore sight to people blinded by certain types of degenerative eye diseases, US scientists say.

Researchers at Stanford University said goggles equipped with a miniature camera display images on a liquid crystal microdisplay embedded in the glasses, similar to what’s used in video goggles for gaming. The images would be beamed from the LCD into the eyes enabling a patient to regain vision, researchers said. “It works like the solar panels on your roof, converting light into electric current,” professor of ophthalmology Daniel Palanker said. “But instead of the current flowing to your refrigerator, it flows into your retina.”

Using near-infrared light to transmit images avoids the need for any wires and cables inside the eye, as some other experimental implants require, making the device thin and easily implantable, researchers said.

“The current implants are very bulky, and the surgery to place the intracocular wiring for receiving, processing and power is difficult,” Palanker said. The Stanford device has virtually all of the hardware incorporated externally into the goggles, he said.

“The surgeon needs only to create a small pocket beneath the retina and then slip the photovoltaic cells inside it,” he said.

The proposed prosthesis is intended to aid people suffering from hereditary degenerative diseases such as retinitis pigmentosa and age-related macular degeneration, the foremost cause of vision loss in North America, the researchers said.

Britain to use sound ‘weapon’ in Olympics?

LONDON, 17 May—A device that can send verbal warnings over a long distance or emit a beam of pain-inducing noise will be used in London during the Olympics, officials said.

Britain’s Ministry of Defence confirmed the US-made long range acoustic device, spotted attached to a landing craft on the Thames River, will be available for use in the summer games.

The LRAD 1000Xi is “an effective long range communications system that broadcasts focused, highly intelligible, multi-language messages, instructions and warnings over distances up to 3,000 metres (1.8 miles) to peacefully resolve uncertain situations, a spokesman for the San Diego-based LRAD Corp said.

The corporation denies it is a weapon and the Ministry announced it would be used in the “loud hailer mode,” the BBC reported on Saturday.

The same versions of the LRAD can produce painful, deafening sound levels of 150 decibels, they can also be used to broadcast verbal warnings such as ordering crowds to disperse, officials said.

The device, which has been used by the US Army for crowd control in Iraq, has also successfully been used aboard ships to repel Somali pirates.

“As part of the military contribution to the police-led security effort to ensure a safe and secure games, a broad range of assets and equipment is being used by our armed forces,” a Ministry of Defence spokesman said.

To your吃惊 includes the LRAD, which will be deployed during the Olympic Games primarily to be used in the loud hailer mode as part of the measures to achieve a maritime stop on the Thames.”

Apple looks set to release a new Mac keyboard that could help students and professionals alike.

The proposed version of the Mac keyboard would have a larger space bar, which could make it easier for users to type more comfortably.

On average, about 60 percent of high-income countries have an ecological footprint that is five times that of low-income ones.

The report came out five weeks ahead of the United Nations Sustainable Development Conference, or Rio+20, in Rio de Janeiro.

“The challenges underlined in the Living Planet Report are clear,” Leape told Inter Press Service. “Rio+20 can and must be the moment for governments to set a new course towards sustainability.”
**Back pain therapy often yields early benefits**

*Sydney, 17 May—* People who receive treatment for chronic low back pain show significant improvement in the first six weeks, but may still have some pain and disability after one year, according to a new study. Researchers analyzed data from 33 studies that included more than 11,000 patients to learn more about how treatment affects low-back pain. Their findings appear in the 14 May online edition of CMAJ, the journal of the Canadian Medical Association.

“Overall, confirms the broad finding of previous reviews that the typical course of acute low-back pain is initially favorable: there is a marked reduction in mean pain and disability in the first six weeks, which then plateaus, although there is still some pain and disability apparent up to one year,” he added.

One year after beginning treatment, the typical improvement in pain intensity was about 90 percent for patients who had acute low-back pain and about 50 percent for those who had chronic low-back pain, the investigators found.

“There is both good and bad news in our paper. It is great that people improve with care, but arguably there is room to do better,” said Dr. Christopher Maher, director of the musculoskeletal division at the George Institute for Global Health of the University of Sydney in Australia, said in a journal news release.

“Beyond six weeks, improvement slows and thereafter only small reductions in mean pain and disability are apparent up to one year,” he added. “One of the principal reasons we have not made more progress in the back pain field is that research agencies do not take back pain research seriously. Around the world, back pain research is hugely underfunded relative to the burden of the disease. It’s time for that to change.”

**Eye changes may predict heart disease in Blacks with diabetes**

*New Jersey, 17 May—* In back Americans with type 1 diabetes, narrowing of the small arteries in the eye (retinal arteriolar narrowing) is associated with increased risk for cardiovascular disease, a new study finds.

“Retinal arteriolar narrowing has long been described as one of the characteristic changes associated with hypertension [high blood pressure] and cardiovascular disease,” Dr. Monique Rue, of the Institute of Ophthalmology and Visual Science at the University of Medicine and Dentistry, New Jersey Medical School, and colleagues wrote as background information in the study, which is published in the May issue of the journal Archives of Ophthalmology.

The researchers looked at information on 468 black patients with type 1 diabetes and followed up after six years. During that time, 59 patients developed cardiovascular disease (17 with heart disease or stroke and 22 with lower extremity arterial disease), and 79 developed high blood pressure. The study authors found that retinal arteriolar narrowing at the start of the study was significantly and independently associated with the development of cardiovascular disease, lower extremity arterial disease, and all-cause death.

In addition, the researchers found that having larger diameter retinal arteriolas was associated with an increased risk of high blood pressure, they noted in the news release. Internet

**Doctors mull value of medical tattoos**

*Toronto, 17 May—* The Canadian Medical Association has expressed concern over the growing trend of people having their medical conditions tattooed on their bodies.

Since 2006, millions of people in Canada and the United States with medical conditions such as diabetes, epilepsy, allergies, or skin conditions have used wrist or ankle bracelets or necklaces provided by the MedicAlert Foundation. People who receive treatment for diabetes, hypertension, allergies, or skin conditions tattooed on their bodies. The potential for high blood pressure, they noted in the news release.

**German economy powers on, French growth evaporates**

*Berlin, 17 May—* Germany’s economy confounded expectations by posting robust growth in the first quarter of the year while France could summon up none at all and Italy slid further into recession, data showed on Tuesday. Gross domestic product in Germany, Europe’s biggest economy, rose by 0.5 percent on the quarter, bouncing back from a 0.2 percent slide in the last three months of 2011. France’s economy stagnated, although it grew slightly at the end of last year.

“This is a very strong comeback. The decline in the fourth quarter was a heart of a recession but just an economic dip,” Joerg Kraemer, economist at Commerzbank, said of the German figures. “Germany is facing better than the rest of the euro zone, which I don’t believe that it will continue at this speed.” The yawning gap between European economies and its peers will fuel an austere versus growth debate in the currency bloc as it veteran on the edge of a new crisis, again centered on Greece. The figure for the euro zone as a whole, due at 05:00 am EDT (0900 GMT), is forecast to show it shrinking by 0.2 percent, following a 0.3 percent contraction in the last three months of 2011 - raising it back into recession.

Germany’s strong showing could just allow the currency bloc to skirt recession and it certainly bolstered markets which were battered on Monday by growing fears that Greece will plunge Europe back into crisis by leaving the euro zone.

The FTSEurofirst of top European shares climbed 0.5 percent in response, safely havan German government bond futures dapped and the euro dropped some poise. A Reuters poll of 41 economists had forecast German growth of 0.1 percent on the quarter. The actual figure beat even the highest forecast. Strength was broadly based with both exports and domestic consumption gaining ground. France, by contrast, was held back by weak household demand and slowing exports.

“There was no good surprise,” said Philippe Waechter, chief economist at Natixis Asset Management of the French data. “There was weak consumption, no investment.” Germany is the euro zone picture which shows nearly all its constituent parts back in recession or flitting with it. Italy’s economy contracted by 0.8 percent in the first quarter, the third consecutive quarterly decline and the steepest for three years, according to preliminary data which were weaker than expectations. The Dutch economy also contracted for a third consecutive quarter, shrinking by 0.2 percent.

Data released two weeks ago showed Spain has already succumbed to recession as it struggles to reduce its budget deficit and shore up a banking sector beset with bad property debts. Greece, still without a government nine days after elections as its political parties argue about whether to rip up its bailout program, is in its fifth consecutive year of recession, which is tantamount to a depression.
Mexican novelist Carlos Fuentes dies at 83

WARSAW, 17 May—Chinese Defence Minister Liang Guanglie met with his Polish counterpart Tomasz Siemoniak on Wednesday, with both sides pledging to boost bilateral military ties.

During the meeting, Liang, also a Chinese state counselor, said it is in the interests of both nations to boost bilateral military ties, which is also conducive to regional and world peace and stability.

Noting the Sino-Polish relations have witnessed sound development overall and the past years, Liang said bilateral military ties, as an important part of bilateral relationship, have also grown rapidly with Chinese, Polish DMs vow to enhance military ties

Sienmik, for his part, said Liang’s visit was the first by a Chinese defence minister in 57 years and that its positive effect will go beyond the scope of bilateral military ties.

Poland is willing to make concerted efforts with China to promote mutual understanding and trust and enhance exchanges and cooperation in a broad range of areas so as to upgrade their military ties, he said.

Liang arrived here Tuesday for an official visit to Poland, the last leg of Liang’s three-nation tour, which has already taken him to the United States and Latvia.

New Zealand closes embassy in Sweden due to budget cuts

WELLINGTON, 17 May—The New Zealand government on Wednesday announced it will close its embassy in the Swedish Capital of Stockholm as a result of budget cuts required among diplomatic posts in Europe.

A third of wildlife has vanished

LONDON, 17 May—The world’s wildlife has fallen by almost a third over the past 40 years, according to a new landmark research.

According to the research, in some parts the figure is much higher. Losses are estimated at more than 50 percent in the tropics, while in tropical freshwater ecosystems specifically, average losses may be as high as 70 percent, according to the 2012 edition of the Living Planet Report, produced by the WWF.

The study lead by Michael McCarthy indicated typical high declines in the number of wild tiger, which has suffered a 70 percent decline in the size of populations, and ‘Baiji’, the freshwater dolphin from China’s Yangtze river, which appears to have become extinct in recent years, independent reported.

However, in northern areas such as Europe and North America, wildlife populations are doing much better, indicating towards the amount of conservation that wealthy societies are able to afford.

“We’re now in the danger zone, exceeding the planetary boundaries for natural capital,” said David Nussbaum, chief executive of WWF-UK.

“If we continue to use up our planet’s resources faster than it can replace them, soon we’ll have exploited every available corner of Earth. Thankfully it’s not too late to reverse this trend, but we need to address this with the same urgency as determination that we tackled the systemic financial crisis globally,” he said.

This report is like a planetary check-up and the results indicate we have a very sick planet. Ignoring this diagnosis will have major implications for humanity. We can restore the planet’s health, but only through addressing population growth and over-consumption of resources,” said Jonathan Baillie, conservation programmes director with the Zoological Society of London.

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Senator presses NRC on issues at Calif. nuke plant

LOS ANGELES, 17 May—The chair of the US Senate’s environmental committee pressed federal regulators Tuesday to disclose details about the design of the troubled steam generators at the San Onofre nuclear power plant, where a probe into tube damage has kept the reactors sidelined for months. In another, Sen Barbara Boxer asked Nuclear Regulatory Commission Chairman Gregory Jaczko for documentation on how the federal agency reviewed generator modifications, which might be the culprit in vibration that has damaged hundreds of tubes inside the complex machines.

At issue is whether operator Southern California Edison satisfied federal requirements by conducting extensive design changes, a claim leveled by a environmental group that said the alterations are at the heart of the plant’s problems.

The reactors, located along the coast between San Diego and Los Angeles, have been shut down for more than three months while investigators try to determine the cause of the unsold tube wear. “Concerns have been raised that design changes in the steam generators contributed to accelerated wear in tubes carrying radioactive water,” Boxer, D-Calif, wrote in a letter. SCE, parent company of Edison International that also requested documents from the company on the history of the plant’s problems. —INTERNET

Old drums beat a path from history to Erykah Badu

LAGOS, 17 May—Witha curved stick in one hand, a five-year-old Nigerian pre-schooler stagg,es as she tries to steady what’s been slung from her shoulder: a drum and many generations of history.

“The children need to carry on our culture, our tradition, and you need to teach them young,” Aralola Olumuyiwa, popularly known as Ara, teaches children how to play the talking drum in a private nursery and primary school on the talking drum. The West African drumming, an hour-glass-shaped instrument usually made of wood and animal hide, is deeply embedded in the region’s culture, having served as a means of communication long before phones, not to mention e-mail and text messages.

But while it has lost its practical purpose, the talking drum is long from dying, having now been incorporated into not only traditional music, but also hip hop and the songs of global stars such as Erykah Badu.

Nigerian-born Sikiru Adepoju has gained acclaim for his talking drum expertise, in large part thanks to his collaborations with Grateful Dead percussionist Mickey Hart.

Ara is one of Nigeria’s rare female drummers and has performed with Stevie Wonder and for the Queen of England. She visits schools teaching children to play, calling it “a way of preserving our heritage through our children who are going to be our tomorrow, our future.” —INTERNET

Singapore Airlines to halt Abu Dhabi, Athens routes on weak performance

SINGAPORE, 17 May—Singapore Airlines (SIA) will be suspending services to Abu Dhabi in the UAE and Athens in Greece from 26 Oct 2012.

The decision to suspend services is a difficult one, as Athens has served since 1972 and Abu Dhabi since 2006, SIA said. The suspensions are in line with Singapore Airlines’ policy to match capacity to prevailing market demand.

Customers holding confirmed tickets issued prior to today for travel to and from Abu Dhabi and Athens after 26 Oct 2012 (27 Oct for the return Abu Dhabi-Singapore service) will be eligible for refunds, without administrative fees or penalties. This also applies to KrisFlyer redemption tickets. Efforts will be made to contact affected customers to offer alternative travel options.

SIA will continue to serve Dubai in the UAE, Connections to and from Athens are also possible on Star Alliance partner airlines via several of SIA’s other European points.—Xinhua

Berlin airport opening delayed until 2013

BERLIN, 17 May—Berlin’s new airport will not now open until 2013 due to fire regulations, German paper Bild reported on Wednesday, heaping further embarrassment on authorities who had said the hold-up would only stretch to three months.

The capital’s long-awaited new airport had been due to open on 3 June, replacing two from the Cold War era. But just weeks before its launch date, the operators said Berlin-Brandenburg airport would not be ready in time. Bild cited a letter from a building regulation agency to the airport’s board chairing meeting on Tuesday night, adding that any interim safety measures would not suffice to secure approval.

“We won’t be able to get a fully automatic system in place that quickly. That rules out opening this year,” an airport official told the paper. It would then make most sense to open the airport when airlines introduce their summer flight plan from next year, the official quoted by Bild. A spokesman for the airport declined to comment but noted that the Berlin-Brandenburg supervisory board was meeting later on Wednesday. “We expect that the board meeting will result in a time plan,” he said.

The opening of what will be Germany’s third largest airport after Frankfurt and Munich has been postponed once already.—Reuters

Rare elephant found dead in Indonesia

JAKARTA, 17 May—A critically endangered Sumatran elephant has been found dead in Indonesia’s Aceh Province, an official said on Wednesday, the second death from suspected poisoning within a month.

Villagers found the carcass, missing its tusks, in a river in Aceh Jaya District on Tuesday, local forestry official Armidi told AFP.

The elephants are usually either killed by villagers, who regard the beasts as pests that destroy their plantations, or by poachers for their tusks.

“We went to the site on Tuesday evening and found the male elephant in a river located a kilometre (half a mile) away from a village,” he said. It was thought to have been killed around four days earlier because it was beginning to decompose, he added.

According to villagers, the elephant had entered a plantation and was lurching unsteadily. They suspected it might have been poisoned.” Armidi said, adding that investigations to determine the cause of death were ongoing.

Villagers did not know who took its tusks,” he added.

Environmental organization WWF earlier this month called on the government to investigate the death of an 18-year-old female Sumatran elephant allegedly poisoned at an Indonesian oil palm plantation in the district. WWF changed the Sumatran elephant’s status from “endangered” to “critically endangered” in January, largely due to habitat loss driven by oil palm and paper plantations.

There are now more than 3,000 Sumatran elephants remaining in the wild, according to the International Union for Conservation of Nature, marking a 50 percent drop in numbers since 1985.

Conflicts between humans and animals are increasing as people encroach on wildlife habitats in Indonesia, an archipelago with some of the world’s largest remaining tropical forests.—INTERNET

Cambodia reports 1,500 cases of dengue fever-like CHIKV virus in last 12 months

PHNOM PENH, 17 May—Cambodia reported 1,500 cases of a new strain of dengue fever in the last twelve months, a Cambodian senior health official said on Wednesday, but no death case has been reported related to such virus.

The Dengue virus, or CHIKV, was diagnosed in Cambodia in 1961 and had disappeared from the country for 50 years. Just in May last year, the disease had re-emerged and caused sickness to 1,500 people to date, Dr Char Meng Chao, the director of the National Centre for Parasitology, Entomology and Malaria Control, told Xinhua.

Since there occurrence in last May, the virus spread from provinces bordering Thailand to those bordering Vietnam, including Battambang, Siem Reap, Preah Vihear, Kampong Speu, Kandal and Takeo.

Preah Vihear has the highest rate of infection, up to 1,041 cases,” he said.

The CHIKV virus has similar symptoms of the fatal dengue fever, but it is less severe than that and does not lead to death,” he added, saying that the disease is caused by tiger mosquitoes and often bursts out in rainy season. The disease causes pain on bones and muscles for a couple of months.

However, the treatment of such symptom is relatively easy, compared with the dengue fever, by applying pain killing medicines, heat relief medicine and paracetamol.—Xinhua

Workers talk in the terminal building of the new Berlin-Brandenburg Airport outside Berlin on 12 May, 2012. (Reuters)

Indonesian wildlife officials and villagers view the body of a rare Sumatran elephant found dead in a palm oil plantation in Aceh Jaya in Aceh Province on 1 May. 2012. A second dead Sumatran elephant has been found dead in Aceh Province on Tuesday.—INTERNET

Rare elephant found dead in Indonesia

JAKARTA, 17 May—A critically endangered Sumatran elephant has been found dead in Indonesia’s Aceh Province, an official said on Wednesday, the second death from suspected poisoning within a month.

Villagers found the carcass, missing its tusks, in a river in Aceh Jaya District on Tuesday, local forestry official Armidi told AFP.

The elephants are usually either killed by villagers, who regard the beasts as pests that destroy their plantations, or by poachers for their tusks.

“We went to the site on Tuesday evening and found the male elephant in a river located a kilometre (half a mile) away from a village,” he said. It was thought to have been killed around four days earlier because it was beginning to decompose, he added.

According to villagers, the elephant had entered a plantation and was lurching unsteadily. They suspected it might have been poisoned.” Armidi said, adding that investigations to determine the cause of death were ongoing.

Villagers did not know who took its tusks,” he added.

Environmental organization WWF earlier this month called on the government to investigate the death of an 18-year-old female Sumatran elephant allegedly poisoned at an Indonesian oil palm plantation in the district. WWF changed the Sumatran elephant’s status from “endangered” to “critically endangered” in January, largely due to habitat loss driven by oil palm and paper plantations.

There are now more than 3,000 Sumatran elephants remaining in the wild, according to the International Union for Conservation of Nature, marking a 50 percent drop in numbers since 1985.

Conflicts between humans and animals are increasing as people encroach on wildlife habitats in Indonesia, an archipelago with some of the world’s largest remaining tropical forests.—INTERNET

Cambodia reports 1,500 cases of dengue fever-like CHIKV virus in last 12 months

PHNOM PENH, 17 May—Cambodia reported 1,500 cases of a new strain of dengue fever in the last twelve months, a Cambodian senior health official said on Wednesday, but no death case has been reported related to such virus.

The Dengue virus, or CHIKV, was diagnosed in Cambodia in 1961 and had disappeared from the country for 50 years. Just in May last year, the disease had re-emerged and caused sickness to 1,500 people to date, Dr Char Meng Chao, the director of the National Centre for Parasitology, Entomology and Malaria Control, told Xinhua.

Since there occurrence in last May, the virus spread from provinces bordering Thailand to those bordering Vietnam, including Battambang, Siem Reap, Preah Vihear, Kampong Speu, Kandal and Takeo.

Preah Vihear has the highest rate of infection, up to 1,041 cases,” he said.

The CHIKV virus has similar symptoms of the fatal dengue fever, but it is less severe than that and does not lead to death,” he added, saying that the disease is caused by tiger mosquitoes and often bursts out in rainy season. The disease causes pain on bones and muscles for a couple of months.

However, the treatment of such symptom is relatively easy, compared with the dengue fever, by applying pain killing medicines, heat relief medicine and paracetamol.—Xinhua

Workers talk in the terminal building of the new Berlin-Brandenburg Airport outside Berlin on 12 May, 2012. (Reuters)

Indonesian wildlife officials and villagers view the body of a rare Sumatran elephant found dead in a palm oil plantation in Aceh Jaya in Aceh Province on 1 May. 2012. A second dead Sumatran elephant has been found dead in Aceh Province on Tuesday.—INTERNET
Union Minister for Labour and for SWRRR meets special advisor to UNSG

Union Minister for Labour and for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement U Aung Kyi receives Special Advisor to the United Nations Secretary General and Special Envoy for HIV/AIDS in Asia and Pacific Dr Nafis Sadik.

NAY PYI TAW, 17 May—Special Advisor to the United Nations Secretary General and Special Envoy for HIV/AIDS in Asia and Pacific Dr Nafis Sadik and party paid a call on Union Minister for Labour and for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement U Aung Kyi at the latter’s office here this morning.

Their discussions focused on public education works against HIV/AIDS being carried out by the Labour Ministry and Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Ministry, new social security board law and its effects, rehabilitation of victims of human trafficking and children suffering from HIV/AIDS, and work plans under public-centered strategies in cooperation with international organizations.

Also present at the call were the director-general of Social Welfare Department and the general manager of Social Security Board.

Union Electric Power No. 2 Minister receives US, Japanese guests

NAY PYI TAW, 17 May—Union Minister for Electric Power No. 2 U Khin Maung Soe received a delegation led by President and Chief Executive Officer Mr Nobuo Kuga of Project Management Department of Oriental Consultants Co Ltd of Japan.

At the meeting, they had a discussion on feasibility study on better power supply in Yangon, upgrading of load dispatching centre and building of coal-fired power plant capable of generating megawatts ranging from 600 to 1200.

Next, the Union Minister received a delegation led by Senior Project Manager Mr Nobuo Kuga of Project Management Department of Oriental Consultants Co Ltd of Japan.

At the meeting, they had a discussion on feasibility study on better power supply, moving gas-fired power plants in central Myanmar that are out of service to Yangon where they are to undergo necessary repair and upgrading of control systems.

Union Hotels & Tourism Minister meets Thai Ambassador to Myanmar

NAY PYI TAW, 17 May—Union Minister for Hotels and Tourism and for Sports U Tint Hsan received Thai Ambassador Mr. Pisanu Suvanajata.

Foreign Affairs asked the Union Minister about the Transport Ministry’s participation in political and economic reforms of Myanmar and its further measures, and current condition of foreign investment environment.

The magazine is reported to write a special feature on Myanmar as “Rethinking Myanmar: A New Strategic Partnership”.

Also present at the call were Deputy Minister U Win Shein and personnel.

Blood donated to mark Mothers’ Day

NAY PYI TAW, 17 May—As a gesture of honouring the Mothers’ Day, Buddhist Yunnan Temple Board of Trustees organized blood donation ceremony for the first time in Chanyayethazan Township of Mandalay on 14 May morning.

It was attended by Medical Superintendent Dr U Win of Mandalay General Hospital, in-charge of National Blood Bank Pathologist Dr Daw Khin Sein Win, doctors, nurses, Chairman of the Temple Board of Trustees U Kyaw Sein, Vice-Chairman U Myint Naing, Secretary U San Hlaing, In-charge of the Relationship Dr Ye Aung and blood donors.

At the ceremony, Dr Daw Khin Sein Win accepted blood bags and K 500,000 donated by blood donors and gave medals and certificates of honour to blood donors.

International entrepreneurs meet departmental officials at MICC

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Union for Labour and for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement U Aung Kyi receives Special Advisor to the United Nations Secretary General and Special Envoy for HIV/AIDS in Asia and Pacific Dr Nafis Sadik.

The meeting focused on potentials of investments in construction, agriculture and irrigation, transport, education, health, hotel and tourism, mines, industrial and investment, energy, communication, livestock and fisheries sectors.

NAY PYI TAW, 17 May—A foreign delegation including International entrepreneurs called on the respective departmental officials at News Briefing Room of MICC in Nay Pyi Taw this afternoon.

The meeting focused on potentials of investments in construction, agriculture and irrigation, transport, education, health, hotel and tourism, mines, industrial and investment, energy, communication, livestock and fisheries sectors.

NAY PYI TAW, 17 May—Special Advisor to the United Nations Secretary General and Special Envoy for HIV/AIDS in Asia and Pacific Dr Nafis Sadik and party paid a call on Union Minister for Labour and for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement U Aung Kyi at the latter’s office here this morning.

In the interview, the Union Minister for Labour and for SWRRR, Mr Aung Kyi, congratulated Myanmar to be a host country for the 27th SEA Games-2013, adding that Thailand is a country that hosted SEA Games for three times and has experiences in that regard, it is ready to provide Myanmar with necessary helps such as training Myanmar athletes at Thai sports training schools.

The Union Minister asked about scholarships for human resources development after speaking that preparations for successfully holding the SEA Games and tasks for timely completion of sports grounds are being carried out.

At the call were Deputy Minister U Htay Aung, head of the office and departmental heads were also present.
Sustainability of libraries, need for people to really engage in reading and emergence of libraries in every village are the objectives to be realized by MLF

Union Minister U Kyaw Hsan addresses meeting with executive committee of Myanmar Libraries Foundation.—MNA

Myanmar-New Zealand hold talks

Myanmar, 17 May—Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs Dr Myo Myint speaking at Myanmar-New Zealand Track II Exchange of Views. MNA

The Myanmar Institute of Strategic and International Studies, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Asia-New Zealand Foundation jointly conducted Myanmar-New Zealand Track II Exchange of Views at Sedona Hotel, here, this morning. Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs Dr Myo Myint delivered the welcoming remarks.

Senior representatives from Government and academic circles from Myanmar and New Zealand participated in the dialogue and exchanged views on current developments in political, economic and foreign relations in Myanmar, current developments in New Zealand and the South Pacific, China-US relations in East Asia, South-Asia and India and developments in ASEAN and regional integration.

The Deputy Minister hosted a Welcoming Dinner in honour of the visiting New Zealand delegation at Padomma Restaurant in the evening.

MNA
Durain, mangosteen marketable in Toungoo market

YEBAIKYI, 17 May—Durain and mangosteen fruits from Kyaukkyi Township and Thandawng region flow into the market in Toungoo as of early May. The city market in Toungoo was flooded with durain and mangosteen from Kyaukkyi Township and Bawgali region arrived at the fruit brokers. These fruits are put on sales in the region in addition to transporting them to Kinpun Market, Myoma Market and Pyinuma of Nay Pyi Taw and Mandalay. Medium sized durain fruit is sold at K 1800 to K 3000 and mangosteen, K 100 to K 120 in the retail market.—Kemon

Farmers prepare cultivation of pre-monsoon sesame

THAZI, 17 May—Although the days after 15th March, day temperature were high in Thazi Township, pre-monsoon rains showered on 9 and 10 April. Thus, temperature of the township declined and gem-kino flowers bloomed across the township. Local farmers are now making preparations for cultivation of pre-monsoon sesame.—Kemon

Model plot of Palethwe paddy harvested in Taikkyi

TAIKKYI, 17 May—The harvesting of summer Palethwe hybrid paddy was held on five-acre paddy farm of Central Land Survey Training School in Taikkya Village of Taikkyi Township of Yangon North District on 11 May. The paddy harvesting ceremony was attended by Principal of the training school U Khin Maung Bo, Head of Yangon Region Settlement and Land Records Department, Head of Yangon North District Settlement and Land Records Department U Htein, Head of Township Settlement and Land Records Department U Than Win and members of Township Agricultural Coordination Committee. After the harvesting works, the paddy produced 151 baskets per acre in wet status. In coming cultivation season, the local farmers plan to extend Palethwe own acreage.—Kemon

Creek, drains, lakes dredged in Dalla for fresh water supply

DALLA, 17 May—Drains and creeks in Dalla are being dredged in Dalla for supply of fresh water with the use of two backhoes. On 10 May morning, officials supervised the works. At present, 120 feet square Daw Shan Lake in Nyaungngokto Village and 65 feet square Daw Win Kyi Lake are being dredged. A drain was dredged at Rakhine Creek Sluice Gate for prevention against flood to store fresh water for irrigating summer paddy.—Kemon

Dedaye Township gets new rural library

DEDEAYE, 17 May—A ceremony to open Bawa Alinyang Library, built by contributions of the State and the people, was held in Mangaygyi Village of Dedaye Township in Pyapon District on 1 May afternoon. At the ceremony, Dedaye Township Administrator U Tin Shwe, Staff Officer U Zaw Min of District Information and Public Relations Department and Mangaygyi Village-tract Administrator U Aung Kyaw Do formally opened the library. After that, the Administrator of Dedaye Township made a speech. The Staff Officer of District IPRD explained the purpose of opening the library and tasks for durability of library. The township administrator, the staff officer of District Information and Public Relations Department and Head of Township Information and Public Relations Department Daw Myint Myint Kyaw donated books on various subjects. Officials accepted the donations.—Township IPRD

TRADING CONCLUDES: At concluding of training courses conducted by Human Resources Development Committee under Republic of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry, President of the federation U Win Aung presents prizes to outstanding trainees. MPA

Information for trafficking in person

The government is carrying out undertakings of prevention against trafficking in person with momentum. In so doing, telephone numbers are announced as the connections with authorities concerned for enabling the people to actively participate in anti-trafficking in persons. These telephone numbers are 067-412555 and 067-412666 in Nay Pyi Taw, 09-49555777 in Muse, 09-49555788 in Mandalay and 09-49555999 in Yangon.
World Bank chief says eurozone needs funding for reforms

WASHINGTON, 17 May—World Bank President Robert Zoellick said on Wednesday if Greece leaves the eurozone, it would have “ripple effects” comparable to the collapse of Lehman Brothers in 2008.

Zoellick said he doesn’t favor eurobonds all the time because it may loosen fiscal disciplines on the states, but it can be used for a limited time.

The danger for Greece is if that country leaves, it would have to take care to keep the market from becoming “adrift, Zoellick cautioned, adding that it makes him think of the failure of Lehman Brothers.

"Where the danger comes in is when events come, they start to affect confidence and you get illiquidity moments," said Zoellick, who also believes the key issue the European countries have to come to terms with is “if you have medium-term reform, you need some sort of medium-term insurance for investors.”

Zoellick said he doesn’t favor eurobonds all the time because it may loosen fiscal disciplines on the states, but it can be used for a limited time.

He also mentioned using the European Stability Mechanism fund to stabilize European economies, which he said, is more likely to happen.

The country’s political turmoil fueled fears among investors and caused large-scale deposit outflows from Greek banks since Monday.

Two US Navy ships collide off Southern California coast

LOS ANGELES, 17 May—US Navy confirmed an amphibious assault ship collided with a Navy oiler Wednesday about 193 kilometers off the Southern California coast as the former was on its way to San Diego in the US State of California.

No one was hurt and no fuel was spilled, the Navy was quoted by local media as saying.

The USS Essex, the amphibious assault ship, collided with the USNS Yukon around 1020 GMT and both vessels were damaged, the Navy said.

The USS Essex was based in San Diego before it was sent to Japan. According to the Navy’s website, the ship is returning to San Diego Thursday after completing 12 years as the Navy’s only permanently forward-deployed amphibious assault ship in Sasebo, Japan.

New Zealand exploring joint Antarctic research with ROK

WELLINGTON, 17 May—Antarctic scientists from New Zealand and the Republic of Korea (ROK) are to investigate areas of possible joint research, New Zealand’s leading Antarctic research institute announced on Wednesday.

The collaboration comes as the ROK steps up investment in Antarctic research with plans for a 69 million-US-dollar station being built over the next two years at Terra Nova Bay, according to the University of Canterbury’s Gateway Antarctica. The Jang Bogo Antarctic Research Station would benefit New Zealand’s research in the area, Gateway Antarctica director Professor Bryan Storey said in a statement.

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The New Zealand government was funding the three-year collaboration study with 174,000 NZ dollars ($33,528 US dollars), said Storey, the focal point coordinator for Antarctic Research Joint with Korea. "The funding is to organize Korean researchers to come to New Zealand for workshops and vice versa, to discuss common interests and develop joint research programs," Storey said in a statement.

The ROK had increased its Antarctic expenditure from 10 million US dollars to 60 million US dollars over the past five years, and was aiming to become a “very significant” Antarctic research nation, he said. "They are not only building a new station using advanced renewable energy technology, in addition to the one they had since 1988, but they have also built a new ice-breaker ship worth $1 billion US dollars," Storey says. The ROK wanted a partner country with a long background of Antarctic research that knew the area and what issues could arise—and New Zealand had a lot of experience. —Xinhua
CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV DELPHINUS VOY NO (317)
Consignees of cargo carried on MV DELPHINUS VOY NO (317) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 18-5-2012 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of S.P.Wi6 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: FORTUNE SHIPPING AGENCY PTE LTD
Phone No: 256924/256914

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV DAN JIANG VOY NO (075)
Consignees of cargo carried on MV DAN JIANG VOY NO (075) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 18-5-2012 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.W.P.T where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.
Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claims Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.
No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: MS INTERASIA LINES
Phone No: 256908/378316/376797

Air Asia to launch Beijing-Kuala Lumpur route

BEIJING, 17 May — Air Asia, a low-cost airline, announced on Wednesday it will launch direct flight from Beijing to Kuala Lumpur starting from 22 June.
The company said four direct flights will take place every week between 22 June to 5 Aug, adding that flights will be scheduled on a daily basis starting from 6 Aug.
Since entering the Chinese market in 2005, Air Asia now flies to 10 Chinese cities, including Tianjin, Hangzhou, Chengdu and Guangzhou.
China is one of Air Asia’s core markets and its entrance into the Beijing market is a milestone in the company’s development, said Azran Osman Rani, CEO of AirAsia X, a long-haul budget airline and Air Asia franchise based in Malaysia.—Xinhua

Upcoming EU summit to focus on economic growth: Barroso

BRUSSELS, 17 May — The June European Council will focus on growth initiative, said European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso on Wednesday.
The European Commission would push for progress on proposals that had been put forward, Barroso said during a weekly meeting of the Commission.
“So it is time to agree on these proposals,” said Barroso.
He urged Member States to swiftly give the Commission a mandate to start negotiations on tax evasion and tax fraud, and expressed regret for two Member States’ veto during ECOFIN meeting on Monday to a mandate for EU to negotiate with third parties.
“There is no easy road to growth, but an intensification of reforms at both the national and the European levels can help,” Barroso said.
He also urged Greek people to take a wise decision in upcoming election, and pledged at the same time EU would respect Greek people’s decision.
“It will now be for the Greek people to take a fully informed decision on the alternatives, having in mind that this will be indeed an historic election,” said Barroso.
Xinhua

China’s tourism investment hit 206 b yuan in 2011

BEIJING, 17 May — Investment in China’s tourism industry hit 206.4 billion yuan (32.8 billion US dollars) last year, according to data from the National Tourism Administration (NTA) issued on Wednesday.
Private investment accounted for 39 percent of the total, said Wu Wenxue, a senior NTA official.
Investment by the government and state-owned enterprises accounted for 25 and 13 percent of the total, respectively, Wu said at a Press briefing.
Meanwhile, 23 percent of the total came from bank loans, Wu said.
Scenic areas, vacation resorts and the renovation of tourist cities took up 66 percent of the investment, while investment in restaurants and hotels accounted for 18 percent, data showed. Wu said China’s economically developed eastern region was the top spot for tourism investment, consuming more than half of the total investment last year.
As of the end of 2011, accumulative investment in tourism projects nationwide totaled 2.67 trillion yuan, the data showed. —Xinhua

Teacher honoured after saving children from bus

BEIJING, 17 May — A middle school teacher in northeast China’s Heilongjiang Province who was injured while saving students from getting hit by a bus has been honoured as a national “role model woman,” the All-China Women’s Federation announced on Wednesday.
Zhang Li has regained consciousness but remains in life-threatening condition, doctors from the hospital she was transferred to said on Tuesday.
Zhang, a 29-year-old teacher at the No 19 Middle School in the city of Jiamusi, was crossing the road just outside the school’s gate on 8 May when a school bus suddenly veered toward several students.
Zhang pushed two students out of the way but was hit by the bus herself.
Her legs were crushed and have since been amputated. —Xinhua

Germany pledges cash aid for Afghanistan after troops pullout

BERLIN, 17 May — Germany has promised 150 million euros (190 million US dollars) worth of cash aid to Afghanistan a year after international peacekeeping forces pullout on schedule in 2014 as part of an agreement signed by both countries on Wednesday.
Chancellor Angela Merkel said the aid to Afghanistan was a reflection of Germany’s long-term commitment to the country.
“Afghanistan’s fate is close to our heart,” Merkel said, adding the pledge of long-term aid marked a “milestone” in the two countries’ relations.
Afghan President Hamid Karzai said the funds would be used in training its security forces and build Afghanistan into a better and stronger country. Germany has some 4,900 soldiers engaged in peacekeeping operations in Afghanistan, making it the third largest contributor to the 130,000-strong NATO-led International Security Assistance Force, after the United States and Britain. —INTERNET

Shaven-headed young boys play near a lion model at the Everland amusement park in Yongin, west of Seoul, South Korea, on 14 May. 2012. They are among the nine children who entered a temple to have an experience of monk’s life to celebrate upcoming birthday of Buddha. —Internet
Man asked to be shot
Police in New York State said they arrested a man accused of agreeing to do a favour for a friend and shoot him in the leg.
State Police said Shawn Mossow, 25, of Norfolk allegedly shot a 24-year-old friend in the leg with a .22-caliber rifle Sunday in Stockholm because the other man was curious about what it would feel like and asked him to take the shot, the Potsdam, N.Y. publication North Country This Week reported.
The victim was treated for a non-life-threatening gunshot wound and is expected to fully recover.
Mossow was charged with first-degree reckless endangerment and is expected to remain in jail on $10,000 bail.

Thin Elizabeth Banks won’t mention her weight
LOUISVILLE, Ky., 17 May—Actress Elizabeth Banks says she is too thin that she would not like to talk about her weight.
“It’s not good to put in a magazine what I weigh because it’s too little. People freak out when they hear what I weigh,” showbizpy.com quoted Banks as saying.

Actor Tom Cruise

Romantic Cruise still crazy about Holmes
LOUISVILLE, Ky., 17 May—Actor Tom Cruise, who married Katie Holmes in 2006, says he is incredibly happy with his special relationship and is still mesmerised by everything she does.
The 49-year-old says he felt an instant attraction to Holmes the moment he met her and just laying eyes on her brings a smile to his face every day.
“She is an extraordinary person, and if you spent five minutes with her, you’d see it. Everything she does, she does with this beautiful creativity. She’s funny and charming, and when she walks into the room, I just feel better,” contactmusic.com quoted Cruise as saying.
The actor says he keeps their chemistry alive by organizing intimate meals to keep their relationship alive.

Justin Bieber’s perfume ‘Someday’ breaks record
NEW YORK, 17 May—Justin Bieber’s perfume ‘Someday’ has broken colourboarding million-dollar in just three weeks resulting in winning at FiFi Awards.
The FiFi Awards are sponsored by the fragrance foundation and is held annually since 1973.
The awards which are dubbed the “Oscars” of the perfume world will be conferred to in New York on 21 May with Glee star Jane Lynch hosting.

Theron gets nervous on red carpet
LONDON, 17 May— Actress Charlize Theron admits she is moved when fans come out to greet her at premiers, but says she still gets unnerved at glittery red carpet events despite a 17-year-old career as a Hollywood star.
“Red carpets are still the same so far as anxiety and nerves. I don’t think that ever goes away because it’s a lot of attention,” Theron said at the British premiere of “Snow White and the Huntsman” here.
“But it’s so moving that everyone comes out to support us. That always, always amazes me. It’s flattering. It’s sweet and I try not to think about it. Of course it’s intimidating,” femalefirst.co.uk quoted Theron as saying.

Billboard Awards to honour Whitney Houston
L.A. VEGAS, 17 May—Jordin Sparks and John Legend are to perform a tribute to late pop icon Whitney Houston at Sunday's Billboard Music Awards show in Las Vegas, ABC said on Tuesday.
Houston is to be posthumously honoured with the 2012 Billboard Millennium Award at the event, which her daughter Bobbi Kristina and sister-in-law Pat are expected to attend.
Houston’s friends and the board of the MGM Grand Garden Arena are to serve as hosts of the ceremony at the MGM Grand Garden Arena.
Houston drowned in a hotel bathtub 11 Feb in Beverly Hills, Calif, after using cocaine. She was 48.

Ming vase turned into lamp sells for $881K
A Ming dynasty vase that experts said would have been worth $6.4 million in intact form sold for $881,320 in Britain because its former owner converted it into a lamp.
Duke’s auction house in Dorchester, England, said an elderly man brought the lamp in for auction and had no idea that it was a 1st century vase from the reign of Emperor Xuande, the British financial website This is Money reported.
“It is tempting to speculate how many millions the vase would have fetched if it had not been damaged when it was converted to a table lamp,” said Guy Schwinge of Duke’s auction house.

Taxi cab thieves leave flower trail
Boston police said they arrested two men accused of hijacking a taxi cab and leaving a trail of flower petals during a foot chase.
Police said Brian Cannen, 21, of Lowell, and Shawn Hickey, 40, of Boston, took a ride in a taxi cab and Hickey allegedly pulled a realistic-looking pellet hand grenade and forced the driver when two of his credit cards were declined, the Boston Herald reported.
The driver fled when the men demanded his money and they gave chase, shooting him twice in the chest with the pellet gun, police said.
Investigators said Hickey briefly stole the cab and left Cunneen behind, but was forced to abandon the vehicle when he crashed it into two cars and the two men fled together on foot.
Police said a trail of flower petals from Cunneen’s “orange, yellow and red floral arrangement” led them to the knife the men abandoned while fleeing and officers were able to catch up to the suspects.
Both men were charged with armed carjacking and armed robbery. Hickey was also charged with assault and battery with a dangerous weapon and leaving the scene of an accident. The men were ordered held without bail.

Bloomers in auction alleged to be queen’s
A Miami eBay user is selling a pair of bloomer-style undergarments allegedly once belonging to Queen Elizabeth II.
The auction alleges the undergarments, which bear an embroidered crown and the letter “E,” were left on an airplane when Elizabeth visited Chile in 1968 and ended up in the collection of Hungarian-born sculptor Baron Joseph “Sepy” de Bicske Dobronyi, who died in 2010, the British newspaper The Daily Telegraph reported.
The description in the auction, which was purportedly posted by Dobronyi’s estate, says Buckingham Palace and the manufacturer of the garment have refused to confirm or deny the authenticity of the item.
“In either case this is an excellent example of a vintage undergarment of that era and very collectible,” the description says.
The auction, which ends on 22 May, had a high bid of $5,300 as of Monday afternoon.
Bayern Munich keen to be part of ‘golden generation’

BERLIN, 17 May—Bayern Munich captain Philipp Lahm says his side must beat Chelsea in Saturday’s Champions League final if they want to be considered part of the club’s “golden generation.”

Bayern host Chelsea at Munich’s Allianz Arena with the Bavarian giants bidding to lift the trophy for the first time since 2001, having reached two of the last three finals.

Lahm played in the Bayern team that lost 2-0 at the hands of Jose Mourinho’s Inter Milan in the 2010 final in Madrid.

Current club president Uli Hoeness and chairman Karl-Heinz Rummenigge, meanwhile, were part of the Bayern team that won consecutive titles in 1974, 1975 and 1976. —Internet

Former Argentina’s coach Diego Maradona stands on the sidelines during their World Cup 2010 qualifying match against Paraguay on 9 Sept, 2009. Reuters

Argentina being considered for the vacant United Arab Emirates head coaching job.

The new president of the UAE Football Association Yousef Al Serkal said on Wednesday that Maradona was among the leading candidates for the post.

“Maradona is within the family of UAE football, we can’t neglect or overlook such a name,” Al Serkal said. “We will have to consider him.”

Maradona, who won the World Cup as a player in 1986 and coached Argentina to the quarter-finals of the 2010 edition in South Africa, is now working at the Al Wasl club in Dubai.

The UAE has been without a head coach since Sredo Katanec was sacked last year following successive defeats in their opening 2014 World Cup qualifying matches. —Reuters

Tevez insists he won’t apologise to Fergie

MANCHESTER, 17 May—Striker Carlos Tevez insisted Wednesday he would not apologise to Sir Alex Ferguson after waving a mocked-up tombstone of the Manchester United boss during Manchester City’s Premier League title celebrations.

“It seems that Ferguson is the president of England. Because each time that he speaks badly of a player or talks nonsense about me no-one comes out to say that he has to apologise.

“When you make a joke, you have to apologise. But I’m not apologising,” said Tevez on returning to Buenos Aires after helping City to their first title in 44 years.

The 28-year-old Argentine striker hold up a banner designed to look like a gravestone and bearing the words ‘RIP Ferguson’ as City celebrated their title triumph over Manchester United during an open-top bus parade.

International Sports

Manchester City’s Argentinian forward Carlos Tevez (C, black hat) sits with his teammates on an open topped bus as they celebrate becoming English Premier League champions in a parade on Manchester on 14 May. —INTERNET

Barton accepts one violence charge, denies another

LONDON, 17 May—Joey Barton has accepted an FA charge against him for violent conduct against Manchester City’s Sergio Aguero in Sunday’s clash which clinched the Premier League title for City.

However, the Queens Park Rangers midfielder has denied a second charge of alleged violent conduct against City’s Vincent Kompany, the English FA said in a statement.

Queens Park Rangers’ English midfielder Joey Barton (C) classes with Manchester City’s captain Vincent Kompany (L) after being sent off by the referee on 13 May.

INTERNET

Brazilian tennis star Rafael Nadal (black hat) sits with his teammates on an open topped bus as they celebrate becoming English Premier League champions in a parade on Manchester on 14 May. —INTERNET

Azarenka suffers injury blow, Federer advances

ROME, 17 May—World number one Victoria Azarenka suffered a blow to her French Open preparations when she was forced to pull out of the Italian Open with a right shoulder injury on Wednesday, but an aching Roger Federer gingerly advanced to the third round.

Azarenka had shown no sign of discomfort when she wallowed Israel’s Shahar Peer 6-1, 6-2 in the second round but the WTA announced her withdrawal shortly after the victory to the surprise of everyone in the Foro Italico.

Roger Federer serves to Carlos Berlocq during their match at the Rome Masters, on 16 May, 2012. —INTERNET

With just 10 days until the start of the French Open, the Belarussian will hope for a quick recovery ahead of her bid for a second straight grand slam title.

In-form Federer, carrying a few aches and pains after winning the Madrid Masters on Sunday, saw off Carlos Berlocq of Argentina 6-3, 6-1.

The Swiss only decided to play after his morning practice session.

—Reuters

Japanese Kiyotake to join Nuremberg

OSAKA, 17 May—Japan midfielder Hiroshi Kiyotake, a member of the country’s under-23 squad for the London Olympics, will join German side Nuremberg on 1 July, his J-League club Cerezo Osaka said Thursday.

Kiyotake has played in five games without scoring a goal for Japan’s senior side. He is also a member of the Olympic squad seeking the country’s first football medal since they won bronze at the 1968 Mexico City Games.

Japanese players in Germany’s professional leagues include Borussia Dortmund star Shinji Kagawa, who appears set to move to England, Stuttgart striker Shinji Okazaki and Wolfsburg midfielder Makoto Hasebe. —INTERNET

Chinese club Guangzhou appoint Italian coach Lippi

GUANGZHOU, 17 May—World Cup-winning coach Marcello Lippi was unveiled as the new coach of Chinese champions Guangzhou Evergrande on Thursday, in the latest sign of the Super League’s growing financial clout.—INTERNET

Lippi made the lucrative move to China last year.

The 64-year-old, who boasts excellent credentials after lifting the Champions League with Juventus and guiding his native Italy to World Cup glory in 2006, is the highest-profile coach to make the lucrative move to China.

The deal also confirms the soaring ambitions of Guangzhou, who last year made Argentina’s Dario Conca one of the world’s richest players when they snapped him up and then went on to take the Super League title.

“In accordance with the strategic needs of the club, the following decision was made: to hire Mr Marcello Lippi as the head coach of Guangzhou Evergrande,” the club said in a statement. —INTERNET

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—Reuters
**Weather forecast for 18th May, 2012**

**A model presents a vehicle during the 7th China (Shenyang) Auto Fair Expo in Shenyang, capital of northeast China's Liaoning Province, on 17 May, 2012. The five-day-long expo opened here on Thursday, attracting 105 auto companies.**

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**Focus Myanmar TV Programme**

**MYANMAR INTERNATIONAL**

(18-5-12 09:30 am - 19-5-12 09:30 am) MST

- News
- National Expo & Car Show
- Challenges to Media in a New Environment
- News
- Tapestry: A Unique Combination of Painting and Craftsmanship
- News
- Myanmar Video Impact “Gandaryi Rory”
- News
- Where Stars Blossom Excellent
- News
- Volunteers Rural Field Trips News
- Music Gallery News
- IWT...Getting Ready for the People and the Country (Part-2)
- News
- The most prominent resort and residence
- Myanmar Movie “Love Be Win”

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**King Kenny dethroned as Liverpool sack Dalglish**

**LIVERPOOL, 17 May—Liverpool legend Kenny Dalglish was sacked as manager of the club on Wednesday in a dramatic move by the club’s owners following a disappointing Premier League campaign. The 61-year-old Scot, who had returned for a second stint as manager at Anfield in January last year, paid the price for a dismal season which saw Liverpool finish 37 points behind Manchester City.

**The Merseyside club’s American owners, the Fenway Sports Group (FSG) had given Dalglish more than £100 million ($153.3 million) to spend in the transfer market since he took over from the sacked Roy Hodgson in 2011. But expensive signings such as Andy Carroll, Stewart Downing, Jordan Henderson and Charlie Adam have largely flopped, with Liverpool’s eighth place finish their worst season-ending position for nearly two decades.**

**Fenway Sports Group and Liverpool Football Club announce that Kenny Dalglish is to leave his post today as manager after having his contract terminated,” a joint statement said.**

**“After a careful and deliberative review of the season the club came to the decision that a change was appropriate. “It is not a decision that was reached lightly or hastily. “The search for a new manager will begin immediately.”**

Dalglish said in a statement he was “honoured and privileged” to have been given the opportunity to manage the club for a second time.

“I greatly appreciate the work that Steve (Clarke), Kevin (Keen), the players and all of the staff put in during my time and feel proud that we delivered the club’s first trophy in six years, winning the (League) Cup, and came close to a second trophy in the FA Cup final,” he said.

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**Medical ward for Sangha under construction in Shwegyin**

**SH WEGYIN, 17 May—Participation of volunteers in construction of self-reliant Sangha ward was organized at Shwegyin People’s Hospital (106-bed) in Shwegyin of Bago District in Bago Region on 12 May morning. The local people participated in construction works. The medical ward for Sangha will be 66x29x'14 feet one-storey structure which will cost K 25 million.**

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**Limbless Frenchman swims from PNG to Indonesia**

**JAKARTA, 17 May—A Frenchman who lost his limbs in an electrical accident swim from Papua New Guinea to Indonesia in strong winds and currents Thursday, finishing the first stretch in a mission to swim between five continents. Philippe Croizon, 43, who swam the English Channel in 2000, left Papua New Guinea’s fishing village of Wutung in the early morning to begin what he has billed as the Oceania-Asia stretch of his challenge.**

**After swimming 20kilometres (12 miles) over almost eight hours, he arrived at 1 pm local time (0400GMT) in the village of Pasar Skow in Indonesia’s Papua province, which shares a border with Papua New Guinea.**

“...it took us an hour and a half more than we expected because we had to swim against the currents,” he said, adding the total time was seven hours, 35 minutes and 35 seconds. More than 100 locals came to see the Frenchman, who swam with the French long-distance swimmer Arnaud Chassery and a man from Papua New Guinea named Zet Tampa, who said he wanted to join the swim to show solidarity. “We swam slowly because we did not have the chance to do a practice run,” Croizon said.—Xinhua

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**Mexican brothers given death penalty in Malaysia for drug trafficking**

**KUALA LUMPUR, 17 May—A Malaysian high court on Thursday sentenced three Mexican brothers and two others to death by hanging for drug trafficking. Kuala Lumpur’s high court judge Mohd Zawawi Salleh convicted 33-year-old Jose Regino Gonzales Villarreal, 36-year-old Simon Gonzales Villarreal, 44-year-old Alfonso Gonzales Villarreal, a Singaporean painter and a Malaysian cane operator for trafficking 29.46kilogrammes of methamphetamine worth $44 million (14.15 million US dollars). Drug trafficking carries a mandatory death penalty by hanging under Malaysia’s law.**

**The Mexicans were from Sinaloa state and have no prior criminal records. They were arrested in March four years ago at a drug manufacturing factory in Malaysia’s southern Johor state.**

The judge dismissed the defence’s arguments that they were hired as cleaners to clean the factory, saying stains of drug chemicals were found on their clothes.

The Villarreal brothers are the first Mexicans to be charged and convicted for drug trafficking.

Their attorney, Kitson Foong, said he will appeal the verdict.—Xinhua
Thai Ambassador calls on Amyotha Hluttaw Deputy Speaker

Nay Pyi Taw, 17 May—Thai Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Pisanu Suvanajata paid a call on Deputy Speaker of Amyotha Hluttaw U Mya Nyein at Amyotha Hluttaw Hall in Hluttaw Complex here this morning.

Present at the call together with the deputy speaker of Amyotha Hluttaw were chairpersons and secretaries of Amyotha Hluttaw committees. During the meeting, they cordially discussed matters related to fostering friendly ties between the two parliaments and two nations.—MNA

Winners awarded in MTF President Cup Junior Tennis Tournament

Nay Pyi Taw, 17 May—Organized by Myanmar Tennis Federation, final matches of the President Cup Junior Tennis Tournament 2012 were held at Theibyau Tennis Court in Mingala Taungnyunt Township yesterday.

After the final matches, officials presented prizes and cash awards to winners in the U-10 boys’ singles event, U-12 boys’ and girls’ singles events, U-14 men’s and women’s singles events and U-16 men’s singles event.

President of Myanmar Tennis Federation U Khin Aung Myint and officials of Hluttaw Office practical development programmes in cooperation with the Hluttaw after the visit of the UN Secretary-General, assistance to be rendered by UN and UNDP for speeding up Myanmar development, carrying out of more development programmes as the restrictions on Myanmar are being lifted, parliamentary assistance, promotion of competency of Hluttaw representatives, providing of publications for the Hluttaw library, more measures for environmental conservation regarding Myanmar’s climatic changes, promotion of living standard the citizens and the ecological conservation in addition to development of GDP alone, measures for systematically shaping economy and economic plans and providing of technical aids as Myanmar has been blessed with natural resources.

MNA

Second Workshop for Study on Household Livelihoods held

Nay Pyi Taw, 17 May—The Second Workshop for Study on Household Livelihoods 2009-2010 of Chin State was held at the city hall in Haka on 10 May morning.

Chin State Minister for Finance and Revenue U Nan Za Mon gave an opening address.

Officials of IHLCA Technological Unit of the United Nations Development Program participated in discussions and replied to queries raised by those present.

MNA

No pressure on team GB to select Beckham, says Coe

Reuters, 17 May—David Beckham will have to earn his place in Britain’s Olympic football squad on skill and merit like any other player and can expect no special favours, London 2012 organisers said on Thursday.

Speaking before the 37-year-old former England captain teamed up with a London delegation for the formal handing over of the Olympic flame, LOCOG chairman Seb Coe said there would be no attempt to twist the arm of Team GB manager Stuart Pearce.

“Stuart has to pick the team that he thinks will lift that (Olympic) trophy. I wouldn’t expect any coach to be operating on any other basis, whether its wrestling or Olympic football,” added Coe.—Internet