**Singaporean President and wife to pay state visit to Myanmar**

**Nay Pyi Taw, 28 March—**At the invitation of His Excellency U Thein Sein, President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and wife Daw Khin Khin Win, His Excellency Dr Tony Tan Keng Yam, President of the Republic of Singapore and wife Mrs. Mary Tan will pay a state visit to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar in the near future.

MNA

**Tatmadaw’s national politics is to safeguard country**

**Nay Pyi Taw, 27 March—**“Tatmadaw always safeguards the country while protecting the country from the outbreaks of racial and political conflicts. It is Tatmadaw’s national politics,” said Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Thayay Sithu Min Aung Hlaing, at the military parade of 68th Anniversary Armed Forces Day today.

It was attended by Chairman of the Union Election Commission U Tin Aye, Pyithu Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U Nanda Kyaw and Chief of the General Staff (Army, Navy and Air) General Thayay Sithu Hla Hny Win, Union Ministers, Hluttaw Affairs Committee Chairmen, Commander-in-Chief (Navy) Vice-Admiral Zeya Kyaw Htn Thura Thet Swe, Commander-in-Chief (Air) Maj-Gen Zeya Kyaw Htn Khin Aung Myint, senior military officers from the Commander-in-Chief (Army) Office. Chairman of the Leading Committee for holding the 68th Anniversary Armed Forces Day Chief of Armed Forces Training Lt-Gen Thiriyanchi Yar Pyae, the Nay Pyi Taw Command Commander, members of Myanmar War Veterans Organization, military attaches from Foreign Embassies in Myanmar, senior police officers from Myanma Police Force, officers from Fire Services Department and Red Cross Brigade, faculty members and students of University Training Corps, reporters from local and foreign media, artists and guests.

Wife of the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Daw Kyu Kyu Hla, wife of the Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) Daw Than Than Nwe, wife of the Chief of the General Staff (Army, Navy and Air) Daw Mar Mar Wai and wives of the Commander-in-Chief (Navy), the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Thayay Sithu Min Aung Hlaing taking salute of parade columns.—MNA

**Daw Kyu Kyu Hla, wife of the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services, garlands a member of parade columns.**

MNA

**Chief (Air), senior military officers of the Commander-in-Chief (Army) Office and the Nay Pyi Taw Command Commander garlanded six parade columns led by Parade Commander Brig-Gen Aye Win.**

Aung San, Anawrahta, Kyansitha, Bayintnaung, Aungzeya and Hsinbyushin took the designated positions and saluted the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Service. After taking the salutes the Senior General inspected the parade columns.

Next, the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services delivered an address. He highlighted the interrelationship between the Tatmadaw and the nation since the time of independence struggle. “Just as the Tatmadaw safeguards the nation from all kinds of threat, it also performs its role in the national politics in accordance with the people’s desire when nation faces with ethnic conflicts or political struggles”, he said.

He quoted the constitution saying that the Tatmadaw’s main responsibility is to safeguard and protect the three main national causes—non-disintegration of the Union, non-disintegration of national solidarity and perpetuation of sovereignty—and the constitution, calling for taking lessons from the past.

He also spoke of the desperate need of peace and tranquility to help achieve the national development, quoting a saying, “Will the nation develop only when peace, stability, unity and well discipline are formed.” He stressed the need of sincerity, trustworthiness and genuine goodwill towards people to unite the nation.

*(See page 8)*
Confiscation of smuggled luxurious vehicles in Mon State

Mawlamyine, 27 March — Under the directive of Mon State government to seize luxurious vehicles that failed to pay customs duty, confiscation of smuggled luxurious cars are being carried out in ten townships of Mon State under the supervision of state/district police commanders.

During the period from 12 October 2012 to 21 March 2013, police arrested 80 people and seized 117 vehicles including 36 ownerless ones worth over K 200 million smuggled from a neighbouring country into Mon State.

Those who owned smuggled vehicles have been charged with violation of import/export law. During the period from 1 January to 21 March 2013, 45 including 14 ownerless vehicles were confiscated.

The smuggled vehicles violated traffic rules and involved in road accidents while they were on the roads in Mawlamyine and other townships with fake number plates.

Further action will be taken against smuggling of luxurious vehicles from the neighboring country into the state under various ways and means, keeping a watchful eye on it. — Kyemon

Anti-human trafficking activity in Bago Region

Bago, 27 March — Under the supervision of Vice-Chairman of Bago Region anti-human trafficking committee Bago Region Police Commander Police Col Ma Win region/district/township anti-human trafficking committees and Bago Region Mernal and Child Welfare Association jointly-organized a mini-concert in the compound of highway bus terminal near Shwemawdaw Pagoda in Bago on 23 M arch.

Vocalist R Zarni and singers sung songs to the accompaniment of Lazy Club Band and police members led by Police Maj Y e Win Aung distributed educative pamphlets to an audience of over 5000. — Kyemon

Union Minister stresses more breeding of dairy cattle

Nay Pyi Taw, 27 March — Union Minister for Livestock and Fisheries U Ohn Myint met with local breeders who farm dairy cattle on a managerial scale at AungThukha village-tract in Nay Pyi Taw Pobbatiri Township on 25 March.

The Union minister explained plans to provide necessary assistance to dairy cattle farms by the ministry for development of livestock breeding sector. He called for more breeding of dairy cattle as milk is an essential bone nutrient to reduce osteoporosis that affects both young and old people so that more milk will be produced to feed them. He elaborated a plan that will help local breeders to keep pig and chicken apart from cow. — MNA

Headline: Husband set alight after wife poured petrol on him

Pathein, 27 March — A man was treated in the hospital for burns after he was set on fire by his wife while he fell asleep at about 9:30 pm on 21 March.

Lin Aung, 25, of Jaingle village in Shwegunyang Township in Pathein Township is being treated in the hospital for burns after his wife poured petrol on his back and lower part of the body as his wife, Moe Moe, had poured petrol on his back and set fire to him while he fell asleep. Then she ran away. As he shouted for help when he was awakened by the flames on his back and lower part of the body, villagers and the administrator rushed there and rescued him. Then he was taken to the hospital in Gwa. — Kyemon

Replacement of wooden sleepers with concrete one satisfies rail users

Yangon, 27 March — To bring further safety and convenience to regular rail users, Mynamar Railways is carrying out the replacement of worn wooden sleepers with concrete ones. The substitution works are being undertaken in many places along the railroad. On 23 March, workers substituted wooden sleepers with concrete ones at Pagoda Street railway station near Shwedagon Pagoda.

A rail travel has become being made for their final move, installation of power line and relocation of staff from shipyard’s office, workshops and factories to the new place, construction of roads, dockyards and jetties and progress in building of 300-ton multi-purpose use park ship No (3) and No (4). — MNA

Motorcyclist killed in collision with bullock-cart in Kawlin Township

Sagaying, 27 March — A motorcyclist was killed in the collision with a bullock-cart while trying to overtake a truck ahead of his bikeneak Panlin village, three-mile west of Kawlin Township of Sagaing Region, on Kawlin-Okkan road at 9:30 pm on 20 March.

A collision between the cart driven by U Ku, 58, of Panlin village of Kawlin Township and the motorbike driven by Ko Ko Lin, 40, of Myoma Myotkin ward in Kawlin happened while the cart was swerving into the right path of the road to avoid the truck and the motorcyclist was trying to go past the truck ahead of his bike.

The head-on collision left the motorcyclist wounded seriously and the victim was pronounced dead due to severe injuries. — Kyemon

Local News

Haka, 27 March — Aimed at fostering reading habit among the people, improving socioeconomic status by reading, widening horizons of ward dwellers and villagers and creating an environment in which books and periodicals are within reach of local people, Haka Township Information and Public Relations Department organized a wall poster and shows being undertaken for enabling them to accumulate their knowledge for enabling them to be interested in reading, opening of mobile libraries at wards and villages and organizing talks and posters and photo shows are being undertaken for enabling them to accumulate their knowledge by reading.— Kyemon
United Nations, 27 March—An African force currently in Mali should be converted into a UN peacekeeping operation and a separate combat force should be created to confront Islamist threats, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon recommended to the Security Council on Tuesday. The UN-backed African force in Mali is due to take over from French-led operations when it starts withdrawing its 4,000 troops from the country in late April.

In a report to the 15-member Security Council, Ban recommended that the African force, known as AFISMA, become a UN peacekeeping force of some 11,200 troops and 1,440 police—once major combat ends. To tackle Islamist extremists directly, Ban recommended that a so-called parallel force be created, which would work in close coordination with the UN peacekeepers.

Diplomats said France is likely to provide troops for the smaller parallel force, which could be based in Mali or elsewhere in the West Africa region.

“Given the anticipated level and nature of the residual threat, there would be a fundamental requirement for a parallel force to operate in Mali alongside the UN mission in order to conduct a major combat and counter-terrorism operations,” Ban wrote. The parallel force would not have a formal UN blessing of the Security Council.

Reuters


Reuters


Reuters

EU in “denial” that sick economy costs lives, health experts say

London, 27 March—Europe’s financial crisis is costing lives, with suicides and infectious diseases on the rise, yet politicians are not addressing the problem, health experts said on Wednesday.

Deep budget cuts and growing unemployment are tipping more people into depression, and falling incomes mean fewer people can see their doctors or afford to buy medicines.

The result has been a reversal since 2007 of a long-term decline in suicide rates, coupled with worrying outbreaks of diseases including HIV — and even malaria — in countries, according to an major analysis of European health in The Lancet journal.

Countering these threats requires strong social protection schemes, researchers argue. But the austerity measures imposed after a string of crises in southern Europe — most recently in Cyprus — has shed such safety nets.

“There is a clear problem of denial of the health effects of the crisis, even though they are very apparent,” said lead researcher Martin McKee of the European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies, a group backed by the World Health Organization.

“The European Commission has a treaty obligation to look at the health effect of all of its policies but has not produced any impact assessment on the health effects of the austerity measures imposed by the troika.”

Reuters

A senior officer from the roughly 1,000-strong five-nation regional force FOMAC, which has been patrolling in an effort to stop the looting, said the situation was gradually improving. But many inhabitants said they were desperate.

“We have the impression that Central African Republic is a forgotten nation,” said Yves Gandazhi, a resident of Bangui’s Miskin neighbourhood, as shots rang out. “We appeal to the international community to help us now.”

Reuters


Reuters

Looters, gunmen roam Central African Republic capital after coup

Bangui, 27 March—Looters and gunmen roam the streets of Central African Republic’s capital Bangui on Tuesday as rebels and regional peacekeepers struggled to restore order two days after a coup plunged the mineral-rich country into chaos.

The ousting of President Francois Bozize and the political turmoil around it has raised a humanitarian crisis in the former French colony and embarrassed regional power South Africa which had sent troops to defend the government.

A bout 5,000 Seleka rebel fighters poured into the capital on Sunday, brushing aside a 400-strong South African force which attempted to block their path. At least 13 South African soldiers were killed and 27 wounded.

Rebel leader and self-proclaiming President Michel Djotodia — who had accused Bozize of breaking past peace accords — on Monday asked the UN mission to help him restore order.

Having run out of supplies during the rebel takeover, hungry residents flocked to markets on Tuesday. But sporadic gunfire rang out across the sprawling riverside capital, home to 600,000 people. Water returned but power was down for a fourth day in a row.

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Reuters

Obamas' huge gap: Spain fills, Italy does not

Washington, 27 March—US President Barack Obama is planning a road trip to drum up public support for new gun laws, but passage of a weapons measure is far from certain amid a bitterly divided Congress.

Obama’s trip comes more than three months after the Newtown, Conn, school massacre that killed 20 children ages six and seven and sparked a public outcry to stop such violence from occurring again. “Obama is hitting the road on gun control because he understands he needs public pressure on Congress,” said DanIEL M Wex, Vice President and Director of governance studies at the Brookings Institution. “There are many entrenched interests who oppose gun restrictions, so he needs to arouse the general public that favours action in order to get legislators to pass legislation,” Wex said.

Indeed, the Republican-led House is unlikely to pass any legislation it deems unfair to gun owners, such as banning assault weapons or putting limits on the size of bullet magazines.

Action in the Senate is also not a sure thing: Politico reported on Tuesday that Sen Ted Cruz, Mike Lee and Rand Paul threatened to filibuster legislation on gun control. That’s according to a letter they plan to deliver to the office of Harry Reid, the Senate majority leader. Some critics have blasted the president for being in what they consider perpetual political meetings, but Rand Paul threatened to filibuster legislation on gun control.

His coalition came first in the February election yet failed to obtain a solid majority in the new parliament that resulted in being divided among three mutually incompatible political forces, with none strong enough to rule alone.

Reuters
The SpaceX Dragon lands at the Pacific Ocean on 26 March, 2013. —Reuters

CAPE CANAVERAL, (Florida) 27 March — A Space Exploration Technologies’ Dragon cargo capsule splashed down in the Pacific Ocean on Tuesday, bringing back science experiments and gear from the International Space Station.

The spacecraft left the orbital outpost at 6:56 am ET, and parachuted into the ocean about 225 miles west of M exico’s Baja California at 12:34 pm ET.

“Recovery ship just heard the sonic booms from Dragon re-entry and has data transmission lock,” Elon M usk, founder and chief executive of the privately held company known as SpaceX, wrote on Twitter just before splashdown. A minute later, recovery ship personnel reported seeing Dragon’s parachutes, Musk said.

“Recovery ship has secured Dragon,” Musk wrote. “Cargo looks A-OK.” The ship will take the capsule to the Port of Los Angeles, near the company’s Hawthorne, California, headquarters, a journey expected to take about 30 hours. Dragon’s return began 252 miles above Earth when astronauts aboard the station used a robotic crane to pluck the capsule from its berthing port and set it into orbit.

SpaceX flight controllers then stepped in and remotely commanded Dragon to fire its steering thrusters and begin the 5.5-hour journey home.

“It looks beautiful from here,” station flight engineer Thomas M arshburn radioed to M ission Control in Houston as the capsule flew away.

“Sad to see the Dragon go. Performed her job beautifully, heading back to her lair. Wish her all the best for the splashdown today,” M arshburn said. The Dragon cargo ship reached the station on 3 M arch with more than 2,300 pounds (1,043 kg) of space equipment, spare parts, food and supplies. It was the second of 12 planned cargo runs for NASA under a $1.6 billion contract. A second freighter, built and operated by Orbital Sciences Corp, is expected to debut this year.

The US space agency hired both firms to fill the gap left by the retirement of its space shuttle fleet in 2011. — Reuters

T-mobile USA to sell iPhone starting 12 April

NEW YORK, 27 March— T-mobile USA said on Tuesday it will start selling Apple Inc’s iPhone on 12 April, making it the last of the big national US operators to sell the popular smartphone.

The No 4 US mobile provider, which plans to merge with smaller rival MetroPCS Communications, is launching the iPhone after it eliminated this week the last of its one-year contracts and two-year service contracts favoured by its bigger rivals.

T-Mobile, a unit of Deutsche Telekom AG, hopes its new approach will differentiate it from bigger rivals that already sell the iPhone: Sprint Nextel, AT&T Inc and Verizon Wireless, a venture of Ve rizon Communications and Vodafone Group Plc.

The company, which has long struggled with cus tomer defections, hopes to attract cost-conscious consumers through an aggres sive marketing campaign that focuses on its lack of service contracts and clearly outlines their monthly cost to own such devices as the iPhone.

US operators have traditionally subsidized phones in exchange for tying customers into contracts but do not disclose how much of their monthly fee cover the device. A practice that T-mobile USA criticized as lacking transparency. “The industry’s broken,” T-Mobile USA Chief Executive John Legere said at a Press event to announce the iPhone’s arrival. "It’s a practice that T-Mobile USA criticized as lacking transparency. "The industry’s broken," T-Mobile USA Chief Executive John Legere said at a Press event to announce the iPhone’s arrival.

Legere estimated that T-mobile customers would pay about $1,000 less over two years than they would for comparable services at A&T, and T-mobile’s website directly compares its pricing to A&T’s service fees. T-Mobile will offer the iPhone 5, Apple’s latest model, for an upfront payment of $99.99 followed by 24 monthly payments of $20. Its bigger rivals charge $200 upfront to customers who sign a two-year contract. Retail Research analyst Ross Rubin said it was still unclear whether consumers have as much disdain for contracts as T-Mobile hopes. He said consumers will likely find the lower upfront cost for phones attractive and that the addition of the iPhone should help T-Mobile retain customers. — Reuters

Deadline for Hon Hai to invest in Sharp lapses with no deal

Tokyo, 27 March— The deadline for Hon Hai Precision Industry Co to buy a stake in Sharp Corp lapsed on Tuesday without any deal, ending an agree ment forged last year that would have made the Tai wanese firm the No1 shareholder in the Japanese TV maker.

Talks for Hon Hai to purchase as much as a 9.9 percent stake stalled after Sharp balked at its demand for a degree of management control Hon Hai also sought to lower the $708 million price tag after Sharp’s shares slumped in the wake of losses that prompted a bailout from its banks last year.

Those banks, which include Mizuho Financial Group Inc and Mitsubishi UFJ Financial Group Inc, had not been expecting a revised deal with Hon Hai, sources told Reuters last month. As talks with Hon Hai unraveled, Sharp con cluded smaller investment

Wal-mart steps up its online game with help from stores

SAN BRUNO, 27 March — Wal-Mart Stores Inc is ramping up plans to com bine its physical stores with online technology, testing the use of lockers to hold goods ordered on the Internet until shoppers pick them up, as the world’s largest retailer tries to catch up with e-commerce leader Amazon.com Inc.

While Wal-Mart is the leading retailer overall with $466.1 billion in annual sales, it trails Amazon and a handful of other retailers when it comes to selling goods online. Amazon had $61 billion in sales last year.

Wal-Mart is on track to surpass $9 billion in annual online sales this year, Neil
**WPP India unit sacks employees after sexist Ford ads**

**New York, 23 March** — Global equity markets and crude oil rose on Tuesday after housing and manufacturing data added to evidence of an improving US economy and helped offset investor concerns about the Cyprus bailout.

Wall Street advanced on separate reports that showed demand for long-lasting US manufactured goods surged in February while US single-family home prices started the year with the biggest annual increase since June 2006. But the Conference Board, an industry group, reported that consumer confidence tumbled in March as Americans turned more pessimistic about short-term economic prospects, adding a note of caution to a market still skittish over Cyprus.

The S&P 500 surged in a late-day rally to close at its highest peak since this year’s rally has attempted to break through the all-time closing high set in October 2007. The benchmark index closed 1.38 points below the record.

Michael Sheldon, chief market strategist at RDM Financial in Westport, Connecticut, said investors needed to see further improvement in the economy for equities to move higher.

The euro edged higher against the US dollar but remained near four-month lows as concerns lingered over implications of the rescue plan for Cyprus, and whether it would shape any future plans for other euro zone economies requiring bailouts.

The single currency remains vulnerable to concern investors may shun euro zone assets or withdraw money from banks in other debt-plagued countries like Spain and Italy.

“There’s uncertainty in Europe as for what is the blueprint when (economies) need to be rescued,” said Sheldon. “The market trend continues to be higher, but investors are gun-shy in light of recent gains.”

**Global shares, crude oil rise in wake of US data**

**Dubai, 27 March**— China and Brazil agreed on Tuesday to swap up to the equivalent of $30 billion in each other’s currencies if need be so that their fast-growing commercial ties will not suffer if a new banking crisis causes dollar trade finance to dry up.

The three-year agreement, signed before the start of a BRICS nations summit in Durban, South Africa, marked a step by the two largest economies in the emerging powers group to change global trade flows long dominated by the United States and Europe.

India, Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa represent together a fifth of global GDP but have struggled to convert their economic weight into political clout in the international arena.

“Our interest is not to establish new relations with China, but to expand relations to be used in the case of turbulence in international markets,” Brazilian central bank Governor Alexandre Tombini told reporters after the signing.

Brazilian Economy Minister Guido Mantega described the deal, called a bilateral currency swap accord, as a sort of “umbrella agreement” that did not spell out what specific areas or categories of trade would be affected.

Brazil’s vast mineral resources and agricultural products have helped fuel China’s industrial growth and feed its people while the returns have helped bring a new era of prosperity to the Latin American giant.

**Emerging powers China, Brazil move towards non-dollar trade**

Bilateral trade totalled around $75 billion last year. Of Brazil’s $412 billion exports to China, iron ore accounted for 34 percent, while soy and soy products made up 29 percent and crude oil 12 percent.

Electronics, machinery and manufactured goods figuring heavily in Brazil’s $342 billion of imports from China.

Brazilian officials have said they hope to have the trade and currency deal operating in the second half of 2013.

Mantega said it would act as a buffer against turbulence in international financial markets dominated by the US dollar.

“If there were shocks to the global financial market, with credit running short, we’d have credit from our biggest international partner, so there would be no interruption of trade,” he said.

**Seven to eight mln people infected with Chagas disease**

**Geneva, 27 March**— About seven to eight million people worldwide are estimated to be infected with Chagas disease, a potentially life-threatening illness caused by the protozoan parasite, Trypanosoma cruzi, the World Health Organization (WHO) said on Tuesday.

The cost of treatment for the disease remains substantial. In Colombia alone, the annual cost of medical care for all patients with the disease has been estimated to be about 267 million US dollars, according to the WHO.

WHO said it was to increase networking at the global level and reinforce regional and national capacities, including strengthening world health emergency preparedness, surveillance and information systems and promoting the identification of diagnostic tests for screening and diagnosis of infections, etc.

Chagas disease is named after Carlos Ribeiro Justiniano Chagas, a Brazilian doctor who first discovered the disease in 1909. It was once entirely confined to the region of the Americas, principally Latin America, but it has now spread to other continents, mainly due to population movement and immigration.

Latin America and the rest of the world. It is curable if treatment is initiated soon after infection. Blood screening is vital to prevent infection through transfusion and organ transplantation, according to the WHO. 

**Factory and housing data support growth picture**

**Washington, 27 March**— Orders for long-lasting US-made goods surged last month and home prices posted their biggest year-on-year gain in six and a half years in January, the latest signs the US economy regained momentum early in the first quarter.

The upbeat picture was unfazed. Economists were largely unfazed.

While orders for non-durable goods orders jumped 5.7 percent in January, and core capital goods posted their largest decline in two years, business spending plans, closely watched proxy for investment, remained tepid, and big jumps in January, and core capital goods posted their largest decline in two years, business spending plans, closely watched proxy for investment, remained tepid.

**A worker shelters from the rain as he passes the London Stock Exchange in the City of London at lunchtime on 1 Oct, 2008.**

**A man walks past a floral display announcing the 5th BRICS Summit in Durban, on 23 March, 2013.**

**A view of the jet assembly line at a Cessna manufacturing plant in Wichita, Kansas on 12 March, 2013.**
Taliban suicide bombers kill five Afghan police as Kerry visits Kabul

JALALABAD, 27 March—Taliban suicide bombers killed at least five policemen in Afghanistan’s restive east on Tuesday, officials said, in a three-hour attack that coincided with a visit to the country by US Secretary of State John Kerry.

The pre-dawn attack on a police compound in Jalalabad, Afghanistan’s largest city, came as the country braces for the beginning of the spring fighting season in the 11th year of the war. One attacker detonated an explosive-laden car at the entrance of the Afghan National Police compound in a bid to let other attackers inside, provincial police chief Amin Shariff said. “Three suicide bombers triggered their explosive vests and five were shot dead,” he told Reuters, adding that five policemen were killed and four wounded. A min said the attackers were armed with rocket-propelled grenades and light machineguns, sparking a three-hour firefighting by Afghan security forces. Six civilians were wounded. Kerry was in Kabul to discuss transfer of security to the Afghan forces, as most US-led NATO combat troops prepare to leave by the end of next year.

The Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujaddid claimed responsibility for the attack in a text message.—Reuters

Two smugglers injured as gas cylinder explodes in Gaza tunnel

RAMALLAH, 27 March—A cooking gas cylinder exploded in an underground tunnel while being smuggled to the Gaza Strip from Egypt, injuring two Palestinian smugglers seriously, a medical spokesman said on Tuesday.

The two were in their 30s, said Ashraf Al-Qedra, spokesperson for the ministry of health in Hamas-controlled Gaza Strip. They sustained serious burns and were taken to hospital.

In a separate incident, another smuggler suffered a fracture to his pelvis after falling into the shaft of a tunnel underneath Gaza’s southern border with Egypt.

When Israel imposed an economic blockade in Gaza in 2007, the tunnels served as the lifeline for the coastal enclave. The dependence on smuggling has continued, despite the efforts of rival states to end the practice.

Kenya to hear petition challenging Kenyatta’s vote win

NAIROBI, 27 March—Kenya’s Supreme Court hears a petition on Wednesday challenging the victory by Uhuru Kenyatta in this month’s presidential election, a case that will test Kenyan democracy five years after a disputed vote ignited tribal violence.

Peaceful voting on 4 March went a long way to restoring Kenya’s reputation as one of Africa’s more stable democracies, reinforced when losing candidate Raila Odinga took his challenge to court rather than letting it play out on the streets.

But the final test will come on Saturday, the deadline for the court to announce its ruling after petition hearings on Wednesday and Thursday. That is when the court will decide whether to uphold Kenyatta’s win or order another vote.

Western diplomats, whose nations are big donors to Kenya, see little chance of another round of violence, partly because they say Kenyans now have more confidence that the reformed judiciary will adjudicate fairly. But the US Embassy has still warned its citizens in Kenya about possible unrest this weekend.

Both candidates have promised to accept the outcome and many Kenyans insist there will be no repeat of the bloodshed that followed the 2007 vote which left more than 1,200 dead.

“We are alive to the competing expectations the Kenyan people have placed before this court,” Chief Justice Willy Mutunga, a well-respected lawyer appointed to the post in 2011, said when he opened two days of pre-trial hearings on Monday. Odinga alleged “ram- pant illegality” in the first round. Kenyatta, son of Kenya’s founding president who is charged by International Criminal Court with crimes against humanity over post-election violence five years ago, said voting was fair.

“The Supreme Court is open in order to enable the public to be witnesses to how the wheels of justice turn,” Mutunga said, referring to television cameras covering the hearings with live broadcasts. “In the end, you must trust us to do our job.”—Reuters

Train-tractor collision kills one, wounds three in Arkansas, US

HOUSTON, 27 March—One person was killed and three others injured after a train crashed into a tractor in the US state of Arkansas on Tuesday, officials said.

The driver of the tractor was killed in the accident on Tuesday morning in the Waltonburg area in northeast Arkansas, according to local TV station KAIT. Three people on the train were taken to a hospital with minor injuries. The collision occurred at a road crossing that does not have railroad signals, police said.—Xinhua

Kenya allays fears of spread of dengue fever

NAIROBI, 27 March—The Kenyan government said on Tuesday there was no cause for concern following an outbreak of dengue viral disease in the East African nation’s coastal region in the past two days.

Public health Director General in the Ministry of Public Health and Sanitation Dr Shabani Shaffez confirmed that two cases had tested positive but assured the country that health experts have been deployed to the region to monitor the spread of dengue fever to other regions.

“there is no cause for alarm. Everything has been contained to curb the spread of the virus. Only two cases had tested positive from the results which have so far been carried out by health experts,” Shaffez told Xinhua by telephone.

His remark comes as eight people with symptoms of dengue fever have been admitted to a hospital in the coastal city of Mombasa. The coast regional director of Public Health and Sanitation said the blood samples from eight patients admitted at the Mombasa Hospital have been flown to South Africa for further analysis.

Mombasa is the East African nation’s second biggest city and is popular with tourists both locally and internationally. The health officials have assured the public that the situation is under control.

Shaffez said the blood specimen taken from two patients who had been hospitalised tested positive for dengue fever after laboratory analysis conducted at the Center of Communicable Disease Control (CDC) in Nairobi.—Xinhua
**LOCAL NEWS**

### Deputy Education Minister meets British guests

**Nay Pyi Taw, 27 March**—Deputy Minister for Education Dr Myo Myint received Chairman of Supper People’s Assembly in Britain, the Rt Hon. Alton of Liverpool Lord David Patrick Alton and Conservative Party’s Human Rights Commission Deputy Chairman Mr. Benedict Richard Victor Rogers and party at the ministry, here, at 2 pm on 25 March. They held discussion on reforms in education, human rights lessons for middle and high school students and academic matters of open universities, assessment for comprehensive education sector, drawing of educational law, opening of teacher training course, English language proficiency course vocational training course and sending of voluntary university students.—SINA

### Merit shared for three-storey building in Chanayethazan Township

**Mandalay, 27 March**—The merit-sharing ceremony for handing over of Byamaso Pyinnadana three-storey building was held in the compound of Byamaso Social Service Association established by Sayadaw Bhaddanta Tikkha of South Salin Monastery on 62nd Street between 32nd and 34th streets in Chanayethazan Township on 8 March morning.

At first, wellwisher family offered alms and robes to Waso Monastery Sayadaw Bhaddanta Aghjia and members of the Sangha. Wellwisher U Thant-Daw Chit Chit (Myint Myint) Khin Hboemont family that cost K 206 million formally opened the building.

The newly-opened building has three stories—the library on the ground floor, the tailoring course on the first floor and the teaching class for matriculation repeater students on the second floor.

**Mynna Alinn**

### Overturned express bus claims four lives

**Loikaw, 27 March**—A K andayaw- Shan express bus plying Loikaw-Aungun route overturned at the downhill road of Nawngwehillin, Pinlaung Township of Shan State. Aung San Mauong of Yenigun Village of Mawmawkhu Village-tract in Loikaw Township plunged into the drain off the downhill road of the township on Loikaw-Aungun Road.

A mong 33 passengers including the driver and bus conductor, four passengers were dead and 25 others wounded. The injured were rushed to Loikaw and Pinlaung Hospitals.

**Mynna Alinn**

### Workshop on social development held on Sagaing Hill

**Sagaing, 27 March**—The Workshop on Social Development was held at IBEC of Sagaing Hill Education Centre in Sagaing on 9 March morning. Presiding Nayaka Sayadaw of the IBEC made a speech. In the two day session of the workshop, Miss Allison, Mr Ewan Campbell, Dr Tin Maung Than and Dr Zaw Oo, adviser to the President, gave talks to the attendees. Later, they shared knowledge and held discussions.

**Mynna Alinn**

### Plan to cover sports village, stadium with thick foliage before SEA Games

**Nay Pyi Taw, 27 March**—Nay Pyi Taw Forest Department of the Ministry of Environmental Conservation and Forestry is striving for greening stadium and sports village for the XXVII SEA Games. Staff and workers are making preparations for growing trees at the venues. They will grow 83700 shade trees on 16 blocks. Before rainy season, they will plant 16000 saplings. They have grown 8100 saplings up to 12 March.

**Mynma Alinn**

### Workshop on Myanmar and Leadership of ASEAN held

**Nay Pyi Taw, 27 March**—In support of the Myanmar’s chairmanship of ASEAN in 2014, a workshop on Myanmar and the Leadership of ASEAN was convened at Zabuthiri Hotel, here, on 25 March with an opening address by Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs U Thant Kyaw.

Also present on the occasion were the senior officials and the ambassadors of Brunei Darussalam, Kingdom of Cambodia and Republic of Indonesia, the Deputy Secretary-General for Political Security Community Department and officials of the ministries under the ASEAN Political Security Community, ASEAN Economic Community and the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community Pillars. Resources persons and participants discussed and exchanged views on current status of the ASEAN Community building, the role and responsibilities of the ASEAN Chair, sharing of best practices and lessons learned from previous Chairs, tentative targets and priority areas of Myanmar during her chairmanship, preparations for ASEAN Summits and related meetings, the role of ASEAN Secretariat in assisting the ASEAN Chair, and the capacity building needs of Myanmar to support the ASEAN chairmanship.

The workshop was jointly organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, ASEAN Secretariat and the ASEAN-United States Technical Assistance and Training Facility (ASEAN-US TATF).

**MNA**

### Forest fire breaks out near Nyana Theikdi Stadium

**Nay Pyi Taw, 27 March**—A fire broke out at the forest near the Nyana Theikdi stadium in Zabuthiri Township on 17 March.

Fire Brigade members from the Hluttaw and Presidential Palace in addition to those of No 5 and No 6 fire stations participated in fighting of fire with the use of fire engines under the supervision of Assistant Director U Kyin Thein of Fire Services Department.

The fire was put out at 12:50 pm.—Mynna Alinn
As Myanmar has high hopes for an emerging and fast growing destination in South East Asia, steps are to be taken to ensure that visitors within and abroad understand the social norms when visiting cultural heritage sites, interpretation at cultural heritage sites is provided in local and international languages and local guides value the living culture of ethnic groups.

Furthermore, dos and don’ts for tourists need to be made public to ensure that tourists visit Myanmar responsibly. For example, it is considered disrespectful when tourists take photos of woman taking a shower, displaying physical closeness in public places is frowned upon in Myanmar, pointing with your feet means disrespect, when visiting Akha villages tourists should know not to take photos of pregnant women, calling with your finger up means calling for a challenge, use of drugs is against the law, prostitution is illegal.

With this end in view, the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism are taking every possible step in cooperation with relevant organizations such as the Ministry of Information, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Immigration and Population, Region/State Governments, Myanmar Tourism Federation, Tour Guide Association, tour operators, media and guide book compilers.

As the country is now experiencing rapid growth in tourism demand, achievements are assumed in the short run and tourism will continue to grow rapidly. But, the people should be wary of the possibility of a monolingual world that poses a grave threat to the linguistic identity, for some dialects are in danger of dying out.

Since typical Myanmar character is friendly, helpful, kind, polite and trustworthy, maintaining cultural diversity and authenticity is undoubtedly necessary. And only then, it will be possible to preserve national identity and encourage the development of cultural heritage and living culture.
Violence, unrests occur in Okpo, Nattalin, Thegon and Zigon Townships of Bago Region

Some suspects detained, under interrogation

— Nay Pyi Taw, 27 March — Rioters destroyed religious buildings, shops and houses in Okpo, Nattalin, Thegon and Zigon Townships of Bago Region. Security measures are being taken there to avoid recurrence of unrests and some suspects were detained and they are under interrogation.

Bago Region Minister for Security and Border Affairs and party dispersed the mobs who were damaging religious building, shops and some houses in Okpo Township on 26 March afternoon.

As a mob destroyed religious building, shops and houses starting from 26 March evening in Nattalin Township, security members broke up the mobs. A total of eight houses, 12 shops and one religious building were damaged in the incident. A curfew has been imposed in Nattalin Township since 5 pm today.

Likewise, a crowd of people attacked a religious building with the use of catapults at Innma village tract in Thegon Township on 27 March morning. So police members of Thegon police station dispersed the group of people. Thanks to security measures, no more attacks occurred.

A house and religious building were under mob attacks on 27 March morning in Zigon Township, security members broke up the mobs. The incident left 14 houses and one religious building damaged. In connection with the incident in Zigon Township where a curfew has been put in place starting from 4 pm today, 10 suspects were detained and they were under interrogation.

Curfews have also been imposed in Gyobingauk, Okpo, Minhla, Zigon and Nattalin Townships in order to avoid recurrence of violence and unrests in Bago Region and security measures are being taken to restore peace and stability by security members and members of Myanmar Police Force in cooperation with local people. The entire people are urged to join hands with the government on the basis of the awareness of consciousness in order to prevent the spread of conflicts.

Separated families reunite in Meiktila

— Nay Pyi Taw, 27 March — Some separated families reunited this morning after the communal violence had separated them in Meiktila.

The reunion of the 74 separated households took place at Meiktila Education College Basic Education High School and No. 5 Basic Education High School (Shante) under the arrangement of the Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Ministry and security forces.

Currently, 7845 sufferers are taking shelter at five relief camps in Meiktila while 1303 victims are taking shelter at 10 monasteries.

Slight earthquake hits outside Myanmar

— Nay Pyi Taw, 27 March — A moderate earthquake of magnitude 6.0 Richter Scale with its epicenter outside Myanmar (Taiwan Region), about 1680 miles east-northeast of Kaba Aye seismological observatory was recorded at 8 hrs 38 min 49 sec M.S.T this morning, the Department of Meteorology and Hydrology announced.

Ambassador U Zaw Tun presents his credentials to Hungarian President

— Nay Pyi Taw, 28 March — U Zaw Tun, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to Hungary, presented his Credentials to His Excellency Mr. János Áder, President of the Republic of Hungary, on 18 March 2013, in Budapest.
**Germans doubt Merkel’s vow on saving deposits**

**Berlin, 27 March**—A majority of Germans doubt Chancellor Angela Merkel’s guarantee that their savings accounts are safe, an opinion poll published by Stern magazine and RTL TV showed on Tuesday, six months before the federal elections.

In a country highly sensitive to fears of hav- ingsavings wiped out, the poll found that 54 percent of Germans are now concerned about their deposits and only 41 percent believe Merkel’s guarantee that their holdings are safe.

The poll of 2,504 eligible voters was taken from 18 March to 22 March, soon after Cyprus reached an initial bailout deal—that its parliament then overwhelmingly rejected—in which it would have imposed a levy on all bank deposits.

Cyprus and its international lenders have since agreed on a bailout plan that includes forcing wealthier depositors to contribute, but the mere prospect of ordinary depositors being hit too in an emergency has alarmed many.

“The chancellor has so far reigned supreme in the euro zone crisis,” Stern wrote. “Now her reputation as the ‘Iron Chancellor’ is suffering for the first time.”

**Venezuelan acting president touts technology transfer with China**

**Caracas, 27 March**—Acting President Nicolas Maduro on Tuesday touted the technology transfer between China and Venezuela during a visit to a Chinese-owned appliance complex. Thanks to the efforts of late President Hugo Chavez and cooperation from China, the Haier industrial complex in Ocumar del Tuy, central Miranda state, was constructed, Maduro said.

There are more than 3 million Haier appliances in Venezuelan homes, including such products as televisions, refrigerators and air conditioners, he said.

The Haier complex has the capacity to produce 80,000 appliances annually, said Industry Minister Ricardo M menendez.

**Turkish president underlines importance of PKK disammament**

**Ankara, 27 March**—Turkish President Abdullah Gul stressed on Tuesday that the disarmament of the Kurdish Worker’s Party, or PKK, is of vital importance for the peace of his country.

At a Press conference held with visiting Cameroonian President Paul Biya, Gul underlined that the disarmament on part of the PKK is crucial for brotherhood, peace and tranquility in Turkey.

Gul’s remarks came after a recent call by PKK leader Abdullah Ocalan upon his followers to lay down weapons and withdraw from Turkey.

Earlier Tuesday, Gul and Biya signed a raft of agreements in tourism, diplomacy, defence and energy as part of their efforts to strengthen ties.

The PKK, listed as a terrorist organization by Turkey, the United States and the European Union, took up arms in 1984 in an attempt to create an ethnic homeland in southeastern Turkey. Since then, over 35,000 people have been killed in conflicts involving the group.—Reuters

**Abducted Israeli, Norwegian tourists freed in E gypt**

**Cairo, 27 March**—An Israeli man and a Norwegian woman who were kidnapped on Friday in Egypt’s governorate of South Sinai have been freed, a local security source told Xinhua on Tuesday.

The release came after two days of negotiations between the security authori- ties and the kidnappers under the mediation of trib- al elders, the source said.

The freed hostages, both in good conditions, are going back to their home countries on separate ways—the Israeli man through the port of Tabu adjacent to Israel and the Norwegian woman heading for Cairo for a night flight.

The security authorities confirmed that the kidnappers were pressing for the release of their jailed family members in exchange for freeing the hostages, who were held by them in a cave area in cen- tral Sinai.

The two were abducted by armed tribesmen when they were travelling on Ta- ba-Dahib highway of South Sinai four days ago.

“Armed tribesmen intercepted the tourists’ car and then forced the two tourists and their driver into their truck,” but the driver was released shortly, sources told Xinhua after the Fri- day kidnapping.

Kidnapping of tourists in Sinai by Bedouins pe- reated lately, but almost all of them were released with- out casualties with the help of tribe leaders.

**Some healthcare costs may rise when “Obamacare” implemented**

**Washington, 27 March**—President Barack Obama’s top healthcare adviser acknowledged on Tuesday that costs could rise in the individual health insurance market, particularly for men and younger people, because of the landmark 2010 healthcare restructuring due to take effect next year.

US Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius said definitive data on costs will not be available until later this year when private health plans become authorized to sell federally subsidized coverage on new state- based online marketplaces, known as exchanges.

“Everything is speculation. I think there’s likely to be some shifting in the mar- kets,” she told reporters at the White House.

The law, also known as “Obamacare,” elimi- nates discriminatory market practices, leaves most people with medical con- ditions, and in particular for women and younger people.

But while the changes are expected to lower costs for women, older beneficiaries and the sick, men and younger, healthier people will likely see higher rates as insurers try to hedge against contin- uing risks.

“Women are going to see some lower costs, some men are going to see some higher costs. It’s sort of a one to one shift ... some of the older customers may see a slight decline, and some of the younger ones are going to see a slight increase,” Insurance pre- miums could rise for some with individual plans, she said, as Obama’s Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act enhances the leverage and either eliminates or reduces the rate of price discrimi- nation against people who are older, female or have preexisting medical condi- tions.

“These folks will be moving into a really fully insured product for the first time, so there may be a higher cost associated with getting into that market,” Sebelius said.

But those who qualify for federal subsidies through state healthcare exchanges would still get a better deal, she said.

Her remarks coincide with growing uneasiness about possible cost increases among lawmakers and executives in the $2.8 trillion US healthcare industry.
**Indonesian President urges speeding up efforts to achieve MDGs target**

The Indonesian President urged speeding up efforts to achieve MDGs award ceremony in Bali. “Let’s use the rest of this (about three years left) as good as possible to speed up and strengthen the achievement of the targets. Please do not make the efforts become slower because of the talk on frame works post 2015 has kicked off,” he was quoted by Investor daily as saying.

**Terrorism claims 49,000 lives in Pakistan since 9/11**

A total of 235 suicide attacks, 9,257 rocket attacks and 4,256 bomb attacks were carried out in the tribal regions and northwestern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province in five years.

The number of civilians killed in the five years stood at 5,152, with 5,678 others injured, it said.

Giving the details of target killings, the report revealed that some 243 people were killed and 275 others were injured in the last three years. It disclosed that 1,030 schools and colleges were destroyed in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa from 2009 to 2013.

**Japen unveils new antisubmarine patrol planes**

**Tokyo, 27 March**—Japan’s Maritime Self-Defence Force (JMSDF) received the first two of a fleet of next generation P-3 antisubmarine patrol aircraft on Tuesday, with the planes scheduled to be deployed at Atsugi Air Base in Kanagawa Prefecture later this month, local media reported.

The official delivery ceremony held earlier in the day in GIFU Prefecture, central Japan, heralds the beginning of the JMSDF’s plans to acquire seven of the high-tech planes to be deployed by March 2014 and a total of 70 P-3s in the long-run, officials said.

The P-3s, designed by Kawasaki Heavy Industries Ltd in cooperation with the Defense Ministry, replace the current over 80 aging P-3 Orion patrol planes used by the JMSDF.

The new planes will undergo two years of operation flight testing, before being fully deployed on patrol duties, officials said.

The P-1 development started in 2001 and planned to finish in March 2012. The process was delayed for one year due to cracks found in its wings and bodies.

**Japen, India vow to promote bilateral ties**

**Tokyo, 27 March**—Japan and India on Tuesday agreed to promote the two nations’ strategic and global partnership, especially in economic and security areas.

Japanese Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida told a Press conference here that Japan and India are strategic and global partners sharing democratic values and strategic interests, and the mutually complementary development with India is of “vital importance” to Japan’s national interests.

After talks with visiting Indian Foreign Minister Salman Khurshid, Kishida said that the two sides agreed to enhance bilateral political dialogues such as the Japan-India “two plus two” dialogue at the vice-minister level and a Japan-India-US trilateral dialogue.

The two countries also agreed to promote co-operation to ensure maritime safety and security through joint drills and Japan-India maritime affairs dialogue, he said.

Japan also unveiled a 220-billion-yen loan (about 2.33 billion US dollars) to India for infrastructure construction and a 71-billion-yen loan (about 753.17 million dollars) for the subway project in India’s economic hub of Mumbai.

Khurshid appreciated Japan’s economic assistance to his country and emphasized that both nations look forward to further strengthening and expanding their strategic and global partnership.

He said bilateral security cooperation is significant and the two countries will expand cooperation in the Asian-Pacific region.

The two nations will also discuss cooperation on nuclear energy for civilian use, while Japan will also invite 1,200 Indian youths to visit Japan.

Khurshid arrived in Japan on Tuesday for a three-day visit and is expected to meet with Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe on Wednesday.
KBZ BANK LTD. is pleased to inform all that we have successfully opened Insein(Pauk Taw Wa)Branch Insein Township, Yangon Region as 102nd branch to date-effective 28.3.2013 All honored persons are kindly requested to come and enjoy our cordial banking services at our newest branch.

KBZ Bank: The Strength of Myanmar

Contact Address:
Insein(Pauk Taw Wa)Branch No.(548), Bayintnaung Road, Pauk Taw Wa Quarter Insein Township, Yangon Region.
Phone: (01) 644967, 643937 Fax: (01) 647933, 647947 www.kbzbank.com
The Republic of the Union of Myanmar has received financing from the World Bank towards the cost of the National Community Driven Development Project (DRD), and intends to apply part of the proceeds for the hiring of consulting services. The Bank will be responsible for the overall supervision of the implementation of the project.

The Department of Rural Development (DRD), Ministry of Border Affairs, invites eligible consulting firms and NGOs ("Consultants") to indicate their interest in providing the Services. Interested Consultants should provide information as detailed and complete as possible demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and previous experience to perform the Services. The following qualifications are required:

1. Experience in developing appropriate gender training, conducting gender analysis, undertaking gender awareness training, and mainstreaming gender aspects in development projects for at least 5 years
2. Previous work experience in Myanmar, knowledge of the local socio-economic context and involvement in community development projects in Myanmar
3. Availability of staff with relevant work experience who are all fluent in Myanmar language so as to be able to undertake high-quality training and work with all relevant project stakeholders.

The assignment period will be for five years. An annual renewal of the contract will be subject to the satisfactory performance of the consultant as assessed by DRD. The assignment period will be for five years. An annual renewal of the contract will be subject to the satisfactory performance of the consultant as assessed by DRD.

h. Undertake other activities to enhance gender equality under the project as may be required by DRD.

2. Tender closing date is (11.4.2013) (16:30 Hr) and tender documents are available at the Head Office Building of Overseas Communications Department, Kayanbary Pagoda Road, near 8 miles junction, Mayangone Township, during office hours.

1. Please get price quotation when we call you the day for Price Bargaining.
2. For the further details, please call 01-650118 during office hours.

INVITATION TO OPEN TENDER

1. Tender are invited by Myanmar Posts and Telecommunications for lease of Extended C-Band Bandwidth [80 MHz] for the existing services (Ipstar System) of Domestic Satellite System and (10 MHz) of standard C-Band Bandwidth for the existing VSAT services of Domestic Satellite System which will be paid in foreign Currency.

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar has received financing from the World Bank towards the cost of the National Community Driven Development Project, which is being implemented by the Department of Rural Development (DRD). DRD is a gender consultant who will support it in mainstreaming gender aspects into the project. Specifically, the consultant is expected to assist DRD in the following services ("Services"): a. Design gender awareness training and manual with modules appropriate to the different project stakeholders, namely DRD, the Department of Social Welfare, the township management sub-committees, the village tract forums, community facilitators and village volunteers, and the CDD Gender Network. The Department of Social Welfare has already developed a gender awareness training module. The consultant will adapt the existing module to the project.

b. Develop a training plan for undertaking the training sessions;

c. Provide gender training for the project at all levels. The consultant will cooperate with the union level technical assistance for organizing the training sessions;

d. Provide inputs on gender reporting, monitoring and tracking regarding the project’s gender related indicators.

e. Assist DRD in preparing half-yearly progress report on the status of gender mainstreaming in the project, and prepare an annual report on lessons learned from project implementation;

f. Assist DRD in organizing an annual workshop for the CDD Gender Network to share experience and lessons learned;

g. Provide support to DRD for the organization of a “development marketplace” on gender; and

h. Undertake other activities to enhance gender equality under the project as may be required by DRD.

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Ibrahimovic’s Champions League ban cut so free to play

Paris Saint-Germain's Zlatan Ibrahimovic will be free to face former club Barcelona in the Champions League next week after his two-match suspension was halved on appeal, UEFA said in a statement on Tuesday.

The volatile Swede was sent off in the last 16 first leg match with Valencia after lunging at full back Andres Guardado with his studs up in PSG's 2-1 victory in Spain. He served the first match of the ban in the second leg. PSG host the first leg of their quarter-final tie on 2 April with the return in Barcelona on 10 April. — Reuters

Forlan dropped as Uruguay reschedule team to face Chile

The South American champions have struggled for goals in their last five qualifiers, scoring only three and taking just two points.

"They are not noted for their generosity at the back but have shipped 13 goals in five matches and 19 in 10 overall, the worst defence along with Chile and Bolivia. "We’ve committed a lot of defensive errors that cost us points. A performance often is related to results (and) a positive result is what can change everything at the moment," said Tabarez. "We need points urgently because we are among several teams fighting for the fourth and fifth place,” Tabarez said.

Portugal revive World Cup hopes with 2-0 win in Azerbaijan

The result also puts an end to a five-game winless streak which Portugal had failed to break last Friday when they stumbled 3-3 draw in Israel.

Ronaldo, watching in the stands because of a suspension picked up in Tel Aviv, saw Azerbaijan’s defensive heroics fall apart after forward Raul Aliev was sent off for a second yellow card early into the second half.

Portugal took advantage soon after when Bruno Alves, who scored the opener in Israel, sprinted towards a Joao Moutinho corner and towered above the Azeri defence to head in after 63 minutes.

 Substitute Hugo Almeida then finished off Azerbaijan with an easy header in the box from a Fabio Coentrao cross with 10 minutes to go.

Sharapova powers on in search of elusive Miami win

Russia’s Maria Sharapova returns a shot to the Czech Republic’s Klara Zakopalova in their women’s singles fourth round match at the Sony Open tennis tournament in Key Biscayne, Florida on 25 March, 2013. — Reuters

"I never give up. It doesn’t matter whether it’s in life or on the tennis court, I keep fighting. That’s what I kept doing today.”

Williams trailed by a set and 4-1 before she reeled off the next five games and ultimately took the match 2-6, 6-4, 6-2. "This particular time I just thought to myself, ‘I’ve been down worse. It’s nothing new. Just keep fighting,’" Williams told reporters.

"I’m not going to lie. It’s not going to matter whether it’s on clay, grass, clay, I keep fighting. That’s what I keep doing today.”

Early, top seed Serena Williams stared defeat in the face before mounting an exciting comeback to overcome Slovakia’s Dominika Cibulkova.

Williams’ score was set at 4-1 before she reeled off the next five games and ultimately took the match 2-6, 6-4, 6-2. "This particular time I just thought to myself, ‘I’ve been down worse. It’s nothing new. Just keep fighting,” Williams told reporters.

Sharapova was beaten in the last two finals after also failing in the tournament deciding in 2005 and 2006, and her determination to go one better this year was evident against Zakopalova, who was helpless in the face of the Russian’s power.

The win means Portugal, who have not missed a major international tournament since the 1998 World Cup in France, moved onto 11 points from six matches. The result also puts an end to a five-game winless streak which Portugal had failed to break last Friday when they stumbled to 3-3 draw in Israel.

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"I never give up. It doesn’t matter whether it’s in life or on the tennis court, I keep fighting. That’s what I kept doing today.”
Webber and Vettel partnership doomed, says Briatore

KUALA LUMPUR, 27 March—Feuding team mates Mark Webber and Sebastian Vettel will not stay together at Formula One champions Red Bull after this season, according to Italian Flavio Briatore.

Briatore, the former Renault team boss who has been part of Webber’s management throughout his grand prix career, told Italy’s RAI radio that he had spoken to the Australian by telephone on Monday after the Malaysian Grand Prix.

He said Webber was still furious with triple world champion Vettel winning at Sepang after ignoring team orders and overtaking him in the closing laps.

“I don’t think the relationship can be sewn together again,” added Briatore.

Aked if he expected one of the two to leave the team at the end of 2013, the Italian replied: “For sure. Last year already there were problems.”

Webber, who will be 37 this year, is out of contract at the end of the season while Vettel is tied to Red Bull until at least the end of 2014.

He and Vettel have had several flare-ups since the start of their pairing in 2009, including a collision at the 2010 Turkish Grand Prix that cost Webber a victory and sent the German out of the race.

Webber has long maintained that the team favours Vettel, despite their insistence that the two have equal status.

Briatore said Malaysia had showed that Vettel was in charge at Red Bull, rather than team principal Christian Horner.

Webber’s father Alan calmed speculation that his son could stay away from the third round of the championship in China on 14 April. — Reuters

Food production in danger in Madagascar due to locust plague

KONSKIE, 27 March—The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) on Monday warned that an ongoing severe locust plague in Madagascar was threatening the country’s next cropping seasons and the food security of more than half the country’s population.

FAO said on its official website that more than 22 million dollars was needed for emergency funding in Madagascar by June to start fighting the plague, adding that a three-year strategy should be set, which requires an additional 19 million dollars.

“Failure to respond now will lead to massive food aid requirements later on,” said Dominique Burgener, Director of the FAO Emergency and Rehabilitation Division.

FAO estimates that about two-thirds of Madagascar will be affected by the locust plague by September 2013 if no action is taken.

The plague now threatens 60 percent of Madagascar’s rice production, which is the main staple in the island country in the Indian Ocean, where 80 percent of the population lives on less than a dollar a day.

In the poorest southern regions, where the plague started, around 70 percent of households are food insecure. A costing for the FAO, the emergency funding has to arrive in time to allow FAO, together with Madagascar Ministry of Agriculture, to launch a full-scale spraying campaign in the country. — Xinhua

Serbia seeks permanent solution for Kosovo

BELGRADE, 27 March—Serbian President Tomislav Nikolic on Tuesday said his country was negotiating with the hope of reaching a permanent solution with Kosovo, reported Radio Televisio Serbia (RTS).

“Serbia needs and offers full cooperation with EULEX” to achieve a lasting solution, said Nikolic after meeting with Bernd Borchardt, head of the EU’s EULEX mission in Kosovo.

Borchardt said he had made his first official visit to Belgrade since assuming the position at the helm of EULEX in February to ensure “better cooperation” with Serbia. He noted EULEX remained “neutral” with respect to Kosovo as it worked toward the establishment of an orderly society in Kosovo.

EULEX focuses on maintaining freedom of movement, security and cracking down on organized crime in Kosovo, according to Borchardt.

Serbia steadfastly refuses to recognize Kosovo’s unilateral declaration of independence in 2008 and insists Kosovo is part of its territory. Most leading European countries and the United States have exchanged diplomats with Pristina. — Xinhua

Over 100 vehicles involved in traffic accident in Austria

VIENNA, 27 March—Thirty trucks and 70 cars were involved in a traffic accident in Lower Austria on the Western motorway, Austria’s second longest motorway, local fire brigade said on Tuesday.

One person died and several injured in the multiple motor collision, happening along a distance of two kilometres on the motorway, which is said to result from both the icy road conditions and the violation of traffic rules.

One bus was also involved in the accident but no passengers was injured. "It was a possible reason for the collision are the icy road conditions," said the spokesman of the local fire brigade. Snowy weather has led to 70 road accidents in Austria since this Monday morning. — Xinhua
Commander-in-Chief hosts dinner to mark 68th Anniversary Armed Forces Day

Defence Services Commander-in-Chief hosts dinner to mark 68th Anniversary Armed Forces Day

Prize winning companies awarded in 68th Anniversary Armed Forces parade

Cash and kind donated for riot sufferers

Chief of the General Staff (Army, Navy and Air) General Thiri Pyanchi Khin presents third model company award to Tatmadaw (Air) company.— MNA

Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) Office and their wives, Commander of Nay Pyi Taw Command and deputy ministers, the parade commander of the 68th Armed Forces Day, military attaches, faculties and students from university training corps, artists and guests. Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Thayay Sithu Min Aung Hlaing cordially greeted those present.

During the dinner, the Myawaddy Music Band of the Directorate of Public Relations and Psychological Warfare entertained the dignitaries with songs.

After the dinner, the music band and artistes from mobile public relations troops performed cultural dances.

Military officers from the Commander-in-Chief (Army) Office and their wives, Commander of Nay Pyi Taw Command and deputy ministers, the parade commander of the 68th Armed Forces Day, military attaches, faculties and students from university training corps, artists and guests. Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Thayay Sithu Min Aung Hlaing cordially greeted those present.

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Cash and kind donated for riot sufferers

Wellwishers donated cash and kind for victims taking shelter at relief camps in Meiktila this morning.

Mandalay Region Chief Minister U Ye Myint accepted the donations which include K 5 million, clothes, rice, energy drinks and drinking water.