President U Thein Sein congratulates Bangladeshi counterpart

President U Thein Sein calls for closer cooperation of ASEAN members towards a people-centered community

President U Thein Sein attends working dinner of 22nd ASEAN Summit

President U Thein Sein takes part in 22nd ASEAN Summit retreat session at Prime Minister's Office in Bandar Seri Begawan of Brunei Darussalam.
Loans disbursed to members of cooperative society

MANDALAY, 25 April—Under the programme to alleviate poverty, the Ministry of Cooperatives extends formation of micro-credit cooperative societies and disburses loans at soft interest.

On 20 April, a ceremony to disburse loans to members of San Thawda Micro-credit Cooperative Society was held at Y U Tin Dhammayon in Pyigyi Yani lon Ward of Aungmyethazan Township of Mandalay.

Aungmyethazan Township Administrator U Zaw Moe made speeches. Head of Departmental Nyunt Swe and the chairman of cooperative syndicate explained poverty alleviation.

Later, Head of Department U Nyunt Swe presented loans to members of the cooperative society.

Drinking water supplied to villages in Padaung Township

PADAUNG, 25 April—Loans disbursed to members of cooperative society

BEGUN, 25 April—Loans disbursed to members of cooperative society

Flocks of globetrotters interested in Myanmar handicrafts in Mingun region

MEIKTILA, 25 April—Tourists are interested in Myanmar handicrafts at Mingun Stupa of Mingun region and purchase souvenirs.

“The most of the tourists who arrived in Mandalay visited Mingun region passing through Ayeyawady River. They tour the museum of Mingun Sayadaw, Grandma Oo Zun Home for Grandma Oo Zun Home and other Myanmar ancient regions.

They prefer to observe Mingu Stupa and then visit souvenir shops. They view statuettes of Manna handi crafts, paintings, sculptures and bronze images. Whenever arrived in Mingun, they bought handicrafts as souvenirs,” said a woman from Yangon.

Fingerlings, birds released on New Year Day

KEHTHUN, 25 April—Due to lesser rainfalls in wards and villages of Aungmyethazan Township in Mandalay Region, lakes and reservoirs dried up. So, the local people faced shortage of drinking water.

The local people pleaded the chance to redredge Pyidawta Lake for many years.

Under the auspices of the village Sayadaw, social organizations and local people dredged the lake with the use of one excavator and five dumpers as of 19 April.

Wellwishers donated cash and kind

MEIKTILA, 25 April—Wellwishers donated cash and kind to victims from relief camps in Meiktila.

U Sein Maung and family donated 9000 packets of instant noodle, 6000 bottles of purified drinking water, Pact Myanmar 2550 viss of fish paste, Cotoanashin Youth Group of Yangon and Shwenyinaung villages.

Coffee mix, 288 boxes of canned fish, four boxes of crackers, 200 pieces of sarongs, Bang Seng Lee Factory staff of Malaysia K, 450,000 and three bales of clothes.

Up to 21 April, wellwishers donated K 132,915,000 and relief supplies worth K 491,266,990.

Teachers attend child-centre teachership course in Natmauk

NATMAUK, 25 April—Under the arrangements of the Magway Region Education Officer of No. 2 Basic Education Department (Mandalay), teachers from Natmauk left for Magway on 21 April to attend the child-centred teachership course to be conducted at Basic Education High School No. 1 in Magway from 22 April to 3 May.

They gathered at the Township Education Officer of Natmauk Township on 21 April morning. A total of 49 primary assistant teachers led by Deputy Township Education Officer U Khin Maung Swe (U Swe-Philosophy) and two assistant TEOs received words of advice by Township Education Officer Daw Khin Nyein Tu.

Lake dredged on self-reliant basis for water storage in Yamethin

YAMETHIN, 25 April—Due to lesser rainfalls in wards and villages of Yamethin Township in Mandalay Region, lakes and reservoirs dried up. So, the local people faced shortage of drinking water.

The local people pleaded the chance to redredge Pyidawta Lake for many years.

Under the auspices of the village Sayadaw, social organizations and local people dredged the lake with the use of one excavator and five dumpers as of 19 April.

Wellwishers donated K 2.5 million. On completion of the work, the rural lake will benefit about 2000 people from 180 houses. — Myanna Alinn
Embassy attack spreads Libyan instability to capital

Tripoli, 25 April—Libya’s central government has long had only a tenuous grip on the eastern city of Benghazi, but the bombing of the French Embassy in Tripoli shows its control of the capital may now also be under threat. The early morning car bomb devastated France’s Embassy, wounding two French guards, in the most significant attack against foreign interests in Libya since September’s deadly assault on the US diplomatic mission in Benghazi.

The US Ambassador and three other Americans were killed in the Benghazi attack leading to a lingering political row in Washington with Republicans accusing President Barack Obama’s administration of withholding information and the White House defending its handling of the issue. In a blow to the Libyan government’s hope of asserting its authority after the 2011 war that ousted Muammar Gaddafi, the French embassy bombing, was the first of its kind in Tripoli. Both France and Libya called the attack a “terrorist act.”

“Given the events in Benghazi in the last year, it may not be that surprising that even areas where there is more state control are not immune,” a Western diplomatic source in Tripoli said. “People can’t just point to the east now.” In the capital, the presence of state security forces is more evident than elsewhere — pick-up trucks bristling with weapons protect ministries or良

US seeks to ease Afghanistan-Pakistan tensions in Brussels talks

Brussels, 25 April—Afghan President Hamid Karzai met Pakistan’s army chief and foreign minister in talks on Wednesday hosted by US Secretary of State John Kerry that aimed at easing tension between the neighbours before the end of NATO’s mission in Afghanistan.

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Bangladesh’s new President sworn in

Dhaka, 25 April—Bangladesh’s new President Abdul Hamid was sworn in at the presidential palace on Thursday. Hamid, 69, was elected President unopposed on Monday as he was the lone candidate nominated by the ruling Awami League (AL) on Sunday.

A combination of handout pictures released through the FBI website on 18 April, 2013 show Dzhokhar and Tamerlan Tsarnaev (L), suspected wanted for questioning in relation to the Boston Marathon bombing.

Boston bomb suspect’s name was on classified government watch list.

Washington, 25 April—The name of one of the Boston Marathon bombing suspects, Tamerlan Tsarnaev, was listed on the US government’s highly classified central database of people it views as potential terrorists. But the list is so vast that this did not mean authorities automatically kept close tabs on him, sources close to the bombing investigation said on Tuesday.

Tsarnaev, 26, was killed in a police shootout early Friday, while his younger brother Dzhokhar, 19, was captured later that day. Prosecutors say the brothers, ethnic Chechens who had been living in the United States for more than a decade, planted two bombs that exploded near the finish line of the marathon on April 15, killing three people and wounding more than 200.

The sources said Tamerlan Tsarnaev’s details were entered into TIDE, a database maintained by the National Counterterrorism Centre, because the FBI spoke to him in 2011 while investigating a Russian national. The FBI said it did not find any threats.

Tamerlan Tsarnaev's details were entered into TIDE by the FBI, a database maintained by the National Counterterrorism Centre, because the FBI spoke to him in 2011 while investigating a Russian national. The FBI said it did not find any threats.
Israeli iPhone app for collaborative photo collages

The originator uploaded a picture of the London Underground. A friend added a shot of New York City’s subway, and a friend of that friend completed the split with a photo of the Milan Metro.

"People are becoming architects and blending all kinds of images, like the Dizengoff Tower in Tel Aviv with one of New York’s skyscrapers, and applying a filter to build something really cool," says M eyyad.

The free app, run on Google Cloud Storage, is a social network complete with profiles and the ability for friends to follow each other. "We have a feed showing all the completed splits," says M eyyad.

"I can comment and 'like' just like on Instagram. But we’re different because we have a 'playground' where I see the splits that have at least one open slot waiting to be populated. I can join with the tap of a button: Snap photo, add filter, upload. All followers will now see the completed split in their feed and they can interact with me around it."

Pixplit’s founders started development in May 2012, attracted angel funding and officially opened on 17 October when the company’s website now at Start TWS (www.StartW.S.com) startup launch competition in Tel Aviv in 2002, the university graduate in civil engineering was tasked with managing the water distribution facilities in the southwestern Japan city.

And since Matsuoka had often been described by his boss as "energetic and proactive in everything," the city government picked him when the Japan International Cooperation Agency asked the city to provide a water supply adviser for its mission in Myanmar.

Kyodo News

A two-frame Pixplit creation

For now, you can choose from six templates. A new form of consumer engagement

M eyyad and his co-founders have a business model in mind for Pixplit. Premium features such as additional templates may be charged for a fee, but the main moneymaking concept is recruiting corporate sponsors in order to take social marketing to a different level. In each user’s feed, every few splits will be sponsored ones roughly matched to the user’s age, gender and location.

"We have communicated with top ad agencies and they are excited about new ways to engage with users," says M eyyad.

"Brands measure the number of likes or tweets or retweets concerning their product or service. That is not as strong as starting a campaign on Pixplit," he says. "Let’s say Nike could begin with the Nike swoosh in the first frame, and friends will add variations—maybe a kid playing basketball wearing Nike sneakers. It allows brands and users to create campaigns together."

What if any of the added photos are offensive or counterproductive to Nike’s marketing strategy?

"If the creator of a split isn’t happy about a specific phrasing, they can ask their friend to delete it," assures M eyyad. "We also have a mechanism to report usage of copyrighted materials and will delete that split. We want to keep Pixplit a safe place to collaborate."

Not for couples only

Pixplit’s origin was a student project at Shenkar College of Engineering and Design in Tel Aviv. Adi Binder, now the company’s director of product and design, developed the concept of an app for couples to manage their communication in one space with chat, video, messaging and co-edited photos.

His serial-entrepreneur friends Jay M eyyad and Nir Holtzman Ninio thought about adding a visual aspect.

The Pixplit team: J ay M eyyad, Adi Binder and N ir Holtzman Ninio

Campaigns call for ban on “killer robots”

LONDON, 25 April—Machines with the ability to attack targets without any human intervention must be banned before they are developed for use on the battlefield, campaigners against “killer robots” urged on Tuesday.

The weapons, which could be ready for use within the next 20 years, would breach a moral and ethical boundary that should never be crossed, said Nobel Laureate J ody Williams, of the “Campaign To Stop Killer Robots”.

“If war is reduced to weapons lacking without human beings in control, it is going to be civilians who are going to bear the brunt of warfare,” said Williams, who won the 1997 peace prize for her work on banning landmines.

Weapons such as remotely piloted drones are already used by some armed forces and companies are working on developing systems with a greater level of autonomy in flight and operation. “We already have a certain amount of autonomy,” said Noel Sharkey, professor of Artificial Intelligence and Robotics at the University of Sheffield.

“We think we are already there. If you asked me to go and make an autonomous killer robot today, I could do it. I could have you here in a few days,” he told reporters. But the technology is a long way off being able to distinguish between a soldier and a civilian. “The idea of a robot being asked to exercise human judgment seems ridiculous to me,” Sharkey told Reuters.

“The whole idea of robots in the battlefield muddies the waters of accountability from my perspective as a roboticist,” he added.

The British government has always said it has no intention of developing such technology. “There are no plans to place such military personnel with fully autonomous systems,” a Ministry of Defence spokesman told Reuters. “Although the Royal Navy does have defensive systems, such as Phalanx, which can be used in an autonomous mode to protect personnel and ships from enemy threats like missiles, a human operator oversees this remote control,” the spokesman added.

But the organizers of the Campaign to Stop Killer Robots say Britain’s rejection of fully autonomous weapons is not yet water-tight. “We’re concerned that there is a slide towards greater autonomy on the battlefield and unless we draw a clear line in the sand now, we may end up walking into acceptance of fully autonomous weapons,” said Thomas Nash, director of non-governmental organization Article 36 – Reuters.
Arms makers boost earnings, but revenues weakening

WASHINGTON, 25 April — Top weapons makers reported higher-than-expected profit and improved margins for the first quarter, even as revenue began to taper off after more than a decade of sharp growth in U.S. military spending.

Boeing Co’s defense division, Northrop Grumman Corp and General Dynamics Corp on Wednesday followed the lead of top Pentagon supplier Lockheed Martin Corp in reporting higher earnings and lower revenue.

Operating margins remained steady or improved across the sector, ranging from 10.3 percent to 12.4 percent.

“Weaker revenues and strong earnings are typical of this point in the defense spending cycle. However, the erosion in revenues is probably a leading indicator of where earnings are headed,” said defense analyst Loren Thompson of the Virginia-based Lexington Institute.

“Earnings eventually will erode as the impact of sequestration is fully felt,” he said, referring to across-the-board federal spending cuts.

Northrop Grumman, which builds unmanned planes and a range of other defence equipment, said it was focused on executing programmes, cash deployment and breaking its portfolio as U.S. defense budgets start to feel the bite of the mandatory spending cuts.

The company reported net earnings of $489 million, or $2.03 a share, compared with $506 million, or $1.96 a share a year earlier. Revenue dipped to $6.1 billion from $6.2 billion.

“Looking ahead, we recognize that we are operating in an uncertain and constrained budget environment,” said Northrop Chief Executive Wes Bush.

General Dynamics, which builds ships, tanks and Gulfstream business jets, reported slightly higher first-quarter earnings, far exceeding analysts’ forecasts, but revenue fell short of expectations.

General Dynamics said net earnings rose to $751 million, or $1.62 per share, from $564 million or $1.57 per share, a year earlier. Revenues dipped to $7.4 billion from $7.58 billion.

Boeing, the second-largest US weapons maker, said its defence earnings rose 12 percent to $832 million, while revenue slipped 1 percent to $8.1 billion.

Japan to introduce countermeasures against H7N9

Tokyo, 25 April — A health ministry panel on Wednesday compiled countermeasures against the H7N9 strain of bird flu.

Under the steps, prefectural governors will be authorized to recommend that patients or suspected patients be hospitalized and to impose restrictions on work.

The Health, Labour and Welfare Ministry aims at introducing the measures in early May by revising government ordinances under the Infectious Disease Law and the Quarantine Law, ministry officials said. — Kyodo News

Ford profit beats estimates as North America shines

DETROIT, 25 April — Ford Motor Co posted a higher-than-expected first-quarter profit on Wednesday as its North American unit posted its best quarter in more than a decade on the strength of new models.

Revenue in North America, the company’s largest market, shot up by one-fifth during the quarter and Ford added that its European restructuring was on track. The second-largest US automaker reported a pretax profit of $2.1 billion, or 41 cents per share for the quarter, down from about $2.3 billion a year earlier. But the results exceeded the analysts’ average estimate of 37 cents per share, according to Thomson Reuters IBES.

The strong performance in North America was the result of “recovering vehicle demand in the U.S., lower wage costs, and factories that are running close to capacity,” Edward Jones analyst Christian Mayes said in an email.

“A recovering housing market is also helping to spur demand for F-Series trucks, which carry higher profit margins than some of the smaller cars Ford sells,” Mayes added.

Ford still expects to lose $2 billion in Europe this year. Chief Financial Officer Bob Shanks told reporters that recent economic data in the region painted a cloudy picture of when Europe would eventually rebound.

He added that automakers “seem to be running along the bottom now” in Europe. The industry may see some stabilization towards year-end or early 2014, he added. — Reuters

WHO says new bird strain is “one of most lethal” flu viruses

BEIJING, 25 April — A new bird flu strain that has killed 22 people in China is “one of the most lethal” of its kind and transmits more easily to humans than another strain that has killed hundreds since 2003, a World Health Organization (WHO) expert said on Wednesday.

The H7N9 flu has infected 108 people in China since it was first detected in March, according to the Geneva-based WHO.

Although it is not clear exactly how people are being infected, experts say they see no evidence so far of the most worrisome scenario — sustained transmission between people.

An international team of scientists led by the WHO and the Chinese government conducted a five-day investigation in China, but said they were no closer to determining whether the virus might become transmissible between people.

“The situation remains complex and difficult and evolving,” said Keiji Fukuda, the WHO’s assistant Director-General for health security.

“When we look at influenza viruses, this is an unusually dangerous virus for humans,” he said at a briefing.

Another bird flu strain — H5N1 — has killed 30 of the 45 people it infected in China between 2003 and 2013, and although the H7N9 strain in the current outbreak has a lower fatality rate to date, Fukuda said: “This is definitely one of the most lethal influenza viruses that we’ve seen so far.”

Scientists who have analyzed genetic sequence data from samples from three H7N9 victims say the strain is a so-called ‘triple reassortant’ virus with a mixture of genes from three other flu strains found in birds in Asia.

Recent pandemic viruses, including the H1N1 “swine flu” of 2009/2010, have been mixes of mammal and bird flu — hybrids that are more likely to be milder because mammalian flu tends to make people less severely ill than bird flu.

Pure bird flu strains, such as the new H7N9 strain and the H5N1 flu, which has killed about 371 of 622 the people it has infected since 2003, are generally more deadly for people. — Reuters

Japan’s top 3 automakers log record overseas output in FY 2012

Tokyo, 25 April — Japan’s top three automakers — Toyota, Nissan and Honda — all produced record high numbers of vehicles overseas in the past business year through March, due partly to increased production in North America and emerging Asian countries on partly to increased production in North America and emerging Asian countries.

Toyota, the world’s largest automaker, reported output of 5.20 million vehicles overseas, up 17.9 percent from the previous year. Toyota group global production — which includes output by small-car maker Daihatsu Motor Co and truck-making unit Hino Motors Ltd — also hit an all-time high of 9.72 million vehicles, up 13.4 percent.

Nissan Motor Co’s production outside Japan expanded 2.6 percent to a record 3.73 million vehicles, reflecting a 16.3 percent increased in production in the United States. — Kyodo News

Photo shows quarantine officers monitoring arriving passengers at Narita Airport, the main international gateway to Tokyo, on 18 April, 2013. — Reuters

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Tokyo, 25 April — Toyota, Nissan and Honda — all produced record numbers of vehicles overseas in the past business year through March, due partly to increased production in North America and emerging Asian countries. Toyota, the world’s largest automaker, reported output of 5.2 million vehicles overseas, up 17.9 percent from the previous year. Toyota group global production — which includes output by small-car maker Daihatsu Motor Co and truck-making unit Hino Motors Ltd — also hit an all-time high of 9.72 million vehicles, up 13.4 percent.

Nissan Motor Co’s production outside Japan expanded 2.6 percent to a record 3.73 million vehicles, reflecting a 16.3 percent increased in production in the United States. — Kyodo News

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Nissan Motor Co’s production outside Japan expanded 2.6 percent to a record 3.73 million vehicles, reflecting a 16.3 percent increased in production in the United States. — Kyodo News
Russia plans to deploy fighter jets, base in Belarus

MINSK/MOSCOW, 25 April — Russia plans to deploy fighter jets in Belarus this year and eventually establish an air base in the former Soviet republic, Russian Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu said on Tuesday. The moves would increase Russia’s military presence in Belarus, viewed by Moscow as a buffer between Russia and NATO, and could unnerve neighbouring members of the Western alliance.

Russia agreed in 2009 to set up a joint air defence system with Belarus and talks were held before then on establishing an air base there, but few concrete steps have been taken. “We have been considering the plan to create a Russian air base with fighter jets here,” Shoigu said at a meeting with Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko in the capital, Minsk. “We hope that in 2015 there will be a regiment of warplanes (in Belarus) which will serve to defend our borders,” Shoigu said in a portion of the meeting shown on Russian state television. Shoigu said the plan is for the first fighter jets to arrive in Belarus this year. Russian aviation regiments normally consist of roughly 60 warplanes. While Russia and NATO officials have agreed armistice terms as between the former Cold War adversaries is all but unthinking, relations are strained and former Soviet satellites now in the Western alliance are particularly wary of the Russian military. An anti-missile shield the United States is deploying in Europe together with NATO nations is a chief source of tension.

Shoigu’s remarks coincided with a meeting in Brussels at which Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov told NATO that the United States should not still guarantee the system would not be used for the first fighter jets to arrive in Belarus this year. Russia said it was not to be used for the first fighter jets to arrive in Belarus this year. Russian aviation regiments normally consist of roughly 60 warplanes. While Russia and NATO officials have agreed armistice terms as between the former Cold War adversaries is all but unthinking, relations are strained and former Soviet satellites now in the Western alliance are particularly wary of the Russian military. An anti-missile shield the United States is deploying in Europe together with NATO nations is a chief source of tension.

China hopes cyber security cooperation with US

BEIJING, 25 April — China hopes to cooperate with the United States on cyber security, a Foreign Ministry spokeswoman said on Wednesday. Cyber security is a global problem, Hua Chunying said at a daily news conference. “We hope the international community will make joint efforts to safeguard peace, security, openness and cooperation regarding cyber space in the spirit of equality and mutual respect,” she said. She said that China and the United States cooperate rather than face conflict with each other. Hua said that the recently announced establishment of a China-US cyber security working group is designed to increase dialogue and boost cooperation between the countries. Earlier this year, China and the United States agreed to set up this group when US Secretary of State John Kerry visited Beijing. The establishment of the group is seen as a positive step in improving relations between the two countries.

Iranian held in Nepal for possible terror links

KATHMANDU, 25 April — Nepalese police are investigating an Iranian man over links to a fake Israeli passport, police said on Wednesday. Police arrested the man identified as Mohsin Khosravian last week after officials at the Israeli Embassy in Kathmandu alerted the police of his suspicious movements in the embassy area.

Ex-Australian POW to apply for A-bomb health-care certificate

NAGASAKI, 25 April — A former Australian prisoner of war, who survived the 1945 US atomic bombing of Nagasaki, will apply for a special health-care certificate to be issued to atomic-bomb survivors abroad. Shoigu said an Australian POW, who survived the attack that will entitle him to medical allowances, a group supporting atomic-bomb survivors abroad said on Wednesday.

Allan Chick, 93, who lives in the state of Victoria, southern Australia, is believed to be the last living atomic-bomb survivor among former Australian POWs, according to the 66-year-old Nobuto Hirose, co-head of the support group. He will seek the certificate through the Japanese Consulate General in Melbourne.

So far, 10 former POWs who survived the atomic bombing of Nagasaki in southwestern Japan have been given the health-care certificate, according to the Nagasaki city government. Most recently, a former Dutch POW was granted the certificate in 2009. Chick told Hiroko Sakaguchi, a 63-year-old member of the support group, that he hopes to be certified as an atomic-bomb survivor. According to Sakaguchi, who visited the former POW last week, Chick was taken prisoner in Southeast Asia and moved to a camp in Nagasaki in 1944 during World War II. He was among 24 Australian POWs at the internment camp who were exposed to the atomic bombing on 9 Aug, 1945. Sakaguchi said it is significant to support Chick, who had a “double whammy” as a POW and atomic-bomb survivor. The former POW said he hopes to keep the current government of Prime Minister Hesham Qandil regardless of its failure in politics, economy and security, he further said. There are also attempts to assassinate the judicial authority, ruin its independence and reject its verdicts, Gadallah added. Gadallah announced his resignation after an interview with an independent local newspaper published on Tuesday, in which he criticized the recent massive anti-judiciary protests of Islamists, the main supporters of President Mohamed Morsi. Gadallah argued that the judicial authority should be treated as an independent, sacred institution like the armed forces, stressing interference of the president’s supporters in judicial affairs was against the country’s best interest.

A draft law submitted to the country’s legislative body by the Muslim Brotherhood’s Freedom and Justice Party seeks to lower retirement age for judges to 60 instead of 70, which observers see as an Islamist’s attempt to control the judiciary by appointing Islamist-oriented judges to replace more than 3,000 judges above the age of 60. “It is unsuitable at this critical stage to attempt to pass an amended law concerning the judicial authority,” added Gadallah in his resignation letter to Morsi.

Egypt’s President al-Morsi to tender resignation

CAIRO, 25 April — Egypt’s President al-Morsi tendered his resignation on Tuesday. “My resignation came for the best interest, for running the country and planning the future of Egypt,” state-run Al-Ahram news website quoted Gadallah as saying. Besides, there is persistence in the attack that will entitle him to medical allowances, a group supporting atomic-bomb survivors abroad.

Morsi’s legal adviser tenders resignation

CAIRO, 25 April — Egypt’s Presidential Adviser for legal affairs Fouad Gadallah has tendered his resignation on Tuesday. The move was made after a number of reasons. First, there is not a clear vision for running the country and planning the future of Egypt,” state-run Al-Ahram news website quoted Gadallah as saying. Besides, there is persistence in the attack that will entitle him to medical allowances, a group supporting atomic-bomb survivors abroad.

Well-wishers leave a shirt at a make-shift memorial on Boylston Street a day after explosions hit the Boston Marathon in Boston, Massachusetts on 16 April, 2013. Reuters

Khosravian, who initially showed police an Israeli passport, was later found to be holding an Iranian passport as well. “Investigations revealed that he is Iranian. His Israeli passport does not have security features, and is therefore a fake,” Khoshravan last week after officials at the Israeli Embassy in Kathmandu alerted the police of his suspicious movements in the embassy area.

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Well-wishers leave a shirt at a make-shift memorial on Boylston Street a day after explosions hit the Boston Marathon in Boston, Massachusetts on 16 April, 2013. Reuters

Boston bombs were detonated by remote control

WASHINGTON, 25 April — The two bombs that went off at the Boston M arathon, killing three people and wounding 264, were detonated with the kind of remote control toy car, US investigators told a House of Representa- tives panel on Wednesday. “It was a remote control for toy cars,” US Representative Dutch Ruppersberger, the top Democrat on the House Intelligence Committee, told reporters after officials from the Department of Homeland Security, FBI and National Centre for Counterterrorism briefed the committee.

“When it comes to toys, we ask Number two brother and number two has said, they got the information on how to build the bomb from Inspire magazine,” Ruppersberger added. Inspire was created by the American-Yemeni preacher Anwar al-Awlaki, a leader of Al-Qaeda’s affiliate in Yemen who was killed in a US drone strike. Ruppersberger said the article on bomb-building in Inspire was headlined: “How to build a bomb in your mom’s kitchen.”

Police say two brothers, Tamerlan and Dzhokhar Tsarnaev, planted and detonated two pressure-cooker bombs near the finish line of the Boston M arathon on 15 April. Tamerlan Tsarnaev, 19, lies wounded in a Boston hospital and has been providing some information to authorities.

Ruppersberger also confirmed that at least some of the explosives used in the attack had come from a fireworks shop in New Hampshire. “One of the brothers, the oldest broth- er, went to a shop in New Hampshire, and asked for the most volatile explosives, so that you’d ‘get the best bang’,” Ruppersberger said.

Reuters
Letpadaung Copper Mining...

Security forces attempting to disperse villagers at Letpadaungtaung copper mine project.—MNA

Quality Thanakha marketable in Pakokku

Negligent fire destroys 75 houses in KhinU Township

Free medical treatment provided to patients in Bago
Love life without drug

The world sets to celebrate International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking on 26 June as the world nations are addressing the issue through their respective programmes.

Myanmar Anti-Narcotics Association (Central) under the Ministry of Home Affairs of Myanmar is as ever preparing to organize the annual ceremony. Com-memorative short fiction, article, poem, song, photo, computerized poster, painting, cartoon, and poster contests have reached 16th anniversary milestone. Campaigns for raising public awareness will be organized nationwide.

Titles of this year’s contests are “Avoid drug for healthy and happy living”, “Thank Health, Not Drugs”, “Say No to Drugs but Sports”, “A Void Drugs, Seal Victory”, “Invariable Youthfulness without Drug” and “A Void Drugs for Better Family Environment”.

The drug poses threat to the entire world, either developed countries or developing countries. The drug could turn anyone into an addict. Medical professionals call it “chronic elapsing disease”.

If the drug addiction overpowers youths who are regarded as future leaders of a country, the country will suffer from loss of human resources for running and safeguarding the nation. They themselves become dis-graced opium eaters. That’s why the world countries are bringing down opium production, drug production, trafficking, and abusing in their own ways.

It is common knowledge that Myanmar, with its isolation vision, has paced up combat and elimination against drug trafficking with the international help and cooperation. The Ministry of Home Affairs is cooperating with related local and international agencies to fight against the drug trafficking. The Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Social Welfare are also opening rehabs (youth rehabs) to help ex-addicts return to the community after curing their “drug addiction”.

Field trips are made to educate growers to cultivate substitution crops. The drug trafficking is effectively cracked down by MNA’s special squads with the help of combined teams of other government agencies, Myanmar Tatmadaw, ethnic armed groups and the public.

The government’s anti-narcotics activities are proved yearly by in-cineration of seized drugs and the support of UN reps, international diplomats and media.

The activities against drug abuse initiated by the government have won overwhelming support of the entire people. “Myanmar Anti-Narcotics Association” (the only social organization in Myanmar specialized in the field) will organize article, short story, poem and extempore contests in commemoration of the International Day against Drug Abuse and Trafficking at MNA HQ in K yarnaw street in Kay myat Township as of April with the aim to eliminate drug abuses.

Myanmar Anti-Narcotics Association (MNA) is raising public awareness for reduction of drug abuses. It is working in cooperation with local and international organizations that share the same objectives with.

The vision of MNA is the establishment of “drug-free society”. It is also working for drug-related harm reduction. To curb drug-related HIV/AIDS transmission, MNA is promoting public awareness campaigns and rehabilitation in wide cooperation with district and township administrations to ward off the invaders from Myanmar.

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If the issue of “drug abuses” looms large, it would destroy human resources and the youths who would lead the nation in the future. So, the onus is on all citizens to eliminate drug abuses. I would like to conclude my article in commemoration of International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking with the call for elimination of drug abuse through short-term and long-term plans for the government.

Translation: HKA

Draft Printing and Publishing Draft Law briefed in Mawlamyine

The deputy minister explained the purposes of drafting the Printing and Publishing Law and Public Service Media Law in every chapter of the Printing and Publishing Draft Law. The deputy minister and the director-general replied to the queries raised by those present.

It was attended by MNA State Hluttaw Speaker, State ministers, the advocate-general, Chief Justice of Mon State High Court, Hluttaw representatives, printers, publishers and media, totaling 90.

Nay Pyi Taw, 25 April—A ceremony to elaborate on the Draft Printing and Publishing Draft Law was held at New Mo Hotel in Mawlamyine on Monday morning, with an address by Deputy Minister for Information U Pike Htwe who sought recommendations from those present.

The world sets to celebrate International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking on 26 June as the world nations are addressing the issue through their respective programmes.

Myanmar Anti-Narcotics Association (Central) under the Ministry of Home Affairs of Myanmar is as ever preparing to organize the annual ceremony. Com-memorative short fiction, article, poem, song, photo, computerized poster, painting, cartoon, and poster contests have reached 16th anniversary milestone. Campaigns for raising public awareness will be organized nationwide.

Titles of this year’s contests are “Avoid drug for healthy and happy living”, “Thank Health, Not Drugs”, “Say No to Drugs but Sports”, “A Void Drugs, Seal Victory”, “Invariable Youthfulness without Drug” and “A Void Drugs for Better Family Environment”.

The drug poses threat to the entire world, either developed countries or developing countries. The drug could turn anyone into an addict. Medical professionals call it “chronic elapsing disease”.

If the drug addiction overpowers youths who are regarded as future leaders of a country, the country will suffer from loss of human resources for running and safeguarding the nation. They themselves become dis-graced opium eaters. That’s why the world countries are bringing down opium production, drug production, trafficking, and abusing in their own ways.

It is common knowledge that Myanmar, with its isolation vision, has paced up combat and elimination against drug trafficking with the international help and cooperation. The Ministry of Home Affairs is cooperating with related local and international agencies to fight against the drug trafficking. The Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Social Welfare are also opening rehabs (youth rehabs) to help ex-addicts return to the community after curing their “drug addiction”.

Field trips are made to educate growers to cultivate substitution crops. The drug trafficking is effectively cracked down by MNA’s special squads with the help of combined teams of other government agencies, Myanmar Tatmadaw, ethnic armed groups and the public.

The government’s anti-narcotics activities are proved yearly by in-cineration of seized drugs and the support of UN reps, international diplomats and media.

The activities against drug abuse initiated by the government have won overwhelming support of the entire people. “Myanmar Anti-Narcotics Association” (the only social organization in Myanmar specialized in the field) will organize article, short story, poem and extempore contests in commemoration of the International Day against Drug Abuse and Trafficking at MNA HQ in K yarnaw street in Kay myat Township as of April with the aim to eliminate drug abuses.

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Translation: HKA
President U Thein Sein calls... 

(from page 1)

He pointed out the regular progress of ASEAN economies amid global economic uncertainties, citing the 5.5 per cent growth.

Myanmar is focusing on meeting the goals of ASEAN Economic Community and has so far achieved the 84 per cent of the goals, said the President calling for redoubling efforts for complete realization of ASEAN Economic Community.

Through the ASEAN could overcome Asian financial crisis, SARS and disasters, conventional and financial crisis, SARS and achieved the 84 per cent-

though the green growth technology and green economy as the best solution to climate change, calling for seriously considering environmental conservation in adopting national economic plans. He invited dialogue partner countries and IMF to participate in ASEAN Integration Megaproject to boost interaction among organizations and peoples of ASEAN countries. He also spoke of the need for active public participation in establishing genuine ASEAN Community to pave the way for people-centered community.

ASEAN countries are to avoid extremism and promote patience and religious concord, stressed the President who vowed to join hands with fellow countries to achieve social objectives.

The President expressed his delight for the ASEAN’s special focus on family values and sharing in setting up the ASEAN Community, calling for reducing the development gap among ASEAN countries.

He stressed the need for close cooperation in combating illegal drug trafficking, piracy, human trafficking and addressing the issues of immigrant workers. He also spoke of his support for six basic principles of South China Sea and agreements between ASEAN and China as well as his concerns of a new flu virus strain in China, calling for preventive measures.

He expressed his special thanks to fellow countries for their support in convincing EU to end economic sanctions on Myanmar. He hoped the remaining sanctions would also be lifted soon. The President also hosted a dinner to the heads of State/Government after the summit.

Myanmar, Japan to cooperate in education, natural disaster preparedness, research

NavPyiTaw, 25 April—

Speaker of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw and Amyotha Hluttaw U Khin Aung Myint received a delegation led by Mr. Daisuke UEDA, adviser to the Technology and Higher Education Branch of Human Resources Development under the Japan International Cooperation Agency of Japan at the Amyotha Hluttaw hall, here, at 2 pm today.

Also present at the call were the Deputy Speaker of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw and Amyotha Hluttaw U Mya Nyine, Chairman of Amyotha Hluttaw Committees U Zaw Myint Pe, U San Tun and Col. Maung Maung Htoo and officials of the Hluttaw Office. They focused on cooperation in development of education sector, natural disaster preparedness, and industrial research works between the two countries and other sectors, and further strengthening of bilateral relations between Myanmar and Japan. — MNA

USAID to help Union Attorney-General’s Office

NavPyiTaw, 25 April—

Attorney-General of the Union Dr. Tun Shin held talks with Senior Governance & Rule of Law Advisor from USAID at his office here this morning. The two focused on fields of cooperation in the short and long run as the advisor has observed the functions of the office of the Union Attorney-General to give necessary assistance. The advisor also said they would seek fields of potential cooperation on the ground in Myanmar.

Also present on the occasion were Director-General U Kyaw Hsan and personnel from Office of the Union Attorney-General. — MNA

Education Ministry seeks English language proficiency of students

NavPyiTaw, 25 April—

Union Minister for Education Dr. Mya Aye held talks with President Mr. Nicholas J. Randall and party at his office this morning on conducting a survey to conduct for integrated transport master plan.

Survey to be conducted for integrated transport master plan

NavPyiTaw, 25 April—

Deputy Minister for Transport U Han Sein met personnel and private entities at the ministry today to coordinate for conducting surveys as part of national integrated transport master plan.

The plan being adopted with JICA’s assistance with feasibility studies under negotiation to single out priorities in respective sectors. Experts form JICA, in cooperation with Santac Co Ltd, will conduct surveys on highway truck terminals, airports, river ports, railway stations, toll gates, bus terminals and expressway entrances in regions and states, it is reported.—MNA

Junior Golf Myanmar Tournament

Yangon, 25 April—

Junior Golf Myanmar Tournament 2013 is being organized at Yagon Golf Club, here, on 2 and 3 May. Junior Golf Myanmar plans to organize the golf tournament monthly for turning out of outstanding golfers.

NLM
Over 1000 units of SIM cards sold at Thazi

THAZI, 25 April—Buyers queued for low-priced CDMA 800 MHz SIM cards yesterday in Thazi Township, Mekitila District, Mandalay Region as over 1000 units of SIM cards are being sold for the first batch there.

The Township General Administration Department supervised the sales of SIM cards at the township sports ground with the help of ward/village administrators and social organizations to ensure the reach of end users.

Buyers need to submit application form attached with original and a copy of household registration, original and a copy of citizenship scrutiny card and two colour photos. The quota is set at one unit of SIM card for each household.

SIM cards are sold to those meeting the requirements as the priority. No. 1 Ward in Thazi Urban area got 99 units of SIM cards, No. 2 Ward 25, No. 342, No. 459, No. 517, No. 6 27 and No. 7 31. —Kyemon

SIM card buyers chosen by lots in Mayangon Tsp

YANGON, 25 April—As Mayangon Township gets its share of 3200 cards of MECTEL CDMA-800 MHz for the first time, Township Administrator U Than Win and townswelders together with Deputy Head of Township Immigration Department U Myo Naing conducted the sale of SIM cards in line with the rules at Phathannmyat-mon Dhamayon at the corner of Tabin Shwe Htwe and Alaung of Royal Bagan Foundation.

Wellwisher U Myo Min Oo-Daw The Myintz Myint (Royal Bagan Foundation) will donate cash to the fund for reconstruction of 19 houses. “We came here to donate clothes, bags of rice and cash to the fire victims. We have no plan to rebuild the houses. When we arrived here, we knew that most of the fire victims are older persons and they would not afford to rebuild their houses. Now is dry and hot season. I thought that the older persons would not endure the hot season. So we decided to rebuild the houses for them,” said wellwisher U Myo Min Oo.

The houses will be of same type. A plan is set to spend K 840,000 on each house. Due to hot season, the construction will be carried out as quickly as possible. —Kyemon

Plan to rebuild houses of fire victims in NyaungU

NYAUNGU, 25 April—A fire broke out in Yanhsan Village of NyaungU Township in NyaungU District at 1 pm on 20 April.

A ceremony to present K 271,800, bags of rice, clothes and other equipment donated by departmental personnel and local people to fire victims was held at the relief camp of the village monastery.

It was attended by departmental officials of NyaungU District and Township departmental officials, members of social organizations, ward administrators and personnel.

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Squad arrests soccer betting

YANGON, 25 April—The gamblers were arrested by officials for soccer betting at a betal shop on Ywala street of Sintgu Ward in Insein Township, here, on 21 April.

According to a tip-off from a member of the public, a squad led by SIP Zaw Min Oo of Special Crime Unit from Office of the Commander of Yangon North District Police Force, SIP Aung Myint Thein of Insein Police Station and Police Sergeant Aung Soe searched the betal shop and arrested two men namely Min Kyi (a) Phoe Thein and Ko Ko Hlaing (a) Shwe Yin Aye who were engaged in gambling with K 74,500 and related materials.

Insein Police Station filed a lawsuit against the two gamblers. —Kyemon

Ammunition unearthed in Bago

BAGO, 25 April—Two 36 grenades and 32 rounds of 303 rifle ammunition were found in Bago on 23 April. The rusty ammunitions were reported to have been unearthed from the 50-foot-deep well at Yangon-Mandalay High-way in Gatha Myothit, Bago and then transferred to Bago No.1 police station.

Likewise, a grenade was found while digging the earth for construction works in Youngyi Ward at the corner of local office street and hospital street on 21 April. According to the investigation by organizations concerned, the grenade was found to be 36 propelled one and no more explosive. Bago No.1 Police Station concerned has seized the grenade and taking actions to transfer it to the battalion under the law. —Kyemon

Fire breaks out at old guest house

YANGON, 25 April—A fire broke out on the first floor of Lamimein guest house on Bago road in Ywama East Ward of Insein Township on 22 April. The fire was sparked by welding and spread to wafer pieces.

Township Administrator U Aung Kyaw Tun, Township Police Commander Police Major Kyaw Win, Head of Township Fire Services Department and social organizations, ward elders and township departmental officials together with Deputy Head of Township Immigration to fire victims was held at 1 pm on 20 April.

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Township Administrator U Aung Kyaw Tun, Township Police Commander Police Major Kyaw Win, Head of Township Fire Services Department
**Regional**

**Senior US military officer visits Chinese Army**

**Jakarta, 25 April**—Indonesia’s M O U with China’s Anhui Province

Indonesia is a very dynamic country with huge natural resource and the Anhui government encourages its companies and entrepreneurs to invest in Indonesia. “The establishment of the economic and trade cooperation zone in Indonesia will surely promote more companies from Anhui to invest here and get developed with China,” Cao said.

According to Cao, the economic and trade cooperation between Anhui Province and Indonesia has been experiencing an rapid increase in recent years, with the total import and export trade volume reaching 1.07 billion US dollars in 2012, up 106 percent from a year earlier.

Zhang Baoshun, secretary of Anhui Provincial Committee of the Communist Party of China, attended the signing ceremony, which is an economic and trade delegation to investigate Indonesia’s investment environment.

**Senior Chinese official emphasizes partnership with Vietnam**

China is ready to advance its comprehensive, strategic and cooperative partnership with Vietnam, a senior Chinese official said here on Wednesday.

During the meeting, Wang Qishan, a member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee, met with a Vietnamese delegation headed by Ngo Van Du, head of the Communist Party of Vietnam’s (CPV) discipline arm.

During the meeting, Wang said the CPC is ready to work with the CPV to step up exchanges and cooperation as well as mutual learning, so as to advance the China-Vietnam comprehensive, strategic and cooperative partnership in a stable and healthy way.

**Philippine military augments forces in southern Philippines to pursue leftist rebels**

The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) has recently sent a Marine battalion to southern provinces, as an M_vis Ww/ head of the Ministry of National Defense, during his visit to southern Mindanao, an important part of the country’s core region.

The AFP’s strategy is to pursue leftist rebels in the southern region, which has been affected by the conflict between the government and communist rebels. The AFP has been working closely with local authorities to prevent the spread of leftist ideology and consolidate the government’s control over the region.

**Japanese government presses ahead with safety review of nuclear plants in wake of March 11 disaster**

The Japanese government is pressing ahead with a safety review of nuclear plants in wake of the March 11, 2011, disaster, focusing on the lessons learned from the Fukushima Dai-ichi nuclear power plant.

The government has been working to ensure that nuclear plants meet new safety standards, including the installation of additional safety measures. The new regulations are expected to come into force once the new regulations are adopted and the Nuclear Regulation Authority (NRA) has confirmed that the plants meet the new requirements.
Claim Day Notice

MV Great Creation VOY No (84)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV GREAT CREATION VOY NO (84) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 26.4.2013 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T. where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority
Agent for: M/S STX PAN OCEAN
Phone No: 256916/256919/256921

Claim Day Notice

MV MCP Larnaca VOY No (001)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV MCP LARNACA VOY NO (001) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 26.4.2013 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T. where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority
Agent for: M/S Mol (S’poore) Pte Ltd
Phone No: 256908/378316/376797

Claim Day Notice

MV ORA BHUM VOY No (334)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV ORA BHUM VOY NO (334) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 26.4.2013 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority
Agent for: M/S Regional Container Lines
Phone No: 256908/378316/376797

Claim Day Notice

MV BANGKAJA VOY NO (84)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV BANGKAJA VOY NO (84) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 26.4.2013 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.W.P.T where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority
Agent for: M/S Wongsamut Ocean Shipping Co Ltd
Phone No: 256916/256919/256921

Claim Day Notice

MV EVER ABLE VOY NO (340N)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV EVER ABLE VOY NO (340N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 26.4.2013 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of H.P. where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority
Agent for: M/S Ever Green Shipping Co Ltd
Phone No: 256908/378316/376797

Claim Day Notice

MV Biendong Navigator VOY No (050)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV BIENDONG NAVIGATOR VOY NO (050) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 26.4.2013 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority
Agent for: M/S Orient Overseas Container Lines
Phone No: 256908/378316/376797

Kansai Airport to start solar power generation

Osaka, 25 April — Photovoltaic panels will be installed at Kansai International Airport serving Osaka to produce electricity for sale to Kansai Electric Power Co, New Kansai International Airport Co said on Tuesday.

Under a project jointly undertaken with Solar Frontier KK and financed by the government-backed Development Bank of Japan, panels will be laid out on idle land of the offshore airport island. They will have an output capacity of 12,000 megawatt hours per year with their operations scheduled for inauguration in January 2014. They are designed to generate power enough to supply around 4,100 households, the companies said.— Kyodo News
CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV ER TURKU VOY NO (016)
Consignees of cargo carried on MV ER TURKU VOY NO (016) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 26.4.2013 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.

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SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S HANJ IN SHIPPING LINE
Phone No: 256908/378316/376797

Justin Bieber, Selena Gomez back together?

London, 25 April—Justin Bieber has hinted he and Selena Gomez are officially back together.
The 19-year-old Beauty and a Beat singer—who was dumped by the brunette beauty in December after a tumultuous two year relationship—briefly posted an uncaptioned new photo of them cuddling up together on Saturday (20.04.13) but he quickly deleted it.
The Spring Breakers actress flew to Norway earlier this week to see the Baby hitmaker, who is currently on tour, and they were soon spotted kissing.

A source previously said: “They were holding hands, hugging and they kissed on the lips. They looked really in love, in fact, no fights ever happened before. It definitely looked they were back together.”
Pals recently insisted that despite their on-off relationship, the pair—who split late last year—can’t stay away from each other and they have an intense connection.

Tom Cruise takes back US box office with “Oblivion”

London, 25 April—Tom Cruise’s post-apocalyptic thriller “Oblivion” wiped out the box office competition, racking up $38.2 million (25 million pounds) in weekend ticket sales during its US and Canadian debut.
The debut of “Oblivion” knocked baseball drama “42” into second place. The drama about Jackie Robinson, the first black player in the Major Leagues, earned $18 million from Friday through Sunday after leading the charts a week ago. In third place, animated combo “The Croods” earned $9.5 million during its fifth weekend in theatres, according to studio estimates.


Singers Emily Magee (R) and Jonas Kaufmann perform on stage during a dress rehearsal of Richard Strauss opera ‘Ariadne auf Naxos’ in Salzburg on 25 July, 2012.— Reuters

Frankfurt, Kaufmann, Stemme top opera honours

London, 25 April—Frankfurt Opera was crowned the world’s best opera company on Monday at the inaugural International Opera Awards which were set up to promote opera to a wider audience as it comes under increasing financial pressure.
The award was one of 21 prizes announced at a ceremony in central London to kick off “The Opera,” annual awards set up by Opera Magazine and British businessman Harry Hyman.

German Jonas Kaufmann, often described as the “new king of tenors,” was crowned the best male singer after strong reviews from productions of “Carmen” and with his solo albums, Verismo Arias and Wagner, becoming bestseller within weeks of release.

Swedish soprano Nina Stemme, who received raves in Munich, Milan and Paris for her Wagner, beat five others including Joyce DiDonato and Sarah Connolly to be named best female singer.

British Antonio Pappano, music director of Britain’s Royal Opera House, won the award for best conductor.
The winners list said that under its intendant Bernd Loewe, the Frankfurt Opera had established itself as one of Europe’s best, with houses almost regularly filled to capacity for a mix of rarely performed works and more mainstream repertoire.

Opera Magazine editor John Allison said he hoped the awards would bring more recognition to opera at an economically tough time when many opera houses were struggling due to a drop in private sponsorships and state subsidies.

“Very few opera companies in the world are immune to the financial pinch,” Allison said, adding that this could stifle creativity and tempt opera companies “to play it safe.”

Hyman said the awards were intended to broaden the audience for opera and encourage new talent by creating bursaries.

“I hope they will become the Oscars of opera,” he said.

Richa Chadda finds Madhuri Dixit perfect combo of actor-dancer

Mumbai, 25 April—Madhuri Dixit is an ideal combination of a good actress and dancer, says Richa Chadda and adds that the Bollywood diva is like a mirchi.

“Madhuri Dixit is like a mirchi. She can dance and act equally well. So she is very fit to be an actress,” said Richa, who made her acting debut in 2008 with Dibakar Banerjee’s Oye Lucky! Lucky Oyu.

But Richa grabbed attention after her work in Gangs Of Wasseypur.

She will next be seen in Farhan Akhtar’s home production Fukrey and guarantees that it will entertain moviegoers.

Directed by Mrighdeep Singh Lamba of Teen Thay Bhal fame, Fukrey also features Pulkit Samrat, Manoj Singh, Ali Fazal, and southern actress Priya Anand. Richa plays a mafia don in the film. “Fukrey is a young story and I am playing antagonist in the film. Since I enjoy playing different kind of characters, so you will enjoy watching Fukrey. I guarantee this,” she said.—PTI
**Clippers’ Paul calls late-game hercules “just basketball”**

LOS ANGELES, April 25—Chris Paul drove right, stumbled forward, leaned back and banked in a game-winning shot that lifted the Los Angeles Clippers to a crucial playoff win on Monday and elevated his status as one of the game’s top closers.

While Kobe Bryant, Kevin Durant and LeBron James are often noted as fourth-quarter assassins, it is the diminutive six-foot (1.83m) Paul who provided the signature moment of the National Basketball Association (NBA) playoffs thus far.

Paul’s last-second jumper gave the Clippers a 93-91 victory and a 2-0 lead in their best-of-seven first-round series with the Memphis Grizzlies that left the home crowd buzzing.

“He’s so stubborn and strong-willed. There’s not too many players like that,” Clippers forward Lamar Odom told Reuters, likening Paul’s clutch play to former team mate Bryant.

“It’s all about their mentality. He just didn’t take no for an answer.”

Paul finished with 24 points and nine assists, and got the final say in a duel with Grizzlies guard Mike Conley, who had a playoff-career-high 28 points and nine rebounds, but it was the timing of his points that made all the difference.

As Los Angeles let a 12-point advantage slip away in the fourth quarter, Paul scored the last eight points for his team in what has become a familiar occurrence for the Clippers.

Blake Griffin’s score-stealing athleticism is the high point of a deep and exciting roster, but when it comes to the last 12 minutes of a close game the offense begins and ends with point guard Paul.

“The timing of his points that made all the difference for the Clippers. Blake Griffin’s score-stealing athleticism is the high point of a deep and exciting roster, but when it comes to the last 12 minutes of a close game the offense begins and ends with point guard Paul.”

Los Angeles Clippers Chris Paul (R) hugs Blake Griffin (C) and Jamal Crawford after scoring the game-winning shot against the Memphis Grizzlies during Game 2 of their NBA Western Conference Quarterfinals basketball playoff series in Los Angeles, April 22, 2013.—REUTERS

**England’s Pietersen ruled out of Champions Trophy**

LONDON, April 25—England batsman Kevin Pietersen will not be ready for the one-day series with New Zealand and June’s Champions Trophy after a further scan on his injured knee on Wednesday fuelled speculation he could be an Ashes doubt.

“Kevin Pietersen has been ruled out of the ICC Champions Trophy following a repeat MRI scan on his right knee earlier today,” the England and Wales Cricket Board said in a statement, adding he would also skip the New Zealand one-dayers which precede the tournament.

The 32-year-old had already been told he would miss the two-match test series against New Zealand next month because of the injury.

He suffered the knee problem during fielding practice in the away series in New Zealand last month and was unable to play in the third and final test.

The home five-test Ashes series against Australia starts in Nottsington on 10 July with the Champions Trophy one-day tournament taking place from 6-23 June, also in England.

Pietersen remains England’s most explosive batsman and any sign he will miss all or part of the Ashes offers encouragement to Australia, who named their squad earlier on Wednesday and are seen as underdogs after losing the last two series.

“Pietersen will now start a graduated rehabilitation programme with a view to resuming full training by the middle of June,” the ECB statement added.

**Liverpool’s Gerrard faces likely shoulder surgery**

LONDON, April 25—Liverpool and England captain Steven Gerrard is likely to need shoulder surgery at the end of the season, the Premier League club said on Wednesday.

If the 32-year-old, who has been ever present in this season’s league campaign, has surgery in the close season he could miss England’s friendlies against Ireland at Wembley on May 29 and away to Brazil on 2 June.

“It’s looking more and more likely that he might require surgery,” first team coach Mike K Madsh told the club’s website (www.liverpoolfc.com).

He has made 628 appearances for the Merseyside club where he has spent his entire career after coming through the youth ranks, scoring 159 goals.

**Rare breakage blamed for Alonso wing problem**

Ferrari team principal Stefano Domenicali said Saturday’s failure had prevented the Spanish, who had been in second place, from regaining Red Bull’s eventual winner Sebastian Vettel for the victory. Alonso, who won the previous race in China, finished the Bahrain Grand Prix in eighth place and is fourth overall in the standings and 30 points behind Vettel.—Reuters

**England’s Kevin Pietersen reacts as he walks off the ground after being dismissed for 73 runs during the second day of the second test against New Zealand at the Basin Reserve in Wellington on 15 March, 2013.—Reuters**
Early flying dinosaur can catch fish

VANCOUVER, 25 April—Microraptors, a flying dinosaur about the size of a modern-day hawk, could catch prey in the water as well as on land, according to a Canadian research. The research, published earlier this week in the journal Evolution, challenged previous belief that microraptors lived in trees and preyed exclusively on small birds and mammals about the size of squirrels.

The new evidence of Microraptor’s hunting ability came from fossilized remains in China, in which the stomach content of fish was easily identified, said Scott Persons, palentology graduate student at the University of Alberta.

"Now we know that Microraptor operated in varied terrain and had a varied diet," said Persons. "It took advantage of a variety of prey in the wet and forested environment" in the current China 66 million years ago.

Further analysis of the fossil revealed that its teeth were adapted to catching slippery, wiggling prey like fish. Dinosaur researchers have established that flesh-eater had teeth with serrations on both sides, which helped the predator saw through meat like a steak knife.

But the Microraptor’s teeth were serrated on just one side, and were angled forward. It is another evidence that shows Microraptor’s adaption to impale fish on its teeth. "With reduced serrations, the prey wouldn’t tear itself apart while it struggled," said Persons. "Microraptor could simply raise its head high, and the fish would slip off the teeth and be swallowed whole, no fuss, no muss."

Japanese director Kawase chosen as Cannes festival jury member

LONDON, 25 April—Brazil were booed by their own fans in a 2-2 draw with Chile in their first friendly at a 2014 World Cup stadium on Wednesday.

The match at the newly refurbished Mierio in Belo Horizonte was coach Luiz Felipe Scolari’s last test before naming his squad on 14 May for the Confederations Cup to be held at six venues in Brazil in June. The friendly, in which Chile were attempting to win in Brazil for the first time in 26 appearances, was also a chance for the local World Cup organisations to test the venue, the second to be ready for the 15-30 June tournament.

Despite a good turnout with a crowd of over 33,000 and a pre-match party, the demanding home fans booed their team and shouted ‘Ole’ when the Chileans exchanged a string of passes. "One day you’re booed, the next you’re praised, football’s like that," said striker Neymar, who put Brazil 2-1 up in the 54th minute from a pass by substitute striker Alexandre Pato. Defender Marcos Gonzalez, who plays his club football in Brazil for Flamengo, headed Chile into the lead from a free kick in the eighth minute. Centre back Rever equalised for Brazil midway through the first half and Herbertaku’s header made it 3-2.

Brazil’s Alexandre Pato (R) challenges Chile’s Marcos Gonzalez (C) and Jose Rojas during their international friendly soccer match in Belo Horizonte, on 24 April, 2013.

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President U Thein Sein meets Thai Prime Minister Mrs Yingluck Shinawatra

Nay Pyi Taw, 25 April—President U Thein Sein of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar who is on tour of Bandar Seri Begawan of Brunei Darussalam held talks with Thai Prime Minister Mrs Yingluck Shinawatra, at the Prime Minister’s Office in Bandar Seri Begawan, this afternoon.

They exchanged cordial view on further promoting existing amity between the two countries, investment of Thai entrepreneurs, encouragement by the two governments for soonest completion of Dawei Special Economic Zone and its related projects, more cooperation in the sectors of trade, investment and sector-wise cooperation and cooperation in rehabilitation of Myanmar citizens in refugees camps in Thai-Myanmar borders.

It was also attended by Union Ministers U Wunna Maung Lwin, U Tin Nang Thein and Dr Kan Zaw, Deputy Ministers U Zin Yaw, Dr Daw Thein Thein Hay and Daw Sanda Khan, Myanmar Ambassador to Brunei Darussalam Daw Yin Yin Myint and departmental heads.

The Thai Prime Minister was accompanied by Minister at the Prime Minister’s Office Mr Niwattamrong Boonsonpaisan and high-ranking officials.

MNA

President U Thein Sein holds meeting with Thai Prime Minister Mrs Yingluck Shinawatra at the Prime Minister’s Office in Bandar Seri Begawan.—MNA

President U Thein Sein arrives back in Nay Pyi Taw

Nay Pyi Taw, 25 April—President U Thein Sein of the Union of Myanmar arrived back here by special flight of Myanmar Airways International this evening from Brunei Darussalam.

The President and party arrived at Bandar Seri Begawan International Airport this evening via Emperor Hotel to leave for Myanmar. The President and party were seen off at the Airport by high-ranking officials from the Prime Minister’s Office and Foreign Affairs Ministry of Brunei Darussalam, Myanmar Ambassador to Brunei Darussalam Daw Yin Yin Myint, staff and families of Myanmar embassy.

The Myanmar delegation were welcomed back at the Nay Pyi Taw International Airport by Vice Presidents Dr Sai Mauk Kham and U Nyan Tun, Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, Union Ministers Lt-Gen Ko Ko, Lt-Gen Wai Lwin, U Aung Kyi, U Thein Nyunt, U Kyaw Hsan, U Myat Hein, U Nyan Tun Aung, U Than Hay, U Win Shein, Commander Maj-Gen Maung Maung Aye and officials.

Delegation members Union Ministers U Wunna Maung Lwin, U Tin Nang Thein and Dr Kan Zaw, Deputy Ministers U Zin Yaw, Dr Daw Thein Thein Hay and Daw Sanda Khan and departmental officials, also arrived back on the same flight.—MNA

Letpadaungtaung Copper Mining Project faces mob protests

Nay Pyi Taw, 25 April—Nearly 30 villagers from Zidaw and Moeygoybin villages headed by Aung Soe, Ko Htet (Yangon Public Service Network), Thaung Htaik Oo (Yangon University of Arts and Science Students Union), and Zaw Naing and Win Kyaw of Moeygoybin Aleywa Village harrowed the cropland with eight cows to the north of Block No. 8 MCC of Letpadaungtaung Copper Mining Project in Salayngyi Township, Sagaing Region on 24 April morning and the chief of Salayngyi Police Force and policemen and deputy township administrator of Salayngyi General Administration Office then attempted to stop them from harrowing. Around 10 am, the number of villagers reached nearly 70 and the policemen had to rescue the deputy township administrator out of the crowd who blocked him. The crowd continued harrowing and left the cropland around 11 am.

Likewise, a total of 70 villagers including some members of Yangon Public Service Network gathered near the land that belongs to Ko Khin Nyunt and Ma Yi Yi Win in Sintae Village (Old village) to the east of Lapadaung Taung Copper Project Area Plot at 8.40 am (See page 7)

Workshop on disaster risk reduction and gender equality at Nay Pyi Taw Amara Hotel

Nay Pyi Taw, 25 April—Workshop on disaster risk reduction and gender equality, jointly organized by Relief and Resettlement Department of the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement and Oxfam (Myanmar), took place at the Fantastic Hall of Nay Pyi Taw Amara Hotel this morning.

On the occasion, Union Minister Dr Daw Maung Maung Aung Kyi, U Thein Nyunt, U Thein Lwin, U Than Htay, U Tin Naing Thein, U Zin Yaw, Dr Daw Thein Thein Hay and Daw Sanda Khan and departmental officials, also arrived back on the same flight.

Ohn Khin in her speech said that the ministry acts as a focal one for disaster management and preventing violence against women and girls. The world countries have paid special attentions to gender sensitizing. It is common knowledge that women engagement and empowerment are to be added in the three pillars of government; legislature, executive and judiciary.

The findings of the workshop and suggestions could be beneficial for Myanmar women’s and girls’ roles and capabilities for preventing violence against them, she added.

Next, Acting Director of Oxfam (Myanmar) explained the purpose of workshop. The workshop lasts till 26 April.—MNA