Mankind settled in Myanmar for over forty million years, researcher says

YANGON 3 May — ‘Free and pluralistic media’ are necessary for a democratic society, Union Minister for Information U Aung Kyi said on Saturday, which marked World Press Freedom Day 2014.

The ceremony was celebrated at the Chatrium Hotel Royal Lake Yangon under the theme “Media Freedom for a Better Future”.

The Union Minister said, that a “free and pluralistic media is vital to good governance in a democratic society in which equal rights are accorded to all citizens.”

He also said that balancing media freedom on one hand and protecting civil rights on the other hand is clearly a highly demanding process for a multi-ethnic and multi-religious country like Myanmar.

U Aung Kyi said: “We witness the achievement of several significant media freedom milestones which we have built in these years, including the lifting of press censorship, the return of private daily newspapers, the release of a number of imprisoned bloggers and journalists, the emergence of several independent press and publishers associations, the return of exiled media groups to mainstream media as they obtained publishing rights, the repeal of the rigid 1962 printers and publishers registration law, the adoption of the printing and publishing enterprise law and news media law in which the prohibition of advocacy of national, racial or religious hatred, the rights of journalists to seek information and their protections are well defined”.

At the ceremony, UNESCO representative Sardar Umar Alan read a joint message from Secretary-General of the United Nations Ban Ki-moon and Director-General of UNESCO Irina Bokova on the occasion of World Press Freedom Day 2014.

The joint message mentioned that only when journalists are at liberty to monitor, investigate and criticize policies and actions can good governance exist.

It also reaffirmed that the United Nations General Assembly has condemned all attacks and violence against journalists and media workers, and urged governments and all those with influence are to act on this condemnation by protecting journalists and other media workers.

The ceremony concluded with the screening of a speech made by late Myanmar veteran journalist Hanthawaddy U Win Tin during World Press Freedom Day 2013.

Meanwhile, many journalists in Myanmar still face pressure from the government and are not allowed to freely cover or even mention sensitive issues, with censorship, a daily occurrence in many media organisations here.—MNA/NLM

With the reforms of the media sector, readers can choose from a variety of publications in English and Myanmar language.—PHOTO: AYE MIN SOE

INCIDE
Outstanding monks and citizens honoured
PAGE-3

Yangon’s evolving skate scene needs support and a safe place to skate: Myanmar Skate Association
PAGE-9

Storm expected in southern Bay of Bengal in 2nd week of May might turn into cyclone: weather expert

YANGON, 3 May — A storm that could turn into a cyclone might occur in the southern part of the Bay of Bengal in the second week of May, according to the International Research Institute of the National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration.

On his facebook site, U Tun Lwin, Meteorologist and former Director-General of the Department of Meteorology and Hydrology, quoted the forecast, as saying that the tropical depression might eventually reach cyclone strength.

“The degree of certainty is 38 percent,” he said.

“The region in which a storm develops is one of the decisive factors of the course and strength. According to statistics, storms that occur in the south-eastern part of the Bay of Bengal are likely to hit Myanmar,” the weather expert said on his facebook page.

According to records, 85 major storms hit Myanmar from 1877 to 2013 with 51 percent of the storms slashing the country in the period from 20 April to 15 May.

According to the weather expert, around 38 percent of all storms that develop in the Bay of Bengal in that period enter Myanmar.—NLM

Ancient earthen pot found in Indagaw.
PHOTO: MWT

Saman River Valley, the Origin of Mankind

The regions of Myanmar have been inhabited by mankind for over 40 million years, said a researcher at a meeting organized by the Tun Foundation at the building of the Myanmar Private Banks Association in Yangon on 3 May.

According to Writer Chit San Win’s research paper titled “Research on Samon River Valley, the Origin of Mankind”, fossils of primates dating back 40 million years have been discovered in Myanmar.

Another evidence cited in his paper was that fossils of hominoid primates lived in Central Myanmar between eight and ten million years ago, and that French and Myanmar researchers proved this with firm evidence in 2007, he said.

A fossil discovered on Dinga Hill in Shwe Myin Tin Mountain north of New Khway Village in Chaung U Township, Sagaing Region, by Dr Ba Maw was of a man who lived there three million years ago.

During the Stone Age, mankind settled in Myanmar from Kachin State in the north to Ye, Myeik and Dawei in the south, he said, citing Professor U Thaw Tin for this conclusion. In addition, the writer said mankind lived in Myanmar throughout various stages of the Stone Age such as the early or Palaeolithic period (from 0.5 to 0.01 million years ago), middle or Mesolithic period (from 30,000 to 12,000 years ago) and late or Neolithic period (from 8,000 to 4,000 years ago) of the Stone Age.

The Bronze Age of Myanmar began about 6,000 years ago in Budalim, Nyaungkan and Monhu Samon Valley. Copperware of the Bronze Age was also found in other parts of the country, including Monwain Village near Tarpain River, Hotha Village in Northern Shan State, Nampan and Namli Villages in Moemek in southern Shan State.

(See page 3)
KYAUKPADAUNG, 3 May—As Kyaukpadaung Township is located in hot and dry area of Mandalay Region, the government arranges sinking many tube-wells in the villages where water is shortage. It is aimed at alleviating the poverty and developing rural development. On 1 May which falls on May Day, four tube-wells were sunk in four villages. Kyaukpadaung Township Rural Development Department and JICA cooperated in sinking tube-wells in Kanbyu village, Kanni village, Taungtha village and Dawah village.

Departmental officials and responsible persons of JICA manage construction of the water tank and installation of engine and pumps as quickly as possible.

Kyaw Htay

Four tube-wells give potable water to villagers in Kyaukpadaung Tsp

Freshwater fish farms in Mandalay region up for bidding

SINGU, 3 May—An auction of freshwater fisheries in Singu and Thabeikkyin townships took place on 29 May in PyinOoLwin, Mandalay Region, drawing bidders from different townships. The bids for 14 of the 20 fish farms in Singu totaled almost K 40 million, while eight of ten in Thabeikkyin earned K 6 million. The remaining fish farms from the two townships are expected to come under the hammer a few days later.

According to records, Myanmar has a long tradition of freshwater fish farms, dating back hundreds of years.

Win Maung

Potable water distribution in needy places

NAY PSI TAW, 3 May—Under the guidance of Nay Pyi Taw Council, administrative officers of Zeyathiri Township, together with fire brigade members, provided water-scarce villages with safe-drinking water this morning.

More than 10,000 gallons of water was distributed to 603 households from four villages in the township. The water was fetched from a pump situated at a Buddhist monastery in Kantha-aye Village. The pump was donated by Man Taung Nyein Foundation.

The villages sit on rock layers, which makes it hard to drill for water.

Ko Myo-Shwe Pauk Kan

Broken bridge in Magway affects 5,000 villagers

TAUNGDWINGYI, 3 May—A torrential rain last October swept away parts of a bridge on the Kan Creek in Taungdwingyi, Magway Region, leading to a range of health, economic and social difficulties, officials said.

Over 5,000 local people from seven villages in the area used to cross over the bridge every day as it links to the Magway-Taungdwingyi Highway, with officials saying they are hoping to finish repair works with the help of locals before the monsoon sets in.

Kyemon

Yazagyo multi-purpose dam project expected to be completed in 2014-15 FY

Yazagyo multi-purpose dam project being implemented in Kalay Township of Sagaing Region.

Today’s Myanmar News Sites
NAY PYI TAW, 3 May—President U Thein Sein presented special honorary awards to outstanding monks and those who strived for the country on Saturday at the President Office in Nay Pyi Taw today.

The president and the vice-presidents presented the awards to 7 monks and outstanding people in various fields. President U Thein Sein hosted a dinner on Saturday at Myanmar International Convention Centre-MICC for the winners of the President’s Excellence Award — outstanding students and youth of the Red Cross Society, as well as scouts.

At the dinner, artists from the Department of Fine Arts under the Ministry of Culture and students from Bagan, Inlay and Ngwehsaung entertained the attendees with traditional songs and dance performances.

MNA

Outstanding monks and citizens honoured

NAY PYI TAW, 3 May—President U Thein Sein presented excellent performance awards to outstanding monks and those who strived for the country at the President Office in Nay Pyi Taw today.

At the prize presentation ceremony, the president said that the state was presenting the excellent performance awards to those who strived for the national development and socioeconomic development of the people.

The objective was to strengthen human resources such as economic and social pioneers to develop the private sector and rural and urban areas, he explained.

During his speech, he pointed out that he had arranged a gathering of pioneers, outstanding students, Red Cross Society members and scouts so that they could emulate pioneers in the future.

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MNA

Excellence award winners share experience with outstanding youths

NAY PYI TAW, 3 May — The 2014 Excellence Award Winners and Special Honoray Award Winners of President U Thein Sein on Saturday shared their experience with outstanding youths.

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2014 ASEAN Business and Investment Summit to be held in November

By Aung Khin

YANGON, 3 May—The 2014 ASEAN Business and Investment Summit (BIS) will be held in Nay Pyi Taw in November, Xinhua news agency reported on Friday.

The report, quoting Vice-President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI) U Wai Phyo, said that AASEAN BIS provides a platform for the business community to engage with ASEAN leaders and economic ministers as well as other key decision makers.

The event, aimed at discussing strategically important issues of Asia and East Asia, is scheduled from 12 to 14 November.

According to a press release by ASEAN BAC, the annual summit also aims to increase ASEAN’s attractiveness as a region for trade and investment and enhance regional competitiveness.

ASEAN BIS is organized annually by the ASEAN Business Advisory Council (ASEAN BAC) which was established by ASEAN leaders in 2003, and has committed to promoting public-private sector partnerships to assist the integration of an ASEAN Economic Community (AEC).

Mankind settled in Myanmar...

(from page 1)

Excavation in the Samon River Valley showed that mankind lived in the Samon River Valley from the early Stone Age to the Iron Age. Early Myanmar civilization started in the valley, the writer said. In addition, household utensils discovered in Hanlin, Beikthano and Sriketra are the same as those found in the Samon Valley. He concluded that those from the valley migrated to these Pyu city-states, the most ancient cities in the history of Myanmar.
Residents enjoy for getting repaved roads

YAMETHIN, 3 May—As part of efforts for rural development, Mandalay Region Development Department made many construction of roads both in the villages and in the towns of Yamethin Township of the region. Residents regularly use the repaved roads and thanked the officials for smooth transportation.

Photo shows a repaved road in Yamethin Township in Mandalay.

Activities hail 68th Anniversary Myanmar Fire Brigade Day

SANITATION CARRIED OUT: To mark the 68th Anniversary Myanmar Fire Brigade Day, a 100-member squad comprising members of the auxiliary fire brigade and personnel of the fire services department led by U Khin Maung Than, Head of Pakokku District FSD cleaned the platform of Thihoshin Pagoda in Ward 15 of Pakokku, Magway Region, on Saturday.

Aung (Mandalay University)

Firefighters in Sagaing practice emergency situation

Mawlamyine, 3 May—On 30 April held a ceremony to honour community health workers for their efforts in the polio eradication campaign at the hall of the Township Health Department in Mawlamyine of Mon State.

Head of Township Health Department Dr Khin Aye Khaing presented certificates to several groups of the community health staff. Similar ceremonies took place in 10 other townships of Mon State.

Under the supervision of authorities, community health workers have been working closely with members of social organizations in order to conduct polio vaccination. Officials said that the polio campaigns were effective, contributing the success to the close cooperation. As infections with “wild polio virus” could be controlled across the nation, authorities declared Myanmar a polio free nation on 7 April 2014 which falls on World Health Day, according to a health officer of the township.—Htet Nay Min Aung

UNIFORMS PROVIDED: U Thant Zin, administrator of Tamway Township of Yangon Region, presents uniforms worth K 1.2 million to members of the auxiliary fire brigade to administrators of respective wards on Friday afternoon.—Aung Than (Mingala Taungnyunt)

Health workers honoured for their efforts in polio eradication campaign

MAWLAMYINE, 3 May—Mon State Health Assistants Association on 30 April held a ceremony to honour community health workers for their efforts in the polio eradication campaign at the hall of the Township Health Department in Mawlamyine of Mon State.

Head of Township Health Department Dr Khin Aye Khaing presented certificates to several groups of the community health staff. Similar ceremonies took place in 10 other townships of Mon State.

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Dental university students on field trip of sharing dental knowledge to villagers

MYEK, 3 May—As part of uplifting health standard of the people, students of University of Dental Medicine (Yangon) conducted collection of data in Myeik of Taninthayi Region on Friday.

The data collection squad leader Dr Maung Myint explained purpose of gathering the data to the local people at Basic Education Primary School (Shanchaung) where member students shared knowledge about dental diseases.

The dentist team performed free dental check-ups and delivered treatment and dental medicines to the people.

The dental team gathered the dental data in Ingaw, Sandawut, Kyweku and Yemyitkyi villages of Myeik Township as of 28 April and provided dental care to about 400 local people.

Dental students had never carried out data collection in the villages. Thanks to educative talks of the students, the local people understood importance of teeth and dental diseases.—Khung Htoo (Myeik District IPRD)

UNIFORMS PROVIDED: U Thant Zin, administrator of Tamway Township of Yangon Region, presents uniforms worth K 1.2 million to members of the auxiliary fire brigade to administrators of respective wards on Friday afternoon.—Aung Than (Mingala Taungnyunt)
Dozens killed in Ukraine riot and fire; OSCE monitors freed

Odesssa, 3 May — At least 42 people were killed in street battles between supporters and opponents of Russia in southern Ukraine that ended with pro-Russian protesters trapped in a flaming building, bringing the country closer to war. Pro-Russian rebels in the east freed seven European military observers on Saturday after holding them hostage for eight days, while Kiev pressed on with a military campaign to reclaim rebel-held territory in the area.

The riot in the Black Sea port of Odessa that ended in a deadly blaze in a trade union building was by far the worst incident in Ukraine since a February uprising that ended with a pro-Russian president fleeing the country.

It also spread the violence from the eastern separatist heartland to an area far from the Russian frontier, raising the prospect of unrest spreading more broadly across a country of around 45 million people the size of France.

On Saturday morning, people placed flowers near the burnt-out doors of the trade union building, lighting candles and putting up the yellow, white and red flag of the city. The burnt remains of a tented camp of pro-Russian demonstrators nearby had been swept away. People spoke of their horror at what happened.

At the nearby hospital, residents queued up to offer blood and others went to find out what medicine was needed so they could go to buy it.

Oleg Konstantinov, a journalist covering the events for a local internet site, said bullets had flown in the melee before the blaze: “I was hit in the arm, then I started crawling, and then got hit in the back and leg.”

The Kremlin, which has massed tens of thousands of soldiers on the eastern Ukrainian frontier and proclaims the right to invade to protect Russian speakers, said the provisional government in Kiev and its Western backers were responsible.

The Odessa bloodshed came on the same day as the biggest push yet by the government in Kiev to reassert its control over separatist areas in the east, hundreds of kilometers away, where heavily armed pro-Russian rebels have proclaimed a “People’s Republic of Donetsk”.

The rebels there aim to hold a referendum on 11 May on secession from Ukraine, similar to one staged in March in Ukraine’s Crimea region, which was seized and annexed by Russia in a move that overturned the post-Cold War diplomatic order.

Rebels in the eastern town of Slaviansk, their most heavily fortified region, shot down two Ukrainian helicopters on Friday, killing two crew, and stalled an advance by Ukrainian troops in armoured vehicles. On Saturday the government said it was pressing on with the offensive in the area for a second day—Reuters

People wait to be rescued on upper storeys at the trade union building in Odessa on 2 May, 2014.—Reuters

A pro-Russian rebel aims his rifle at a checkpoint near a Ukrainian airbase in Kramatorsk, eastern Ukraine on 2 May, 2014.—Reuters

British official condemns bomb attack in Nigeria

LONDON, 3 May — Mark Simmonds, British Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Foreign & Commonwealth Office, on Friday condemned the latest bomb attack in Abuja, capital of Nigeria.

Death toll of a blast at Nyanya on the outskirts of Abuja on Thursday night rose to 19 on Friday, and some 60 people were also injured in the explosion, Nigerian police authorities said.

“I condemn utterly this disgusting and cowardly attack and offer my condolences to those affected,” Simmonds said, adding that he was “horrified” to learn of the bomb attack on the eastern outskirts of Abuja.

“We will continue to support the Government of Nigeria as it seeks to prevent further attacks and bring those responsible to justice,” he noted.

A previous suicide bomb blast near the scene of the Nyanya attack claimed at least 71 lives and injured 124 others in mid-April.

It was unclear if the explosion was perpetrated by Boko Haram, a sect which has been a major security threat in Nigeria since 2009. The group claimed responsibility for April’s blast in Nyanya.

Obama, Merkel still struggle over spying but agree on trade

Washington, 3 May — President Barack Obama and German Chancellor Angela Merkel could not hide differences on Friday over US surveillance practices despite Obama’s offer of “cyber dialogue” with Berlin and a pledge to bridge gaps that have tarnished their relationship.

The two leaders have been at odds over the US National Security Agency’s spying habits since revelations from former NSA contractor Edward Snowden last year showed the United States had listened in on many of its allies, including Merkel.

Obama has since banned the practice of eavesdropping on allied political leaders, but the measure has not placated Germany.

We have a few difficulties yet to overcome,” Merkel said in a joint news conference with Obama at the White House, referring to the conflict and pointedly declining to say, when asked, that trust between the two nations had been restored.

Snowden’s revelations caused indignation in Germany, which is especially sensitive about surveillance after abuse by the Gestapo under the Nazis and by the Stasi in East Germany.

Obama has pushed in vain for a “no-spy” agreement with Washington.

Obama said the United States did not have such agreements with any country, friend or foe. He said the United States was working with Germany to work through rules that govern the relationship and to avert misunderstanding.

Venezuela says 58 foreigners among unrest detainees

CARACAS, 3 May — Venezuela said on Friday that 58 foreigners had been arrested on suspicion of inciting anti-government protests and violence that have rocked the South American nation for the last three months.

Interior Minister Miguel Rodriguez Torres told a news conference that Colombians, an American, a Spaniard and an Arab were among the scores of “mercenaries” rounded up before and during demonstrations against the socialist government.

At least 41 people have died, and nearly 800 injured, in violence around the protests that brought the South American OPEC nation’s worst unrest in a decade. “Up to now, there are 58 detainees of other nationalities, almost all implicated in the use of arms,” he said, showing reporters numerous flow-charts and photos of alleged meetings, phone calls and plotting.

The US citizen, detained in Tachira state, had been previously identified as Todd Michael Leininger, and is accused of arms trafficking and attempted murder.

Anti-government protesters hold up chains during a May Day demonstration in Caracas on 1 May, 2014.—Reuters

President Nicolas Maduro, who seems to have faced down the worst of the protests, alleges his opponents were planning a coup against him, with the connivance of the United States, like the brief toppling of his predecessor Hugo Chavez in 2002. Rodriguez accused right-wing US politicians and former Colombian president Alvaro Uribe of being involved in a meticulous plan to spark the unrest and bring down Maduro with the involvement of the US government.—Reuters

US President Barack Obama (R) and German Chancellor Angela Merkel walk following their meeting to the herb and vegetable garden of the White House in Washington on 2 May, 2014.—Reuters

Washington, 3 May — President Barack Obama and German Chancellor Angela Merkel could not hide differences on Friday over US surveillance
Al Qaeda’s leader says Iraqi branch in Syria must return to fight at home

"It’s a very contested area," said one diplomat following the chemical elimination process, which is supervised by a joint mission of the United Nations and the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. Activists say rebels have clashed with Assad’s forces between Dumair air base, which they said came under heavy rocket fire from the rebels, and Sayqal air base about 40 km (25 miles) further east where the chemicals are believed to be held. While the rebel attack appears more focused on Dumair and on breaking the military stranglehold which Assad’s forces have imposed closer to the capital, the fighting has increasingly isolated Sayqal and encroached towards it. Activists said the fighters are from the Islamic Front — one of the largest and most powerful Islamist coalitions — the Rahman Corps and Ahmad Abdo Brigade. The offensive appeared to be funded by Gulf Arab supporters, they said. The diplomat said rebels have overrun the abandoned and emptied chemical base at Khan Abu Shamal, which lies between Dumair and Sayqal, and cut the road linking them. He described the proximity of the fighting to Sayqal as worrying and said it was not clear whether there were alternative routes to evacuate the chemicals other than the road which was blocked by the rebels.

Waste from US nuke weapons lab might be source of leak

Russia, Portugal agree to cooperate in combating pirates

Syrian rebel offensive encroaches on last chemical stockpile

"It’s a very contested area," said one diplomat following the chemical elimination process, which is supervised by a joint mission of the United Nations and the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. Activists say rebels have clashed with Assad’s forces between Dumair air base, which they said came under heavy rocket fire from the rebels, and Sayqal air base about 40 km (25 miles) further east where the chemicals are believed to be held. While the rebel attack appears more focused on Dumair and on breaking the military stranglehold which Assad’s forces have imposed closer to the capital, the fighting has increasingly isolated Sayqal and encroached towards it. Activists said the fighters are from the Islamic Front — one of the largest and most powerful Islamist coalitions — the Rahman Corps and Ahmad Abdo Brigade. The offensive appeared to be funded by Gulf Arab supporters, they said. The diplomat said rebels have overrun the abandoned and emptied chemical base at Khan Abu Shamal, which lies between Dumair and Sayqal, and cut the road linking them. He described the proximity of the fighting to Sayqal as worrying and said it was not clear whether there were alternative routes to evacuate the chemicals other than the road which was blocked by the rebels.

It was a political disaster" for Islamist militiamen there, the movement’s global leader Ayman al-Zawahri told the international media on 27 April — and the toxins — the last of the capital in August.

Suburbs around the Syrian capital have clashed with Assad’s forces between Dumair air base, which they said came under heavy rocket fire from the rebels, and Sayqal air base about 40 km (25 miles) further east where the chemicals are believed to be held. While the rebel attack appears more focused on Dumair and on breaking the military stranglehold which Assad’s forces have imposed closer to the capital, the fighting has increasingly isolated Sayqal and encroached towards it. Activists said the fighters are from the Islamic Front — one of the largest and most powerful Islamist coalitions — the Rahman Corps and Ahmad Abdo Brigade. The offensive appeared to be funded by Gulf Arab supporters, they said. The diplomat said rebels have overrun the abandoned and emptied chemical base at Khan Abu Shamal, which lies between Dumair and Sayqal, and cut the road linking them. He described the proximity of the fighting to Sayqal as worrying and said it was not clear whether there were alternative routes to evacuate the chemicals other than the road which was blocked by the rebels.

The two leaders also agreed to seek an early conclusion of the ongoing negotiations for a free trade agreement between Japan and the European Union. Abe is the first Japanese prime minister ever to visit Portugal, one of the 28 countries comprising the EU. Aiming to strengthen its relations with Portuguese-speaking countries such as Brazil, Angola and Mozambique, Japan is planning to join as an observer the Community of Portuguese Language Countries. Coelho welcomed the move.

Abe is on a six-nation tour of Europe. He arrived in Portugal after visiting Germany and Britain and will also stop in Spain, France and Belgium.

The US Department of Energy indicated on Friday that waste from a nuclear weapons laboratory stored in an underground dump in New Mexico might be the source of a major radiation leak that had exposed 21 people and closed the repository for months. The Energy Department said in a statement on Friday that crews in their recent trip to the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant in southeastern New Mexico uncovered the disintegration of several heavy bags containing magnesium oxide. The bags sit atop several sealed drums containing nuclear waste from Los Alamos National Laboratory, a leading nuclear weapons manufacturer of the country. "The team is looking into the possibility that a chemical reaction may have occurred within a drum, causing a potential release," the department said in the statement.

Investigators were also looking at whether the cause could be related to the waste packages themselves. The department said earlier it was not clear what damaged the bags. And the crews had not found any structural damage in the waste storage area of the repository.

Officials said a possible cause of the problem might be the presence of untreated nitrate salts in some of the containers, which could result in an "energetic chemical reaction" if they came in contact with certain other material in the containers.

A US-led coalition had been trying to avert Western intervention by means of a deal reached last year which had won the admiration of many rebels fighting against the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and another Al Qaeda-aligned group, the Nusra Front. Zawahri, who has run al Qaeda since Osama bin Laden was killed in May 2011, accused ISIL’s leader, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, of “sedition” and said rebel disunity had been handed “on a plate of gold” to Assad, the ultimate target of all Sunni Islamist groups in Syria. Zawahri said Baghdadi should instead redouble his efforts against the Iraqi government, led by Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki, who is a Shi’ite — an Islamic sect regarded by al Qaeda as heretical. Shi’ism is the dominant sect in Iraq. A diplomatic source said Japan and Europe had worked to “busy itself with Islamic sect regarded by al Qaeda as heretical. Shi’ism is the dominant sect in Iraq. A diplomatic source said Japan and Europe had worked to “busy itself with

Visiting Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe (L) and Portuguese Prime Minister Pedro Passos Coelho shake hands in Lisbon on 2 May, 2014, prior to their talks. Abe, who is on a two-day official visit to Portugal as part of six-nation European tour, is the first Japanese prime minister to visit the country. — Kyodo News

Syrian rebel offensive encroaches on last chemical stockpile

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Bombs, protests hit Egypt in run-up to presidential election

CAIRO, 3 May — Two suicide bombings in Egypt’s South Sinai killed a soldier and wounded at least eight people and two other bombs killed two people in Cairo on Friday, less than four weeks before a presidential election is due to be held, officials sources said. In other violence in the port city of Alexandria, two people were shot dead when supporters of deposed President Mohamed Morsi clashed with residents, the Interior Ministry said in a statement.

Friday’s suicide attack in El-Tur, a town on the main road between Cairo and the tourist resort of Sharm El-Sheikh, killed a soldier as well as the bomber. Three policemen and another soldier were wounded, an Interior Ministry statement said.

Four Egyptians were wounded in the second attack, further south on the road between El-Tur and Sharm El-Sheikh, the Interior Ministry and security sources said.

The army has been waging a campaign against armed Islamist groups in North Sinai. The influence of such groups expanded in the area after the 2011 uprising that toppled Hosni Mubarak from the presidency.

While most of the recent attacks have targeted the security forces, three South Koreans were killed in February when a bomb hit a tourist bus in South Sinai near a border crossing with Israel.

Tourists are an important source of foreign currency for Egypt’s economy but tourist numbers have dwindled over more than three years of political turmoil.

In the Alexandria clashes, two people were shot, the Interior Ministry said. Forty-two Morsi supporters were arrested in protests across Egypt, it added.

Three members of the security forces were wounded in clashes with Brotherhood supporters in Helwan, south of Cairo, it said.

The Brotherhood, on its website, blamed one of the deaths in Alexandria on security forces. Thousands of Brotherhood supporters have been arrested and hundreds killed since July. The organization says it is committed to peaceful activism.—Reuters

Nineteen hurt in New York subway derailment

NEW YORK, 3 May — A New York City subway train carrying 1,000 riders derailed on Friday morning while traveling through a tunnel in the borough of Queens, injuring 19 people, city fire officials said. Fifteen people escaped with minor injuries while four more were transported to a hospital with potentially serious injuries, officials said.

The cause of the derailment was not immediately known but MTA Chairman Thomas Prendergast said the mass-transit agency will begin a full inspection of signals and tracks.

“Yesterday morning I was talking to my staff about the importance of our inspections,” Prendergast said on NY1 television broadcast video of fire officials evacuating throngs of people in darkness, said the station in downtown Cairo, security sources said.

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More than 2,100 confirmed dead in Afghan landslide

KABUL, 3 May — Afghan officials gave up hope on Saturday of finding any survivors from a landslide in the remote northeast, putting the death toll at more than 2,100, as the aid effort focused on the more than 4,000 people displaced. Officials expressed concern the unstable hillside above the site of the disaster may cave in again, threatening the thousands of homeless and hundreds of rescue workers who have arrived in Badakhshan province, bordering Tajikistan.

“More than 2,100 people from 300 families are all dead,” Naweed Forotan, a spokesman for the Badakhshan provincial governor, told Reuters.

Villagers and a few dozen police, equipped with only basic digging tools, resumed their search when daylight broke but it soon became clear there was no hope of finding survivors buried in up to 100 meters of mud.

The United Nations mission in Afghanistan said the focus was on the more than 4,000 people displaced, either directly as a result of Friday’s landslide or as a precautionary measure from villages assessed to be at risk.

Their main needs were water, medical support, counseling support, food and emergency shelter, said Ari Gaitanis, a spokesman from the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan.

The impoverished area, dotted with villages of mud-brick homes nestled in valleys beside bare slopes, has been hit by several landslides in recent years. The side of the mountain above Ab Barak collapsed at around 11 a.m. (0630 GMT) on Friday as people were trying to recover belongings and livestock after a smaller landslide hit a few hours earlier.

Hundreds of homes were destroyed by the landslides that were triggered by torrential rain. Officials worry another section of the mountainside could collapse.—Reuters

Colombia court backs Santos in sea boundary dispute with Nicaragua

BOGOTA, 3 May — Colombia’s constitutional court ruled on Friday that applying a decision by the International Court of Justice (ICJ) that granted Nicaragua a disputed area of Caribbean waters could not take effect without a treaty between the countries.

The court’s verdict upholds the position taken by Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos, who said the Hague-based ICJ’s decision was not applicable according to Colombia’s constitution without such a treaty, ratified by the Andean nation’s congress.

The ICJ in November 2012 reduced the area of ocean that belonged to Colombia around its cluster of Caribbean islands, determining that a section of their maritime shelf belonged to Nicaragua.

Colombia has been angered by Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega’s plans to allow foreign companies to explore for oil in Caribbean seas that Colombia maintains are its own.

Santos, the front runner in a presidential election set for 25 May in which he will seek a second term, has never said that he flatly rejected the ICJ’s ruling and stated in the past that Colombia would not go to war to resolve the dispute.—Reuters
Press freedom should not just be lip service

By Soe Tint

Free media, traditional and new, are indispensable for development, democracy and good governance, United Nations officials said on 1 May, two days ahead of Press Freedom Day – observed annually on 3 May.

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon told a briefing that freedom of expression, independent media and universal access to knowledge will fortify our efforts to achieve lasting results for people and the planet.

Myanmar has now been in a position to enjoy some degree of press freedom since censorship was revoked when a democratic government came to power three years ago.

With the government having allowed private newspaper publications, we are now able to read unbiased news stories about human rights abuses for example.

A lot of private newspapers have emerged and reporters can do free reporting. Meanwhile, state-run newspapers are going through a reform process. The state-owned English version newspaper is now on a joint-venture basis, while two Myanmar newspapers are transforming into public service media.

Mr. Ban, however, said in his briefing that every day of the year, the fundamental freedom to receive and impart ideas through any media is under assault. He pointed out that journalists are being singled out for speaking or writing uncomfortable truths – kidnapped, detained, beaten and sometimes murdered.

In this regard, we can say that complete press freedom cannot be enjoyed if such assault against journalists continues to exist.

Therefore, all global countries, including Myanmar, should spare no effort to promote press freedom in accord with democratic norms and standards.

Illustration of Strategy

Prince Siddhattha had a very definite objective which was an unconditional life. He perfectly knew that an unconditional life was a life entirely free from bondage – bondage to passions and defilements. In other words, he intended to be totally liberated from all forms of bondage. He knew that he would thus be delivered from all kinds of suffering and sorrow only after he had abandoned once and for all every particle of sensual desire, pride and wrong view. At last, he was able to develop the Strategy of Morality, Concentration and Wisdom.

So, Prince Siddhattha’s Objective was Liberation and his Strategy was Sila, Samadhi and Pañña which is the same as Morality, Concentration and Wisdom.

Some other Examples:

Objective

- Destination
- Lunch
- Productivity
- Profit
- Knowledge
- Peace of Mind
- Health
- Problem
- Riddle
- Disease/Ailment
- An Issue to be Settled

Strategy

- Journey
- Choice of a Particular Restaurant (Choice of Dishes is Tactic)
- Output Divided by Input.
- Income minus Expenditure
- Learning
- To Be Carefree & Sorrowless
- Diet and Exercise and Serenity of mind
- The Right Way to Solve the Problem
- The Correct Answer to it
- The Right Remedy/ Medicine
- Negotiation or Fighting it out
- A Mountain Top
- Climbing, Negotiating & Reaching the Summit
- Trust / Love
- Being Trustworthy / Loveworthy
- Sowing & Cultivating
- Peace
- War or Peaceful Coexistence
- To Win the Battle
- Prevailing Over the Enemy (Enemy Advance, We Retreat Enemy Camp, We Harass Enemy Tires, We Attack Enemy Retreat, We Pursue = Tactic).
- Beautiful Garden
- Creative Gardening (Design & Choice of flowers = Tactic)
- Elegant Dress
- Innovative Tailoring (Designing Patterns & choice of colors = Tactic)

(To be continued)

U Kyi Mun residing in Yangon is a consultant of NAING GROUP Capital CO., LTD.
Yangon’s evolving skate scene needs support and a safe place to skate: Myanmar Skate Association

By Kerstin Winter

“My life is so different now. Skateboarding has changed my life for the better,” said 27-year-old Ko Thit as he clutches his board in the dim light under Hledan bridge in Kamayut township, where every Friday evening a growing number of inline and skateboarding fans meets.

Some of them made the trip to Yangon’s Pyay Road all the way from Bago to meet old friends and make new ones.

New faces — Myanmar and foreign — are always welcome, organizers from the Myanmar Skate Association said.

The MSA was officially founded one year ago, and now with 600 members across the country, it has transformed the lives of many, said David Bayne from Australia.

The 23-year-old is one of the founders of the group and has been dedicated in promoting skating and the benefits it brings.

“Skating builds confidence, and it is a great sport for everyone. People can come here and make many new friends. We are like a family and welcome people of all age groups, skateboarders, inline skaters, BMXers. There is no rivalry here,” he said.

As more and more people are joining, David and the other organizers said they are hoping that the authorities or private donors will help them to find a safe place to skate, as the makeshift skatepark under the bridge is located between several heavy traffic lanes. “And I am worried that the authorities might block us here. There was a skatepark near City Center, but they never let us repair it, so now it is impossible for us to skate there anymore,” David said.

“They have skateparks in Myitkyina in Kachin State and even in Rakhine State, but not in Yangon, because land is so expensive here,” he added.

Around 50 boys and girls whizz around between the concrete pillars, jumping over self-built rails and ramps, and attempting new tricks the more advanced riders have taught them. Skating is known to give a great rush and is highly addictive, with the first wave of skating culture here possibly inspired by neighbouring countries such as China, David says. According to the MSA members, skate communities are not a new thing here, but that things only took off around 2011 when more people got access to the internet. Many kids learnt more about the sport by watching Western video clips and connecting with like-minded people on Facebook. Equipment is still hard to find in Myanmar, especially skateboards, which cost around K 40,000 and are often of poor quality, David said. But the community is growing and many skaters are happy and willing to share their equipment with newcomers.

To educate more people about skating, and ultimately enrich their lives with something fun and healthy to do in their free time, Soe Htet Oo, one of the MSA founders, said they travel to different destinations in a van once a month to promote the sport and share their experience. “Many people have never heard of skating before or they think it is just for children, so when they see us skate they are surprised and amazed,” he said.

“We go to skateparks around the country and talk about equipment, tricks, speed, and safety. And in future we would also like to organize more competitions,” David said.

The MSA has so far held two competitions in Yangon; one at a school for deaf-and-mute children and one at a public school, with a phenomenal response, David said. “Some got injured in practice, but they would still come back and watch and support us. They were so excited.”

The MSA members donated the prizes, but stressed that paying everything out of their own pockets in order to support the community is difficult as many members are still students.

But as more and more foreigners enter the country, the Myanmar skating community is hoping that it will soon benefit from the influx — not just financially, but also on a cultural level.

“It would be great if more foreigners came to teach new tricks or simply hang out here. The people here could learn more about other countries and cultures, and make international friends,” David said.

For more info go to www.facebook.com/myanmarskateassociation or contact dpayne@hopemyanmar.org

A young adrenaline junkie showing off his skills.

With skills that would impress a Western pro, this young talent now only needs an international standard skate park to practice.

Inline skating is popular among the girls.

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New EU force in Central African Republic sets stability as top priority

BANGUI, 3 May — The top priority of a new European Union peacekeeping force in Central African Republic is to restore stability in the capital, the force commander, French Major-General Philippe Ponties, told a news conference on Friday.

“Thousands of people have been killed in inter-communal violence in the former French colony in recent months and close to a million have been displaced from their homes.

“The objective that we are looking for, and which I think we share with most of the international community, is to make it so each citizen of Central African Republic, whatever their communal background, can see a positive future,” Ponties said.

“There will be 850 soldiers (by June) who will be deployed to contribute to the security of the airport in Bangui and the establishment of a stable and secure environment in the third and fifth districts of the capital,” he said.

Mostly Muslim Seleka rebels seized power in the land-locked country last year, saying they had been excluded by southern tribes from its oil, gold and diamond wealth. But their 10 months in power, marked by murder, looting and extortion, sparked a sectarian backlash in which Christian militias are driving Muslims from the south.

The news conference was held in the VIP lounge of Bangui’s main airport. EU peacekeepers took charge of security at the airport on Wednesday in their first major operation to try to end the bloodshed.

Their presence has not stopped violence in the city, including the killing of a Muslim man on Wednesday whose body was decapitated and mutilated.

Thousands of civilians have taken refuge beside the airport and almost all the capital’s Muslims have fled the city.

The EU launched its force at the start of April after weeks of delays caused by shortages of soldiers and equipment.

Only about 150 EU troops have arrived so far but the strength of the force is expected to continue building until it reaches its target of 800 to 1,000 soldiers in June, the EU said.

Countries including France, Georgia, Estonia, Latvia, Poland, Portugal and Spain have pledged soldiers or logistics. The United Nations has approved a 12,000-strong peacekeeping mission that will take over from an African force in the country from mid-September.

Persistent violence has raised costs for a parallel political transition period to 713 billion CFA francs (889 million pounds) from an initial estimate of 490 billion CFA francs, Prime Minister Andre Nzapayeke said on Friday.

Interim President Catherine Samba-Panza in January named Nzapayeké, a former official of the African Development Bank, as prime minister, in a move towards restoring order.

South Sudan leader ready for talks but rival doesn’t commit

JUBA, 3 May — South Sudan’s President Salva Kiir Mayardit (R) shakes hands with US Secretary of State John Kerry at the President’s Office in Juba on 2 May, 2014.—REUTERS

Kiir spoke hours after US Secretary of State John Kerry met him in South Sudan’s capital Juba to urge him to help end the civil war.

Kiir invited Kerry to mediate talks with his rival Riek Machar who has accused him of systematically killing civilians and ethnic cleansing.

Kiir described Machar’s actions as murder, pillage, and extermination.

Machar was ready for face-to-face talks with Machar, to try and advance since the 23 January signing of a ceasefire agreement that ended months of fighting in South Sudan’s future.

AFP

Nigeria says gathering of rich and powerful will not be cowed by bombings

ABUJA, 3 May — Nigeria on Friday urged delegates due for the World Economic Forum (WEF) in Abuja next week “not to let terror win” by staying away after a second bombing in the capital in less than three weeks.

A suspected car bomb killed 19 people and wounded 34 on Thurs- day night in the suburb of Nyanya, about 8 km (five miles) from Abuja city centre and next to the bus station where a rush hour bomb attack killed 75 peo- ple on 14 April.

The bombs, along with the abduction of 200 girls from a secondary school in the northeastern village of Chibok near the Cameroon border, threaten to over- shadow the WEF conference’s emphasis on Africa’s positive growth story.

The girls, who were taking exams, were taken away on trucks on the same day as the bus station bombing. Both attacks showed the powerlessness of Nigerian security forces to protect civilians against the militant Islamist group Boko Haram.

President Goodluck Jonathan’s government will mount a huge security operation to protect the WEF scheduled for next Wednesday and Thursday.

A regional replica of the Davos, Switzerland, event, it will bring together interna- tional leaders, policy-makers, entrepreneurs and philanthropists.—Reuters

Ordinance experts turn over a damaged car at the scene of a bomb attack in Nyanya, Abuja, on 2 May, 2014.—REUTERS
**Jupiter’s moon Ganymede may have ‘club sandwich’ layers of ocean**

WASHINGTON, 3 May — As club sandwiches go, this one undoubtedly is the biggest one in the solar system. Scientists said on Friday that Jupiter’s moon Ganymede may possess ice and liquid oceans stacked up in several layers much like the popular multilayered sandwich. They added that this arrangement may raise the chances that this distant icy world harbors life.

NASA’s Galileo spacecraft flew by Ganymede in the 1990s and confirmed the presence of an interior ocean, also finding evidence for salty water perhaps from the salt known as magnesium sulfate. Ganymede, which with its diameter of about 3,300 miles (5,300 km), is the largest moon in the solar system and is bigger than the planet Mercury. A team of scientists performed computer modeling of Ganymede’s ocean, taking into account for the first time how salt increases the density of liquids under the type of extreme conditions present inside Ganymede. Their work followed experiments in the laboratory that simulated such salty seas.

While earlier research suggested a routine “sandwich” arrangement in which there is ice at the surface, then a layer of liquid water and another layer of ice on the bottom, this new study indicated there might be more layers than that.

Steve Vance, an astrophotologist at NASA’s Jet Propulsion Laboratory in California, said the arrangement might be like this: at the top, a layer of ice on the moon’s surface, with a layer of water below that, then a second layer of ice, another layer of water underneath that, then a third layer of ice, with a final layer of water at the bottom above the rocky seafloor.

“That would make it the largest club sandwich in the solar system,” Vance said in a telephone interview. “I suppose I’m also a fan of club sandwiches. My fiancée points out that I order them every time we go out to eat.”

Ganymede boasts a lot of water, perhaps 25 times the volume of Earth’s oceans. Its oceans are estimated to be about 500 miles (800 km) deep. With enough salt, liquid water on Ganymede could become so dense that it sinks to the very bottom, the researchers said. That means water may be sloshing on top of rock, a situation that may foster conditions suitable for the development of microbial life. Some scientists suspect that life first formed on Earth in bubbling thermal vents on the ocean floor.

“We are understanding how life came about on Earth involves the interaction between water and rock. This research provides a stronger possibility for those kinds of interactions to take place on Ganymede,” added Vance, whose study was published in the journal *Planetary and Space Science*.

Ganymede is one of five moons in the solar system thought to have oceans hidden below icy surfaces. Two other moons, Europa and Callisto, orbit the big gas planet Jupiter. The moons Titan and Enceladus circle the ringed gas planet Saturn.

“We’re providing a more realistic view into ocean structure in Ganymede’s interior. We’re showing that the salinity has a tangible effect on the ocean,” Vance said.

**Scientists confirm existence of superheavy element 117**

WASHINGTON, 3 May — The existence of a new superheavy element known as element 117, which was first created artificially in 2010, have been confirmed, an international team of researchers said on Friday.

The research, published in the US journal *Physical Review Letters*, made it one step closer to earn an official spot on the periodic table.

The discovery of element 117 was first announced in 2010 by a Russia-US collaboration working at the Joint Institute for Nuclear Research in Dubna, Russia. The original experiment was repeated successfully in 2012.

The present experiment was performed by an international team led by scientists at the GSI Helmholtz Centre for Heavy Ion Research, an accelerator laboratory located in Darmstadt, Germany. In this experiment, scientists bombard a berkelium target with calcium ions until they collided and formed element 117, which then decayed into elements 115 and 113.

Elements beyond atomic number 104 are referred to as superheavy elements. The most long-lived ones are expected to be situated on a so-called “island of stability,” where nuclei with extremely long half-lives should be found.

Although superheavy elements have not been found in nature, they can be produced by accelerating beams of nuclei and shooting them at the heaviest possible target nuclei.

Fusion of two nuclei, a very rare event, occasionally produces superheavy element. Those currently accessible generally only exist for a short time.

“The successful experiments on element 117 are an important step on the path to the production and detection of elements situated on the ‘island of stability’ of superheavy elements,” Horst Stocker, scientific director of GSI, said in a statement.

**US jury orders smartphone maker Samsung to pay Apple $120 million**

SAN JOSE, California, 3 May — A US jury on Friday ordered Samsung Electronics Co Ltd to pay $119.6 million to Apple Inc, far less than Apple had sought and marking a big loss for the iPhone maker in the latest round of their globe-spanning mobile patent litigation.

During the month-long trial in a San Jose, California, federal court, Apple accused Samsung of violating patents on smartphone features including universal search, while Samsung denied wrongdoing. On Friday, the jury found the South Korean smartphone maker had infringed two Apple patents.

Apple and Samsung have been litigating around the world for three years. Jurors awarded the iPhone maker about $930 million after a 2012 trial in San Jose, but Apple failed to persuade US District Judge Lucy Koh to issue a permanent injunction against the sale of Samsung phones in the United States.

Some industry observers see the ongoing legal dispute as an attempt by Apple to curtail the rapid growth of phones based on Google Inc’s rival Android software. Samsung was far by far the largest adopter of the operating platform.

“Though this verdict is large by normal standards, it is hard to view this outcome as much of a victory for Apple. This amount is less than 10 percent of the amount Apple requested, and probably doesn’t surpass by too much the amount Apple spent litigating this case,” said Brian Love, assistant professor at the Santa Clara University School of Law.

“Apple launched this litigation campaign years ago with aspirations of slowing the meteoric rise of Android smartphone manufacturers. It has so far failed to do so, and this case won’t get it any closer.”

The current case involves five Apple patents that were not in the 2012 trial and that cover iPhone features such as slide-to-unlock and search technology. Apple is seeking to ban sales of several Samsung phones, including the Galaxy S III, and sought just over $2 billion in damages.

It will now be up to Judge Koh to decide whether a sales ban is warranted, though legal experts deem that unlikely.


Responding to the verdict, Apple said the ruling reinforced its stance that “Samsung willfully stole our ideas and copied our products.” Samsung representatives were not immediately available for comment.

The shortfall in damages for Apple led some experts to again question whether patent litigation amongst the technology industry’s largest players, which has been on the rise in past years, was a viable strategy.

Apple’s iPhone (L) and Samsung Galaxy Note are displayed at a shop in Tokyo on 31 Aug, 2012.—*Reuters*

**Comcast nears deal to stream EA games to TVs**

LOS ANGELES, 3 May — Comcast Corp may soon allow customers using its cloud-connected X1 cable box system to buy games from Electronic Arts Inc through their televisions, according to five sources briefed on the plans. Such a partnership would come as the cable company seeks to protect its turf against a new wave of challengers.

After two years of testing, Comcast and EA, are close to reaching an agreement to stream video games such as “FIFA” and “Madden,” into the living rooms of some of Comcast’s more than 22 million customers across the United States, said the sources, who declined to speak publicly before a deal had been struck.

Comcast would make the games available on X1, a video operating system with apps and an interface that is considered the most sophisticated in the cable industry, the sources said. It features Internet applications, viewing recommendations and voice control.

If the agreement goes through, it would mark the boldest step yet by a cable company to muscle into the territory of leading video-game console manufacturers such as Sony Corp and Microsoft Corp. Comcast has been beefing its X1 system with new features to stop potential customer defections to rival video streaming systems such as Apple TV and Amazon.com Inc’s Fire TV, which was launched just last month with a slew of games.—*Reuters*
Thai opposition leader wants election delayed to allow reforms

BANGKOK, 3 May — Thai opposition leader Abhisit Vejjajiva on Saturday urged that a general election planned for July be delayed by up to six months to allow time for reforms aimed at ending a protracted political crisis that threatens to explode.

Protesters have been trying to oust Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra since November, part of a long-running crisis that broadly pits Bangkok’s middle class and royalist establishment against the mainly poor, rural supporters of Yingluck and her brother, ex-premier Thaksin Shinawatra.

Thaksin was ousted by the military in 2006 and now lives in exile to avoid a jail term handed down in 2008 for abuse of power. His opponents accuse him of corruption and nepotism.

ASEAN-plus-3 to boost cooperation to strengthen Asian bond markets

ASTANA, 3 May — The Association of Southeast Asian Nations plus Japan, China and South Korea are set to hold a financial chiefs meeting in the Kazakh capital on Saturday aiming to boost cooperation in strengthening Asian bond markets to help prevent recurrence of an Asian currency crisis.

The financial ministers and central bank governors are also expected to address concerns about an economic slowdown in emerging economies in the wake of the US Federal Reserve’s tapering of its large-scale asset purchases.

At the meeting held on the sidelines of the Asian Development Bank’s annual conference, the financial chiefs are likely to confirm the need to help businesses procure funds and increase transactions in local currencies by expanding a credit guarantee capacity for corporate bonds through a fund known as the Credit Guarantee and Investment Facility.

In a statement to be released after the meeting, they are expected to endorse a decision made last November to more than double the credit guarantee limit to $1.75 billion.

As massive outflows of US dollar-based capital triggered the 1997 to 1998 Asian currency crisis, the development of resilient local currency bond markets has been a long-term challenge in the region.

Also on the agenda is a plan to link each nation’s fund and securities settlement systems to help enhance the safety and confidence of transactions and spur investment.

The ASEAN-plus-three consists of the 10 ASEAN members — Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam — plus Japan, China and South Korea.

Malaysia says Vietnam being investigated over missing MH370 jet

KUALA LUMPUR, 3 May — Malaysia said on Friday an independent panel is probing whether Vietnamese authorities breached international aviation rules by failing to detect soon after Malaysia Airlines flight MH370 had not contacted them as required by international aviation protocol.

A preliminary report the Malaysian government filed last month with the UN watchdog on civil aviation has raised a host of questions surrounding the early stages of the flight of the Malaysian airliner that disappeared on 8 March.

The report was filed with the International Civil Aviation Organization on 9 April and released to the public on Thursday.

Flight MH370 was bound for Beijing from Kuala Lumpur when it vanished while above the South China Sea. It was scheduled to fly through Vietnamese airspace.

Radar contact with the plane was lost at 1:21 am on 8 March but, according to the interim report, it was only 17 minutes later that the Ho Chi Minh air traffic control contacted Kuala Lumpur air traffic control indicating the whereabouts of the Boeing 777.

It was then, the report said, that the Malaysians realized the plane was missing.

Researchers and investors from countries including the United States, China and Canada take part in an academic conference to discuss special economic zones, organized by a North Korean group, in Pyongyang on 2 May, 2014. — KYODO NEWS

Malaysia Department of Civil Aviation chief Azharuddin Abdul Rahman told reporters that as far as Malaysia was concerned, Kuala Lumpur ground control instructed the MH370 pilot at 1:19 am to change the radio frequency to that of Ho Chi Minh air traffic control and the pilot acknowledged.

“After passing the Igari waypoint, the transfer of control to Ho Chi Minh ATC became official,” Azharuddin said, using the acronym to refer to Ho Chi Minh air traffic control. The Igari waypoint refers to the airspace bordering Malaysia and Vietnam.

Speaking at the press conference, Malaysia Defence Minister Hishammuddin Hussein addressed questions about why the Malaysian government took four hours before activating a search operation.

According to the interim report, the Kuala Lumpur Rescue Coordination Center was activated at 5:30 am, four hours after radar contact was lost, and “after all effort to communicate and locate the aircraft failed.”

Hishammuddin decried criticism by pointing to the Air France 447 case, in which six to seven hours reportedly passed before a search operation was launched.
CONGRATULATIONS

We would like to congratulate the Patron of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI) and the Chairman of the Kanbawza Bank Ltd., U Aung Ko Win, who has been awarded the “Special Honorary President’s Excellence Award” (the Highest Tax Payer Entrepreneur Award) once again for the Tax Assessment Year of 2012-2013, at the President’s Excellence Award Presentation Ceremony, at Nay Pyi Taw on 3.5.2014. We hope that you continue to be the highest tax payer in the upcoming years and continue to contribute toward the betterment of society and development of the country.

Chairman and Central Working Committee/ Working Committee
The Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI)
**CLAIMS DAY NOTICE**

**MV PANJA BHUM VOY NO (015)**

Consignees of cargo carried on **MV PANJA BHUM VOY NO (015)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 4.5.2014 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.W.P.T where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

**SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT**

**MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY**

**AGENT FOR: MS WAN HAI LINES PTE LTD**

Phone No: 256908/378316/376797

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**CLAIMS DAY NOTICE**

**MV FRISIA LAHN VOY NO (1432)**

Consignees of cargo carried on **MV FRISIA LAHN VOY NO (1432)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 4.5.2014 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: MS MCC TRANSPORT**

Phone No: 256908/378316/376797

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**Day after filing for divorce, Hrithik-Sussanne celebrate son’s birthday together**

**MUMBAI, 3 May —** A day after he filed for divorce from wife Sussanne Khan, Hrithik Roshan planned a special birthday for his son, Hridhaan, where he took the entire family to Lonavala on a short trip.

Says a source, “May 1 was his younger son Hridhaan’s birthday and the entire house was buzzing with activity. The day kicked off with Hridhaan being greeted with big boards that announced his birthday.”

Hrithik then took his kids to watch the latest Spider-Man film; Sussanne too was present at this screening. After the film, Hrithik took the entire family to an adventure park in Lonavala where he had organized a small party.

The source adds that the actor had booked a mini bus so the entire family could travel together. “Hrithik, Sussanne and their kids were accompanied by Zayed Khan, Farah Ali Khan and their children. Everyone had a great time,” says the source.

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**Kevin Spacey brings stage act to big screen in documentary**

**LOS ANGELES, 3 May —** Kevin Spacey, the two-time Oscar-winning actor and star of one of the most talked-about online streaming shows “House of Cards,” leans forward and says that even in his lofty status among Hollywood actors, he still has a personal point to prove.

With a new documentary “Now: In The Wings on a World Stage,” Spacey lets his personal passion for theater roar in a film that introduces audiences to his second career on the stage as he tours the world with his own company’s production of William Shakespeare’s historical play “Richard III.”

**Jennifer Lawrence Got Drunk at Madonna’s Oscars After-Party**

**NEW YORK, 3 May —** Actress Jennifer Lawrence was so drunk at Madonna’s Oscar party that she puked. The 23-year-old star, who was nominated for a Best Supporting Actress Academy Award for her role in American Hustle, was wasted at a post-show bash and pop star Miley Cyrus witnessed the whole thing, reported Huffington Post.

Jennifer recalled having a little too much fun at this year’s Oscars, which she attended with BFF Laura Simpson, on Late Night With Seth Meyers.

“I was so drunk. I puked on the stairs at Madonna’s after-party,” she said.

**‘American Idol’ runner-up Clay Aiken winning political respect in North Carolina**

**CARY, (N C), 3 May —** “American Idol” runner-up Clay Aiken readily signs autographs and poses for selfies with voters in his bid for a North Carolina congressional seat, but tries hard to keep his pitch at campaign stops focused on political issues.

“I have one very best not to sing,” said Aiken, 35. “Because I think there’s a challenge ... to get people to not see me as a singer but instead as someone who is capable and wants to fight for them.” The entertainer has gained respect as he seeks the Democratic nomination in his home state’s 2nd congressional district next Tuesday. In April, the Washington-based Cook Political Report admitted surprise after Aiken proved to be well-versed on political affairs, “washing away any notion he’s another superficial, stage-managed Hollywood star dabbling in politics as a new hobby.”

Even so, political experts say the first-time candidate is in an uphill, perhaps futile battle to win the primary and then unseat the incumbent in a district North Carolina’s Republican-led legislature re-drew to favor their party.

US Representative Renee Ellmers, 50, a former nurse, beat a moderate Democrat for the seat during the Republicans’ national electoral sweep in 2010 and two years later won her second term with 56 percent of the vote.

In mid-April, her campaign had nearly six times more cash on hand than Ai ken’s, finance reports show, and most analysts predict she will be re-elected in November, barring any serious gaffes or a better-than-expected turnout for Democrats. “(Aiken) can do everything right and still basically end up having no chance because of factors beyond his control,” said Steven Greene, a political science professor at North Carolina State University in Raleigh.—Reuters

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Actress Jennifer Lawrence is seen at the after-party.
US projected firefighting costs exceed budget by $470 million

Salmon, 3 May — The US government expects to spend $470 million more than it has on hand to fight wildfires in a season that has already brought large blazes to California and Western states, where drought is worsening fire risks, federal officials said on Friday.

Predicted high temperatures and less moisture for much of the US West are expected to boost firefighting costs to nearly $1.87 billion this year for agencies that only have $1.4 billion budgeted, according to the US Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management.

A provision in President Barack Obama’s 2015 budget proposal and legislation pending in Congress would use federal disaster funds for expenses tied to catastrophic wildfires, which represent 1 percent of blazes but which cost roughly $400 million a year to contain, according to fire managers.

Budget gaps come as federal agencies adjust to a “new normal” of wildfire seasons that start earlier and last longer, said Randy Eardley, spokesman for the National Interagency Fire Center in Bozeman, Montana.

For instance, a blaze in southern California broke out on Wednesday, driven by Santa Ana winds, which sweep hot air from California’s desert through mountain passes and river canyons.

“The big fires in California and the West are expected to remain high in May for drought-stricken states like California, Arizona, New Mexico and Alaska, and hazards will intensify in June for Nevada and Oregon,” according to forecasts by the National Interagency Fire Center.

Snowfall and rain have reduced the threat of wildfires in the Northern Rockies for the moment, but continued drought in southwest Idaho will worsen the fire outlook there July through August, federal forecasts show.

Reuters

Bayern’s Neuer extends contract by three years to 2019

Berlin, 3 May — Bayern Munich’s German goalkeeper Manuel Neuer signed a contract extension that will keep him at last season’s treble winners until 2019, the Bundesliga club said on Friday.

Announcing the deal after the end of an emergency general meeting to elect the successor to convicted former club president Uli Hoeness, Bayern CEO Karl-Heinz Rummenigge said the 28-year-old Neuer had added three years to his contract.

“Our goalkeeper Manuel Neuer has today extended his contract to 2019.” Rummenigge told reporters.

“It is a sign of his wonderful character that he said: ‘Bayern forever’,” Rummenigge said. “For that I would like to thank Manuel Neuer."

Neuer joined Bayern from Schalke 04 in 2011 and has already won the Champions League, two Bundesliga titles and a Club World Cup among other trophies. The keeper has been first choice for Germany since 2010.

Bayern Munich’s goalkeeper Manuel Neuer

Reuters
West Ham United head into the break at Upton Park over Tottenham Hotspur with a 2-0 lead thanks to a Harry Kane own-goal and a Stewart Downing free-kick

With pressure firmly mounting on both managers heading into the Saturday lunchtime kick-off, it was Tim Sherwood’s men who started the better of the two sides.

As an early chance for youngster Harry Kane saw him nearly catch Ham-mers keeper Adrian out but the Spaniard was lucky enough to see his deflected clearance go wide.

Moments later and as a nice move involving Kane, Christian Eriksen and Emmanuel Adebayor saw the latter with a clear shot on goal but the striker sent his effort directly to-wards Adrian.

The home side then had their turn to test visiting keeper Hugo Lloris and they did so from a corner which saw Guy Demel’s header hit the crossbar.

Moments later and the home side would break the deadlock but not after a moment of controversy after Younes Kaboul was sent off for a last-man chal-lenge on Stewart Downing.

Andy Carroll hit the resulting free-kick which was well saved by Lloris, but the resulting corner saw Carroll’s header deflect in off youngster Kane.

Sam Allardyce’s side then pushed for a second and they got it moments before half-time. The impres-sive Downing was yet to score for West Ham but his free-kick beat every-one, including the in-form Lloris to give the home side a 2-0 lead heading into the break.—Reuters

Rodgers confident Liverpool can rely on Everton for help

LONDON, 3 May — Liverpool manager Brendan Rodgers is confident local rivals Everton will not go easy against Premier League contenders Man-chester City, in a pivotal fixture that could affect the destination of the title.

If City win on Sat-urday, they will go back to the top of the table ahead on goal difference of Liver-pool, who do not play at Crystal Palace until Mon-day. Rodgers pointed out that fifth-placed Everton have plenty of incentive for the crucial clash, hav-ing not yet given up hope of securing fourth spot and Champions League qualifi-ca-tion.

“I’ve read some bits and pieces about Everton not wanting to do Liver-pool a favour, but make no mistake they are a great club who’ve done really well this year and they’re fighting for a Champions League position,” Rodgers said in a news conference at the club’s training ground.

“They’ve got outstanding players and are going into the game looking to get a result.”

Rodgers claimed Liverpool, seeking a first league title in 24 years, are in “a wonderful position”, adding: “We’ll do what we’ve always done and concen-trate on the next game.

“If we go on and win our two games to finish, which will be tough games, we’ll just see where it takes us.”

Rodgers hopes that England striker Daniel Sturridge will be fit to play on Monday, despite not having started a game since the home win over City three weeks ago.—Reuters

FIFA vetoes Fernando’s Portugal World Cup bid

RIO DE JANEIRO, 3 May — Football’s governing body FIFA has vetoed a request by Porto’s Brazil-born midfielder Fernando to play for Portugal.

The 26-year-old was granted Portuguese nationality last December having represented Porto since signing from Brazil’s Vila Nova in 2007.

But in a statement released on Friday, the Portuguese Football Federation revealed FIFA had dashed the player’s hope of representing his adopted country at this year’s World Cup.

“FIFA considered that the player did not hold Portuguese nationality when he played for Brazil in the under 20 World Cup qualifiers, as required by federation regulations,” the statement said.

Fernando had hoped to join a long list of Brazil-born players to switch their allegiance. Recent examples include Deco (Portugal), Marcos Senna (Spain), Pepe (Portugal) and Diego Costa (Spain). — Xinhua

Nine clubs face punishment over financial losses

LONDON, 3 May — Nine European football clubs face punishment under new rules designed to force teams to rein in their financial losses, UEFA said on Friday, without naming any of the offenders.

Media reports this week said big-spending Manchester City and Paris St Germain have been given the chance to settle breaches of the Financial Fair Play (FFP) rules that will leave them free to play in next season’s Champions League.

There had been specula-tion that details of those settlements would emerge as early as this week.

In a statement issued after a two-day meeting of its Club Financial Control Body (CFCB), UEFA said it had given a clean bill of

Rose storms into contention at Quail Hollow

CHARLOTTE, (North Carolina), 3 May — Justin Rose’s hopes of repeating as US Open champion next month got a timely boost as he moved within a stroke of the lead in the Wells Far- countryCode.com

Kaohsiung, 9 May 2014

Xinhua

REUTERS

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