**Myanmar National Commission for UNESCO to undergo reforms**

**By Ye Myint**

YANGON, 14 May—The Myanmar National Commission for UNESCO will be reformed due to the retirement of several members as well as cabinet reshuffles, which have made it necessary for the body to undergo a transformation, said Dr Lwin Lwin Soe, secretary-general of the commission, on Wednesday.

In her opening speech at a meeting seeking proposals to reform the commission at Yangon Foreign Languages University that also serves as the secretariat for the commission, the secretary-general who is also the rector of YUFL, highlighted the importance of recruiting new members to the commission for ensuring effective implementation of UNESCO’s works in Myanmar, meeting international activities.

The meeting continued with those present from the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Science and Technology and Ministry of Transport presenting their proposals to reconstitute the commission. Myanmar joined Unite

**Laws unbenefticial to Myanmar must be amended or abolished: Speaker of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw**

NAY PYI TAW, 14 May—Laws that are unbenefticial to the country and its people must be amended or abolished, said Union Minister U Win Myint (See page 3)

**Israeli Ambassador meets Ayeyawady Region Chief Minister, donates books to libraries of region**

YANGON, 14 May—Israeli Ambassador Hagay M. Behar made an official visit to Ayeyawady Region on 8 and 9 May. During his visit, the Ambassador met U Thein Aung, the Chief Minister of Ayeyawady Region, and they exchanged ideas on promoting aid and economic relations, especially in the agricultural and vocational training. Taking the opportunity, the Ambassador presented the “Soul Bird” education project, launched by the Israeli Embassy in Yangon on 2014.

On the occasion, the Embassy donated more than 600 translated books (See page 3)

**Families of 14 people who died in bus crash to receive K 4.5 million each in compensation**

NAY PYI TAW, 14 May—The families of the 14 Yazamin express bus passengers who died on Monday in an accident on the Yangon-Mandalay Expressway will each receive K 4.5 million in compensation, officials said Wednesday.

The case was discussed at the Ministry of Finance in Nay Pyi Taw, with an address by Union Minister U Win Shein who said the insurance money will be handed out to the families through the Chairman of the Nay Pyi Taw All Bus Lines Control Committee and Yazamin Express Services. The passengers on the express bus had bought Special Travel Insurance that was distributed on 8 May and arranged by the Insurance Supervisory Committee under the Ministry.

Ministry officials further discussed insurance policies and security on expressways. Theaina accident on Monday also left 20 passengers injured with officials urging travellers to buy an insurance before boarding a long-distance bus.

MNA

**Yazamin Bus Line banned from resuming Yangon-Nay Pyi Taw-Yangon route after fatal bus crash**

NAY PYI TAW, 14 May — Authorities announced on Wednesday that the Yazamin Bus Line will not be given permission to resume its Yangon-Nay Pyi Taw-Yangon service, after 14 people were killed on Monday on the Yangon-Mandalay Expressway.

The Nay Pyi Taw Road and Water Transport Board said the accident was caused by reckless driving (See page 3)
LOCAL NEWS

66th World Red Cross Day celebrated in Lewe

Lewe, 14 May—To commemorate the 66th Anniversary of World Red Cross Day, Lewe Township Red Cross Society celebrated on Wednesday at the compound of its office in Lewe Township, Nay Pyi Taw.

During the ceremony, the Secretary of Nay Pyi Taw Red Cross Supervisory Committee read out a message sent by Dr Thar Hla Shwe, the President of Myanmar Red Cross Society-MRCS and officials presented awards to outstanding members of the society.

Min Min Latt (Mann Tekkatho)

New Light of Myanmar

Rice offering ceremonies held in Yamethin Tsp on Fullmoon Day

Yamethin, 14 May—Pagodas, monasteries, stupas and religious buildings were packed with devotees and pilgrims who performed meritorious deeds in Yamethin Township of Mandalay Region on Fullmoon Day of Kason which falls on 13 May (Tuesday).

The rice offering ceremony took place at the precinct of Minthamee Pagoda in Yamethin.

Local people offered rice, soft drinks, soap, note books and alms to over 500 monks from 40 monasteries.

The 26th rice offering ceremony was held at Yadana Sasana Beikman in Kanauk (a) Kanhet Village of Yamethin Township. Many wellwishers donated cash and kind to the fund of the monasteries at the ceremony.

Huang Than Tin (Yamethin)

Solar panels installed at rural housings free of charge for electrification

Myeik, 14 May—Taninhtayi Region government supervises installation of solar panels for electrification in Nga-in, Mawsone and Pyingyi villages in Myeik Township as of 20 March.

Myeik Township Rural Development Department installs one set of 70-A solar panel that can generate electricity to TV, two sets of florescence and one bulb free of charge.

On 29 May, Deputy Minister for Livestock, Fishereis and Rural Development U Khin Maung Aye inspected electricity supply for local people through solar panel.

The deputy minister instructed officials to systematically use the solar panels.

Skilled workers from Arnt Htoo Gabar Co that installed solar panels at rural areas and the head of Township Rural Development Department gave talks to the rural people on systematic use of solar panel and devices for durability.

Khuang Htoo
(Myeik District IPRD)

LOCAL NEWS

Rural people in Kyaukpaduaung Tsp get new bridge

Kyaukpaduaung, 14 May—A ceremony to inaugurate the creek crossing bridge was held in Wetthachin Village of Kyaukpaduaung Township in Mandalay Region on Tuesday morning. It was aimed at ensuring smooth transport in the region and swift flow of commodities.

The bridge was donated by U Thaung Nyunt (State Education Officer-Rtd).

The bridge costs K2 million fund of retired education officer U Thaung Nyunt and local state education officer U Ko Nay (Kyaukpadaung) and one bulb free of charge.

Thanks to the bridge, over 3000 local people have easy access to other villages all the year round.

The bridge was contributed by K2 million fund of retired state education officer U Thaung Nyunt and local people from six villages are relying on the bridge,” said Daw Hla Myint Yi of Wetthachin Village.

The construction of the bridge was contributed by K2 million fund of retired state education officer U Thaung Nyunt and local people. The bridge costs K 12.2 million.

The deputy minister for Livestock, Fishereis and Rural Development Department supervises installation of solar panels.

In my childhood, there was a bridge near the current bridge. But it was destroyed in the flood 25 years ago. Later, local people had faced much difficulty in transport. Now, we all enjoy better transport through the newly-built bridge. Indeed, the local farmers are worrying about pests.

Summer paddy thriving in Dabayin Tsp but farmers worries about pests

Dabayin, 14 May—A plan was set to grow 60,900 acres of summer paddy in 2014 in Dabayin Township of Sagaing Region. This cultivation season, local farmers cultivated Hsinshweli and Mann Ayeya paddy strains that can yield high production.

Hsinshweli paddy can be harvested at 135 days and Mann Ayeya strain, 120 days. These two strains can produce 75 to 100 baskets of paddy per acre. Each acre of paddy costs about K200,000 but the local farmers can fetch K 500,000 per basket, said U Kyaw Soe Naing from Thayetkan Village.

Local farmers are worried about infection of pests at the paddy plantation this year. Now, farmlands of U Po Swe and U Soe Myint from Thayetkan Village are destroyed with the pests, he added.

The local farmers are now taking preventive measures against pests at the summer paddy plantations daily. In 2013, they lost some monsoon paddy plantations under destruction of pests. 

Thein Tun (IPRD)
National

Laws unbeneﬁcial to Myanmar must be amended or abolished...

(from page 1)
of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw and the Lower House, at a work coordination meeting in Nay Pyi Taw on Wednesday.

He also highlighted the existing laws to be in conformity with conventions and treaties acceptable to the country.

He called for participation of all, stressing the importance of enactment and amendment of legislation necessary for keeping up with an every-changing fast-paced environment. A timeframe is necessary for amendment, enactment and abolition of laws, he added.—MNA

Speaker of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw and the Lower House Thura U Shwe Mann speaking at meeting on legal affairs.—MNA

Myanmar, Malaysia discuss labour rights for Myanmar workers in Malaysia

Nay Pyi Taw, 14 May — Myanmar’s Union Minister for Labour, Employment and Social Security U Aye Myint and Malaysia’s Home Affairs Minister Dr Armad Zuhid Hamidi held talks over issues related to protection and promotion of rights of Myanmar migrant workers in Malaysia.

During their meeting of in Nay Pyi Taw on Tuesday, they discussed matters on extension of registration for Myanmar migrant workers up to the end of 2014.

The meeting also focused on providing assistance to Myanmar illegal workers who are under detention in Malaysia and granting compensation to Myanmar workers who sustained injuries and died at work sites.

Union Minister U Aye Myint has also urged Malaysian Home Affairs Minister to bring charges against those who commit crimes against Myanmar workers in Malaysia.

They also discussed matters on issuing work permits to Myanmar workers and relaxing penalty fees for work permits.

H & T Minister urges for development of tourism industry

Nay Pyi Taw, 14 May—Union Minister for Hotel and Tourism U Htay Aung on Monday and Tuesday met with ofﬁcials and staff of Chanthaba Hotel Zone, Ngwehsaung Hotel Zone and the Pathein Branch of the Hotel and Tourism Development Department, urging them to participate in human resources development.

He also discussed infrastructure development along Ngwehsaung Beach which is seeing an inﬂux of foreign visitors.

At the ground breaking ceremony of Dae-woo Amera Lotte Hotel in Hline Township in Yangon on Monday, the Union Minister said that according to records, more than 2 million tourists visited the country in 2013 and the Ministry expects an increase to about 3 million travellers this year.

U Zaw Myint appointed as Ambassador to Nepal

Nay Pyi Taw, 15 May—The President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has appointed U Zaw Myint as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal.—MNA

U Min Thein Zan, U Paw Lwin Sein concurrently accredited to Maldives, Croatia

Nay Pyi Taw, 15 May—The President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has appointed U Min Thein Zan, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, concurrently as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to the Kingdom of Belgium, concurrently as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to the Republic of Croatia.—MNA

Yazamin Bus Line banned from resuming...

(from page 1)

and failure to systematically supervise the safety of passengers, and that the shuttle service will be shut down from 15 May.

Ten men and four women were killed in the accident which occurred around 6 pm on 12 May at milepost 197/6.—MNA

Israeli Ambassador meets Ayeyawady Region...

(from page 1)

The Embassy has launched this Education Project last February during the Ayeyawady Festival and since then donated nearly 4,000 translated books in Myanmar, Kachin, Kayin, Mon, Shan and Chin languages to the libraries across the country.

The aim of the project is to promote the reading habits of the young generation in Myanmar.

Among the regions and states that the Ambassador had visited and donated books are Nay Pyi Taw, Mandalay and Sagaing regions.—MLM

Senior Brand Manager Mr. Tan Hiang of Southeast Asian region of Dell Co., explains Dell end user computing, from security, manageability to reliability at the hall of Ministry of Information on Wednesday.—MNA

New Light of Myanmar Thursday, 15 May, 2014  |  3
BANGKOK, 14 May — A meeting between Thailand’s interim prime minister and the Election Commission to fix a date for polls that the government hopes will break a stalemate was postponed on Wednesday due to security concerns over the venue, a commission official said.

The government sees the polls as the best way out of a protracted crisis that has brought sporadic violence to the streets of Bangkok, threatened to tip the economy into recession and even raised fears of civil war.

But the government’s opponents said they would reject a general election anyway in the belief that the ruling party would win. They want electoral reform aimed at ending the influence of ousted former premier Thaksin Shinawatra before another vote.

“The government has asked to delay the meeting due to security concerns over the venue location,” said Election Commissioner Somchai Srisuthiyakorn.

Vietnamese official vows to suppress illegal actions in anti-China protests

HANOI, 14 May — Tran Van Nam, vice chairman of Binh Duong Province People’s Committee, said in an interview on Wednesday that Binh Duong is determined to suppress those who force others to take illegal actions.

On Tuesday, the anti-China protests in Binh Duong Province, some 1,120 km south of Vietnam’s capital Hanoi, went violent. Thousands of protesters broke into foreign factories, conducting wrecking and looting, which leads to over 1,000 factories shut down and over 15 factories burning down. Most of the factories belong to China’s Tai-wan invested companies, local Chinese told Xinhua on Wednesday.

Tran Van Nam said the province concentrates quickly stabilizing the situation and protecting legitimate rights and interest of investors and labors, while local people told Xinhua the violent situation there are still not settled on Wednesday morning.

Nam made the remark to local VNExpress online newspaper on Wednesday, noting that “the province will strictly handle those who took advantage of the situation to provoke, disturb and cause damage to assets of people, companies and the state.” According to the official, some 19,000 workers took part in a demonstration against China.

Initially, the protest was a mild one. However, later several extremists provoked the crowd, destroying gates of factories, and attracting more workers to join the protest, said the report. Many foreign companies must ask their workers to go home early in fear of the crowd getting into their offices and factories. Several extremists used the messy situation to steal assets, burn factories as well as beating security guards and experts, said Nam on VNExpress.

China on last Friday urged Vietnam to respect China’s sovereign rights and jurisdiction over the Xisha Islands in the South China Sea and stop provocating actions. Foreign Ministry Spokeswoman Hua Chunying made the remarks at a regular press briefing. She reiterated that the Xisha Islands are the inherent territory of China and there are no disputes in this area.

India names next Army chief

NEW DELHI, 14 May — India on Tuesday named Lieutenant General Dalbir Singh Suhag as the next Army Chief, who will assume office when incumbent General Bikram Singh retires in July.

The outgoing Congress-led government cleared the name of Lieutenant General Suhag, currently the vice chief of the Indian Army, at its last Cabinet meeting chaired by Prime Minister Mammohan Singh in the national capital, sources said.

The Defence Ministry had earlier proposed Lieutenant General Suhag’s name for the top post, after getting the go-ahead from the independent Election Commission in charge of affairs during the general elections which concluded on Monday.

The main opposition Bharatiya Janata Party had earlier opposed the move of outgoing government initiating the process of appointing the next head of the Indian Army, but Lieutenant General Suhag was named nevertheless.

As per the prevailing tradition, a new Army chief is named two to three months before the incumbent retires.

China denies US version of Kerry’s remarks to foreign minister

BEIJING, 14 May — China has said US Secretary of State John Kerry made no such comments during the phone conversation, China Foreign Ministry spokesman Hua Chunying told the official Xinhua news agency late on Tuesday.

Kerry’s message during the phone talk was that the United States does not take sides in the South China Sea dispute, and has no intention to make any judgment on the issue of territorial sovereignty, Xinhua said. Tensions rose last week after China moved a giant oil rig into an area also claimed by Vietnam. Each country accused the other of ramming its ships near the disputed Paracel Islands.

China claims almost the entire South China Sea, rejecting rival claims to parts of it from Vietnam, the Philippines, Taiwan, Malaysia and Brunei.

“He (Kerry) said China’s production of an oil rig and numerous government vessels in waters disputed with Vietnam was provocative,” US State Department Spokeswoman Jen Psaki told reporters in Washington, referring to the telephone call.

Strike by Cambodian Caltex staff enters 3rd day after wage talks fail

PHNOM PENH, 14 May — Cambodian workers for the US-owned Caltex petrol stations in Phnom Penh continued their strike for higher wages Wednesday after wage negotiations late Tuesday failed to reach any agreement.

Strike leader Sar Mora, president of the Cambodian Food and Service Workers Federation, said some 300 Caltex workers had continued their strike at 18 of the country’s 26 Caltex petrol stations on Wednesday — the third day of the protest.

“They will not stop their protest if the company does not agree to their demands,” he said.

All Caltex stations in Phnom Penh City are still closed Wednesday as striking workers gather inside the stations with placards demanding higher wages. Workers broke out the protest on Monday to demand the oil supplier to raise their monthly minimum wages to 160 US dollars from the current 110 US dollars.
Six powers, Iran enter crunch phase of nuclear diplomacy

VIENNA, May 14 — Six world powers and Iran launch the decisive phase of diplomacy over Tehran’s nuclear work during three-day talks starting in Vienna on Wednesday, with the aim of resolving their decade-old dispute by 20 July despite skepticism a deal is possible.

After three months of broad discussions about expectations rather than possible compromises, the sides now plan to start drafting the text of a final accord that could put an end to years of hostility and mistrust and curtail the risk of a new war in the Middle East.

In the next two months, the six powers — the United States, Russia, China, France, Britain and Germany — want Iran to agree to dramatically cut back its nuclear work, which they fear has the aim of producing weapons, while Iran wants them to eliminate devastating economic sanctions.

Diplomats from both sides have said they want to resolve all sticking points about issues such as Iran’s capacity to enrich uranium and the future of its nuclear facilities, as well as the timeline of sanctions relief, by the middle of July.

After that, an interim deal they struck last November expires and its extension would likely complicate talks.

A senior US official has warned about excessive optimism.

“I would caution people that just because we are certain to eventually get to a resolution,” Fabius said. “Quite frankly, this is very, very difficult,” the official told reporters on Tuesday, speaking on condition of anonymity.

“We have at least 14 indications that show us that, in the past recent weeks again, chemical weapons in a smaller scale have been used, in particular chlorine,” Fabius said.

Fabius made the comments during a visit to Washington where he discussed the crises in Syria and Ukraine with his American counterpart John Kerry.

Fabius said the Assad government was hiding some of the stockpiles and the reports involving chlorine gas attacks indicated he still had the ability to produce chemical weapons.

What it shows is that the Islamic State regime in spite of its commitment continues to be able to produce chemical weapons and to use them,” Fabius said.

He pointed at France’s efforts within the United Nations to refer the three-year-old civil war in Syria to the International Criminal Court for possible prosecution of war crimes and crimes against humanity.

The 15-member council is due to meet on Wednesday to discuss the draft and it could be voted on within days, diplomats said.

But Russia, a veto-wielding council member and ally of Assad, has made clear it is against such a move.

The OPCW is considering a fact-finding mission on its own to investigate reports of chlorine gas attacks, sources told Reuters last month.

Syria has promised to hand over or destroy its entire arsenal, although it still has roughly 75 percent of the chemicals it declared to the OPCW and has not yet destroyed a dozen production and storage facilities.

Speaking alongside his Italian counterpart at the State Department, Kerry later said the international community needed to insist that Syria fully comply with its commitment to dismantle its entire stockpile.

A general view of a meeting with European Union foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton (centre L) and Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif (centre R) in Vienna on 9 April, 2014.—Reuters

France says Syria used chlorine in 14 recent attacks

WASHINGTON, May 14 — Syria may have used chemical weapons involving chlorine in 14 attacks in recent months, French Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius said on Tuesday, expressing concerns that Syrian President Bashar al-Assad is hiding toxic weapons.

“We have at least 14 indications that show us that, in the past recent weeks again, chemical weapons in a smaller scale have been used, in particular chlorine,” Fabius told a news conference through an interpreter. “Right now we are examining the samples that were taken.”

Fabius made the comments during a visit to Washington where he discussed the crises in Syria and Ukraine with his American counterpart John Kerry.

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Pakistan’s President Asif Ali Zardari and France’s President Nicolas Sarkozy walk hand in hand during a ceremony at the Elysee Palace in Paris, France on 12 May, 2014.—Reuters

Pakistan's President Asif Ali Zardari and France's President Nicolas Sarkozy walk hand in hand during a ceremony at the Elysee Palace in Paris, France on 12 May, 2014.—Reuters

A boy walks as he holds containers of water along a damaged street in Aleppo on 13 May, 2014.—Reuters

ISLAMABAD, May 14 — Admiral Jonathan Greenert, US Chief of Naval Operations and Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif on Tuesday agreed to continue to work together in order to build a stronger partnership and further common objectives, the US Embassy said.

Admiral Greenert is the fourth top US official to visit Pakistan in less than a month at a time when the NATO troops are planning to leave Afghanistan.

The US wants Pakistan to help in Afghan reconciliation process and to ensure that the militants could not cross into Afghanistan from its border regions.

US Deputy Secretary of State, William J Burns, who visited Pakistan last week, emphasized in his meeting with Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif “to sustain pressure on militant groups, deny them a safe-haven, and prevent cross-border attacks.”

The US does not want instability in Afghanistan after the NATO withdraw and considers Pakistan’s role very important for peace in the war-torn coun-try, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and Admiral Jonathan Greenert, who met in Islamabad, also reaffirmed the importance of the US-Pakistani security relationship.

NAVAL OFFICIALS AGREE TO BUILD STRONGER PARTNERSHIP

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A boy walks as he holds containers of water along a damaged street in Aleppo on 13 May, 2014.—Reuters

PSI

INCREASED TENSION IN AFGHANISTAN

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A boy walks as he holds containers of water along a damaged street in Aleppo on 13 May, 2014.—Reuters

PSI
Russia says EU sanctions will hurt Ukraine peace efforts

MOSCOW, 14 May — Russia said on Tuesday new European Union sanctions will hunder efforts to defuse the crisis in Ukraine and urged the West to persuade Kiev to hold discussions on the country’s future structure before a 25 May presidential election.

The results of self-rule referendums in the mainly Russian-speaking eastern regions of Donetsk and Luhansk “should be a clear signal to Kiev of the depth of the crisis” in Ukraine, the Russian Foreign Ministry said in a statement.

The Kremlin has stopped short of endorsing independence for the regions or their absorption into Russia but has said the referendums underscore the need for talks between the pro-Western government and separatists from the east. “Moscow hopes the EU and United States will use their influence on the current leadership in Kiev so that issues of state structure and respect for the rights of regions are discussed soon — in any case before the election scheduled for 25 May,” it said.

Russian President Vladimir Putin has suggested the Ukrainian government hopes will increase its legitimacy and control, will not be legitimate if people in the east are not confident their rights will be protected.

The EU imposed sanctions on two Crimean companies and 13 people on Monday in response to Moscow’s annexation of the Black Sea peninsula from Ukraine and its support for Russian-speaking separatists.

The EU had already imposed asset freezes and visa bans on 48 Russians and 48 Ukrainians, and the United States has also imposed sanctions during the worst crisis in relations between Moscow and the West since the Cold War.

Deputy Foreign Minister Grigory Karasin told the EU envoy to Russia on Tuesday that the EU sanctions were a “exasperated, trite approach ... that will not only not resolve but will deepen differences, hindering the joint search for a way out of the real crisis situation in Ukraine,” the Foreign Ministry said.

UN expecting to feed 6.5 million Ethiopians this year

GENEVA, 14 May — The World Food Programme will help to feed nearly 6.5 million Ethiopians this year, the UN agency said on Tuesday, with the country hit by locusts, war and sparse rainfall.

“We are concerned because there is the beginning of a locust invasion in the eastern part of the country, and if it’s not properly handled it could be of concern for the pastoralist population living there,” WFP spokeswoman Elizabeth Byrs told a UN briefing in Geneva.

“And in the northern part of Ethiopia there has been less rain than average for the third or fourth consecutive year.”

Ethiopia is also dealing with growing refugee numbers due to the conflict in neighboring South Sudan, sapping WFP’s budget for feeding new arrivals in the country, which is at risk of a shortfall as soon as next month.

More than 120,000 South Sudanese have crossed over into Ethiopia in the past six months, mostly women and children who are arriving “famished, exhausted and malnourished”, WFP said in a statement.

The recent influx has brought total refugee numbers to 500,000 in Ethiopia. The UN also provides food for millions of needy or undernourished Ethiopians, including 670,000 school children and 375,000 in HIV/AIDS programmes.

Ethiopia’s overall situation has vastly improved over recent years and the economy now ranks as one of the fastest growing in Africa. But deep problems remain.

Malnutrition has stunted the growth of two out of every five Ethiopian children and reduced the country’s workforce by 8 percent, WFP said, citing Ethiopian government data.

The International Monetary Fund expects Ethiopia’s economy to grow 7.5 percent in each of the next two fiscal years but says the government needs to encourage more private sector investment to prevent growth rates from falling thereafter.

Another drone found on mountain in S Korea

SEOUL, 14 May — Another drone was found on a mountain near Seoul, South Korea’s capital, after the defense ministry concluded three drones discovered in March and April were flown by the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK), local media reported on Wednesday.

A flying object, believed to be an unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV), was found on Mount Cheonggye, southeast of Seoul, military officials were quoted by local media as saying.

An unidentified hiker reported it to the police, who transferred it to the military. A military investigation team was dispatched to the scene to recover and examine where it came from. The UAV was similar in color with the three drones, which the South Korean military claimed came from the DPRK, but it was different in shape with the three drones.

US spy chief visits S Korea for talks on security issues

SEOUL, 14 May — The chief of the US intelligence office is in South Korea for talks with officials on security issues, including North Korea’s nuclear programs, Yonhap News Agency reported on Wednesday, citing a military source in Seoul.

James Clapper, director of National Intelligence, arrived in Seoul the previous day to hold a series of talks with senior officials, including South Korean Defence Minister Kim Kwan Jin. “His visit is mainly to discuss the situation of the Korean Peninsula,” the source was quoted as saying.

Clapper’s visit comes amid heightened tensions after North Korea threatened in recent weeks to conduct its fourth nuclear test to protest what it perceives as a hostile US-South Korean stance against it.

Clapper is also scheduled to visit the Combined Forces Command and meet its commander Gen Curtis Scaparrotti, the report said.

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Nigeria signals readiness to talk to Boko Haram rebels

A B O U T

- Nigeria's government signalled a willingness on Tuesday to negotiate with Islamist militants holding more than 200 schoolgirls, a month after the kidnapping that has provoked global outrage.

The window of negotiation is still open,” Minister of Special Duties Tanimu Turaki told Reuters by telephone. He was speaking a day after Boko Haram leader Abubakar Shekau posted a video offering to release girls in exchange for prisoners held by the government.

Senior officials say the government is exploring options and has made no commitment to negotiations for the release of the girls, and Turaki declined to comment on the possibility of talks over the kidnapping itself.

Instead, he referred to an amnesty committee that he heads, set up by President Goodluck Jonathan last year to talk to the Boko Haram militants behind a five-year-old insurgency. The committee’s initial six-month mandate expired without holding direct talks with the rebels, though it has spoken to them through proxies. It has since been replaced by a standing committee empowered to conduct talks, officials said.

Boko Haram has killed thousands of people since 2009 and destabilised parts of northeast Nigeria, the country with Africa’s largest population and biggest economy.

The abductions have triggered a worldwide social media campaign under the Twitter hashtag #BringBackOurGirls, and prompted the United States, Britain, France and Israel to offer help or send experts to Nigeria.

The United States has sent military, law-enforcement and development specialists.

Two US officials said on Tuesday a mix of unmanned and manned American surveillance aircraft were being used to aid the search for the missing girls. One US official identified the drone as a Global Hawk, which is a high-altitude, unmanned spy plane manufactured by Northrop Grumman Corp NOC.N.

The Boko Haram video showed more than 110 girls sitting on the ground in a rural location, the first time they have been seen in captivity.

Although at least some of them are Christian, and Shekau described them as "infidels", they were wearing full Islamic veils and singing and chanting Muslim prayers. It was not clear when or where the video was filmed or whether Shekau, who sat in front of a green backdrop holding an AK-47 during part of the video, was in the same location as the girls.

Those shown were among 276 abducted on April 14 from a secondary school in the village of Chibok, Borno state, in a sparsely populated region near the borders with Cameroon, Niger and Chad. Some escaped but about 200 are still missing. The group initially threatened to sell them into slavery.

-- Reuters

Forum in Khartoum calls for expanding Sino-Africa cooperation

K H A R T O U M, 14 May — The Third China-African Peoples Forum ended in Khartoum on Tuesday with leaders publishing the Khartoum Report, calling for greater cooperation between Chinese and African NGOs.

The report focused on imports and exports, cooperation and visits between the Chinese and African leaders and organizations as well as cooperation between the organizations to serve the development and child and maternity centres.

The report urged for expansion of joint technology, environment, health, culture and poverty relief programmes, in addition to establishing Chinese projects focusing on environmental protection in Africa as well as promoting small joint projects between NGOs.

Sudanese Assistant to the President Ibrahim Ghandour, in his closing remarks, expressed hope that the forum would boost relations and deepen the ties between the non-governmental and civil societies in China and the African countries.

“The relations between the countries of our African continent and friendly China have always remained a perfect and inspiring model for the relations among nations, because they were based on sincere cooperation and keenness on realisation and exchange of mutual benefits,” he said.

Earlier in the year, Sudan vigorously denied a US report that criticized its human rights record and the conditions of its prisons, accusing the US and other Western countries of meddling in the internal affairs of other countries.

The forum opened its sessions in Khartoum on Monday with attendance of over 200 delegates from 26 African countries and a joint delegation consisting of 210 members.

The opening session of the Third China-African Peoples Forum was attended by vice-chairwoman of China Association for International Exchange Wang Zhiwen, Sudanese first vice-president Bakri Hassan Salih, Mauritanian state minister for foreign affairs and representative of the African Union Makfutu Hamoudi.

The Sudanese and Chinese delegates signed a memorandum of understanding in accordance with which the Chinese Fund for Peace and Development, which will set aside $500,000 US dollars to establish the Sino-Sudanese Friendship School in city of Omdurman.

Turkish coal mine fire kills at least four, hundreds feared trapped

ISTANBUL, 14 May — An explosion and fire in a coal mine in western Turkey killed at least four miners on Tuesday and may have trapped as many as 300 more, officials said.

The blast at the mine in Soma, around 120 km (75 miles) northeast of the Aegean coastal city of Izmir, happened during a change in shifts, leading to uncertainty over the exact number of workers still inside, labour union officials said.

“They are pumping oxygen into the mine, but the fire is still burning. They say it is an electrical fault but it could be that coal is burning as well,” Tamer Kucukgencay, chairman of the regional labour union, told Reuters by telephone.

Television footage showed dozens of fellow workers and family members gathering outside the hospital in Soma, a coal mining community in Turkey’s western province of Manisa.

Local member of parliament Muzaffer Yildiz told broadcaster CNN Turk that four people had been killed and 20 others taken to hospital, retracting his earlier statement that 20 people had been killed.

Nurettin Akcul, head of the Turkish Mine Workers’ Union, said five workers had been killed in the blast, which he said happened around 2 km (1.2 miles) below ground. Energy Minister Taner Yildiz confirmed that a fire had been triggered by an electrical fault and that workers had been killed, but declined to say how many.

Mehmet Bahattin Aci, mayor of Soma, said 200-300 workers were still inside following the explosion. The head of the local fire service also told Turkish television that around 300 workers were still trapped.

— Reuters

Fighter jets bomb al-Qaeda weapon convoy in SE Yemen, killing six

The Yemeni army, backed by the US military support, has waged a wide-scale assault against al-Qaeda strongholds recently.

The Turkish Defence Ministry has announced the killing of many non-Yemeni al-Qaeda members during the major military offensive launched by the armed and security forces since late April.

Territories in Azzan and Mahfad, two of al-Qaeda’s main bastions, have been recaptured by the army.

The al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), considered a major threat to the Yemeni government and neighbouring oil-rich Saudi Arabia, has vowed to hit back in Yemen’s main cities, including the capital Sanaa.

— Reuters

The body of miner is carried to an ambulance in Soma, a district in Turkey’s western province of Manisa on 14 May, 2014 — Reuters
Is the apartment boom in Yangon a curse?

By Myint Win Thein

Yangonites are used to living in apartments, some of which were built during the colonial period. It can be said that apartment life-style originated during the colonial period, but it was limited only to the downtown area. About 20 years ago, the apartment culture spread to adjacent townships of downtown Yangon like Mingala Taungnyunt, Tamway, Ahlon, Sanyoung, Kamayut, Hlaine and Thingan gyun due to the increasing population.

With many rural people migrating to Yangon, its population further rose very fast during recent years and the demand for housing and apartments shot up very quickly. Furthermore, foreign direct investment to Myanmar increased dramatically in recent years and further pushed up property prices and rents.

With the growing demand, developers rushed to build more buildings with landowners willing to offer their land as prices kept rising. Thus, new apartment buildings are emerging in Yangon.

However, some developers fail to abide by the rules and regulations for apartment building and add more storries than permitted. The quality of buildings is also in question. Last year, an official from the Yangon City Development Committee admitted that construction work at over 1 thousand sites in the city was being carried out without permission. In addition, authorities in Thingan gyun Townshio ordered to demolish hundreds of apartment floors that had been added to buildings without permission.

After the crackdown on unlicensed buildinds in that township, apartment culture spread to suburban townships like South Okkalapa, North Dagon and Thakaya. No one knows whether the developers follow the construction rules and regulations and if the new apartment buildings meet construction standards.

The recent earthquake in Thailand, which was felt as far as Yangon, was a cause of concern for urbanites in Yangon as well. We will have to pay the price for malpractices in the construction sector during times of disaster.

The PEARL Strategy of Success

If you really and earnestly want to succeed in your life, in your job and in your relationship, you have got to totally commit yourself to strongly focusing on PEARL Strategy of Success.

First of all, I would like you to concentrate your mind on: “This one thing I do. Forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forth into those things which are before, I press towards the mark.”

What is important is the power of your concentration, and what matters most is that you must have a burning desire to be somebody most definitely or to have the one and only thing most passionately.

Now, let us see what the PEARL Strategy of Success means.

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**Proactive**

It means to take charge of yourself, to be in charge of your life, your job and your relationships. Proactive means to be authentic, reliable and constructive and responsible. Being Proactive is to have an original, active vision backed up by a passionate, prudent strategy. The Oxford Dictionary meaning of Proactive is: (of a person or policy) controlling a situation by making things happen rather than waiting for things to happen and then reacting to them. If you have a combination of personal qualities such as initiative, resourcefulness and the knack for getting the desired results, you are said to be proactive. Be solutions-oriented, be not problem-driven. Always be active and dynamic, never be passive and static. Always willing to go the Extra Mile, put into practice The Can-Do Spirit. This is being Proactive. In short, to be proactive is to take full responsibility for your life, your job and your relationships.

**Effective:** Producing the result that is wanted or intended; producing a successful result. —*Oxford Dictionary*

**Efficient:** Doing something well and thoroughly with no waste of time, money or energy. —*Oxford Dictionary*

**Effectiveness-cum-Efficiency:** To be effective means to be productive. To be productive means to be able to produce desired results. To be effective also means to be able to maintain productivity, stability and consolidation. Most importantly, to be effective is to be growing, to be developing and to be progressing. In short, to be effective is to be capable of building unity, mutual trust and win-win relationship.

Lastly, to be effective is to Do the RIGHT THINGS. To do the right things means to be sincerely engaged in endeavoring to get the desired results. In short, to be effective means to follow the Right Way to attain the Right Goal.

To be efficient means to do things in the Right Way with the Right Skills and with the Right Mental Attitude. In simple language, efficiency means to get more with less. In other words, to be efficient means to gain more/better results with less cost. It means to get MORE OUTPUT with LESS INPUT. Efficiency is simply a matter of PRODUCTIVITY, which means the total output divided by the total input.

To be effective is WHAT TO DO and to be efficient is HOW TO DO. A simple example is: Choosing the Right Way to the Summit of Mount Everest is Effectiveness, and climbing skillfully and prudently is Efficiency.

**Audacious**

To Be Audacious is to be BOLD, BRAVE, COURAGEOUS or to have TEMERITY. To DARE to STRUGGLE and to DARE to WIN is audacity. So also, to DARE to SCALE the HEIGHTS is pure and simple audacity. To be STRATEGIC is an Audacious act; to be Diligent and Dedicated is audacity. To live a life of PLAIN LIVING and HARD STRUGGLE is also pure audacity.

To be RESOLUTE, to FEAR NO SACRIFICE and to SURMOUNT ALL DIFFICULTIES is audacity, too. It is the utmost audacity to Dare nobly, to WILL strongly and never to FALTER in the PATH of Duty. One of the most beautiful forms of audacity is ALTRUISM.

**Resourcefulness**

To be resourceful is: Good at finding ways to doing things and solving problems, according to the Oxford Dictionary.

**Leadership**

Being the foremost person of importance with influence, power and knowledge to direct, control and organize the followers, for a certain purpose or project. The essence of Leadership is to inspire support and commitment from its followers.

• Leadership is also the personal quality of inspiring, motivating others to be committed to carrying out a job, a project or a mission to a good accomplishment.

• A LEADER is a Coach, a Mentor, an Enabler, a Foremost Expert, an Influencer, An Organizer, A Role Model, an Example and a Direction Giver. A supreme Leader can be a superb visionary who see the big picture as well as far into the future. A leader is straightforward, honest, authentic, reliable and constructive.

• A true leader is altruistic, self-sacrificing, energetic, prudent, and forward-thinking. A good leader is usually bold, daring and dedicated to purpose. According to Sun Tzu, a good leader only fights when there is:
  • a prize fighting for,
  • certainty of success, and
  • no other way of winning the prize.

• Sometimes, Leadership has to be effective-nuthless for the organization in the following ways:
  • Fights strategically on selected big battles
  • Inflexible about outcomes, but flexible on means
  • Very, very strongly focuses on business imperatives
  • Future-focused, creates win/wins
  • Stretches people: climate of opportunity
  • Total Commitment given and reciprocated
  • Total persistence in chasing goal : High Trust
  • Ambitious for Organization

The game of life and living is no easy matter. You have got to play it hard and live it hard. In fact, life is not for the faint-hearted. Now, I have offered a realistic STRATEGY for living your life most successfully. Keep this STRATEGY to heart and most passionately apply it in your valuable life most dexterously, ably and audaciously.

Ref: How to Manage by Jo Owen

U Kyi Mun residing in Yangon is a consultant of NAING GROUP Capital CO., LTD.
Umbrella hoisted atop pagoda in Namsang, Shan State

NAMSANG, 14 May—A ceremony to hoist an umbrella atop an ancient pagoda was held in Matkyan region of Namsang Township in South Shan State, on Tuesday morning.

Shan State Minister for Industries and Electrics U Sai Tun Yin, Shan State Minister for Development Affairs U Sai Hla Win, officials and locals attended the ceremony, which saw the umbrella with a pennant-shaped vane and diamond orb hoisted atop the 108 feet-high Labha Theikdi Lwemonmaing Pagoda.

Following the ceremony, alms were offered to 1528 members of the Sangha.

Moe Lwin Oo
(Loilem)

Yamethin township officials plan to dredge moat

YAMETHIN, 14 May—Mandalay Region Electricity and Industry head U Kyaw Myint and other officials have held a coordination meeting on dredging the Mingala moat in Yamethin of Mandalay Region.

The moat, which has existed since the ancient Yamethin city was built, is filled with sand, silt and weeds and cannot store water at full brim. The bunds of the moat were also damaged in bad weather.

But local people have still been using the water from the moat.

Township Development Affairs Committee officials said the moat filled with water can contribute to environmental conservation and said they will take responsibility for dredging the moat, with work expected to start in the third week of May.—Hlaing Than Tint (Yamethin)

Basic Education School to open in Thaton Township

THATON, 14 May—Under the auspices of the Htaunghmu Monastery abbot, construction of a Basic Education Primary School was completed with the contribution of local people from Htaunghmu Village of Thaton Township.

The school will open this coming term, officials said. “The old school building could not provide adequate accommodation to the students. The new place of the school is located at the centre of the village, with a wider compound. The vacant school will become a playground for the children,” said village administrator U Kyee Shwe.

The school, which cost K31.5 million, was built on a four-acre plot beside the village-owned ‘In’ forest.

Officials are preparing to hand over the keys to the new school building through the township education office. —Thet Oo (Thaton)

Tea shops crowded with free WiFi users in Thazi Township

THAZI, 14 May—Cafés in Thazi Township of Mandalay Region are packed with customers on a daily basis as the shops are providing free WiFi services to them.

Locals said that although beer pubs and restaurants also provide WiFi free services, only tea shops are crowded around the clock as they are also frequented by female customers. The most popular location is the May Flower Café which is open 24/7.

Thazi has now become a “WiFi city” locals said. —Chan Thu (Meiktila)
Global economy still faces considerable risks: leading economic organizations

Berlin, 14 May—World economy still faces various risks despite its recent improvements, and further efforts on growth and consolidation are needed, said heads of world’s leading economic organizations on Tuesday.

High unemployment, significant output gap, low investment, rising inequality and slowdown in emerging economies still have an impact on global growth prospects, said chiefs of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the World Trade Organization (WTO) in a joint statement with German Chancellor Angela Merkel released after their meeting in Berlin.

“The global economy has noticeably improved, but is still far from a robust, sustainable growth,” the statement said.

“Considerable risks of various kinds remain,” said the leaders. “The debt level of most industrialized countries remains too high at the level of the state, enterprises and households. In many countries, the unsatisfactory development of the labor market must continue to be addressed urgently.”

They urged governments to continue their efforts on promoting growth and ensuring fiscal consolidation. Structural reforms should continue to be implemented in the euro zone to strengthen the stability and competitiveness in the common currency area.

In the United States, a credible medium-term budget is needed for its fiscal consolidation, as the country still suffers from a high level of debt.

Emerging economies, meanwhile, must retain their strategies to ensure sustainable growth, improve adaptability to external shocks, and to reduce poverty.

According to IMF, global economy would grow by 3.6 percent in 2014 and by 3.9 percent in 2015.—Xinhua

AT&T in talks to buy DirecTV for nearly $50 billion

New York/Los Angeles, 14 May — AT&T Inc is in active talks to buy satellite TV provider DirecTV and may complete a deal in the next few weeks that could be worth close to $50 billion, two people familiar with the matter said on Monday.

The second-largest wireless operator is discussing an offer in the low- to mid-$90s per share for DirecTV, one of the people said, compared with the company’s closing price of $87.16 on Monday.

A bid near $85 per share would value DirecTV at more than $48 billion based on its shares outstanding, and would represent a premium of more than 20 percent to its stock price before news of AT&T’s interest first emerged on 1 May. The deal price has yet to be finalized and terms could still change, the people said, adding that discussions are continuing.

They asked not to be named because the matter is not public.

Other details also have yet to be worked out, such as a break-up fee as well as a potential role for DirecTV Chief Executive Officer Mike White, the second person said. The talks are the latest sign of a rising tide of potential megadeals in the telecoms, cable and satellite TV space, which is being rolled by Comcast Corp’s proposed $45 billion takeover of Time Warner Cable Inc as well as market forces such as the rise of Web-based TV and surging mobile Internet usage.

AT&T and DirecTV declined to comment. Bloomberg News earlier reported that AT&T was offering to pay around $100 per share for DirecTV, whose management team will continue to run the company as a unit of AT&T. The Wall Street Journal said a deal could happen in two weeks.

DirecTV shares rose 6 percent to $92.50 extended trading on Monday. DirecTV is working with advisers including Goldman Sachs Group to evaluate a possible combination following a recent takeover approach from AT&T, Reuters reported last week.

A combination of AT&T and DirecTV would create a pay television giant close in size to where Comcast will be if it completes its pending acquisition of Time Warner Cable. For that reason, the proposed merger is likely to face a prolonged battle to convince regulators to allow further consolidation in pay-TV.

Reuters

Pregnancy linked to car crash risk

New York, 14 May — Women are at increased risk of being seriously injured during a motor vehicle accident during the second trimester of pregnancy, according to a new study from Canada. Pregnant women were 42 percent more likely to be involved in a motor vehicle accident that sent them to an emergency room, compared to when they weren’t carrying a child, researchers found.

“A normal pregnancy is usually accompanied by a lot of fatigue, nausea, mood fluctuations, anxieties and distractions which may all contribute to distracted driving,” Dr Donald Redelmeier, the study’s lead author from the University of Toronto, told Reuters Health.

Redelmeier, who is also an internist at Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre in Toronto, said he got curios about the risk of vehicle crashes during pregnancy, because pregnant women would ask about the danger in other activities, such as riding a rollercoaster.

“Once we was asked about road safety despite it being a larger risk to mother and child,” he said. For the new study, he and his colleagues analyzed data on all adult women who gave birth in the Canadian province of Ontario between April 2006 and March 2011.

They compared the women’s crash rates before and after pregnancy to see if there was a difference.

Over half a million

women gave birth and accounted for about 8,000 crashes as drivers during that time.

The researchers found that the rate of accidents was about 24.6 crashes per 1,000 women before pregnancy, compared to 7.7 crashes per 1,000 women during their second trimester. The increased rate was present regardless of a woman’s background and demographics. It also didn’t seem to matter whether the woman already had children.—Reuters

OPEC raises oil demand forecast for 2014

Vienna, 14 May — OPEC raised its forecast on the demand for its oil in 2014 to 29.8 million barrels per day (bpd), 110,000 bpd higher than its previous projection, the Vienna-based cartel said on Tuesday.

In its latest monthly report, the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) said its oil output in April rose by 131,000 bpd to 29.59 million bpd, largely due to higher supply by Iraq and Saudi Arabia.—Xinhua

The longer parents smoke, the more likely their kids will, too

New York, 14 May — Parents should quit smoking while their children are young to help prevent them from picking up the habit later on, according to a new study.

“Our analysis showed that the longer adolescents are exposed to a parent’s smoking when the parent is addicted to nicotine, the more likely they are to begin smoking and to become regular smokers in the future,” said lead author Darren Mays.

Quitting is of course important for parents’ health, and could be important for kids’ health too, said Mays, a public health researcher with the Cancer Prevention & Control Program at the Lombardi Comprehensive Cancer Center of Georgetown University Medical Center in Washington, DC.

“Our results suggest that for parents who are addicted smokers (quitting) may also reduce the likelihood that their children will go on to become smokers in the future,” he told Reuters Health.

For the study, Mays and his colleagues followed 400 teens from early to late adolescence. Researchers separately interviewed the kids, most around age 14, and one of their parents, about their respective smoking histories.

The kids were interviewed again one year later and again four years after that. Six percent of the kids were already regular smokers when the study began. Thirty percent of the kids reported at all three interviews that they had never smoked.

The rest of the kids either experimented with a few cigarettes early on – nearly half of whom became regular smokers by year five - or experimented later on.

Reuters
Astronaut Koichi Wakata, the first Japanese captain of the International Space Station, smiles after landing aboard the Russian Soyuz spacecraft in Zhezkazgan, Kazakhstan, on 14 May, 2014.—Kyodo News

Coral reefs provide protection from storms, rising seas

WASHINGTON, 14 May — Coral reefs may offer a comparable but “significantly cheaper” alternative to artificial coastal defences to protect coastal cities in many parts of the world from incoming waves, storms and rising seas, an international team of researchers said on Tuesday. “Coral reefs can be an effective first line of defense and these benefits are important for many nations,” the researchers, led by marine scientist of the Nature Conservancy Michael Beck, wrote in the British journal Nature Communications.

The researchers performed a meta-analysis of 27 previous studies of how coral reefs around the world dissipate wave energy, conducted in conditions ranging from normal surf to hurricane-level waves. They found that coral reefs reduce wave energy that would otherwise impact coastlines by an average of 97 percent. The reef crest, or shallowest part of the reef where the waves break first, dissipates 86 percent of wave energy on its own, they said. “It is a huge reduction,” said study co-author Fiorenza Micheli, a professor of biological sciences at Stanford University, adding that the effects were comparable to artificial breakwaters engineered specifically to dissipate wave energy. Storing and recovering reefs also makes economic sense. The median cost for building artificial breakwaters is 19,791 US dollars per meter, compared to 1,290 dollars per meter for coral reef restoration projects, they said. “On average, the costs of the restoration projects were significantly cheaper than costs of building tropical breakwaters,” the researchers wrote. “As living structures, reefs have the potential for self-repair and thus lower maintenance costs as compared with artificial structures.” The researchers estimated that about 197 million people worldwide can receive risk reduction benefits from coral reefs alone or may have to bear higher costs of disasters if the reefs are degraded.

BlackBerry to let rival systems manage its devices

TORONTO, 14 May — BlackBerry Ltd said on Tuesday it planned to allow rival mobile device management players to manage its BlackBerry 10 devices on the internal networks of their clients, marking a swift shift in strategy for the embattled technology company. Waterloo, Ontario-based BlackBerry said VMware Inc subsidiary AirWatch, Citrix Systems Inc and International Business Machines Corp would be the first companies to manage its new line of smartphones on their own mobile device management systems.

The move by BlackBerry is in effect a tacit nod that some large corporate clients are using or are switching to rival MDM players to manage devices on their internal corporate networks. Allowing these companies to manage BlackBerry 10 devices ensures that their customers still get employee freedoms to choose BlackBerry’s new devices as their smartphones. BlackBerry, a pioneer in the smartphone industry, is trying to engineer a turnaround after its new line of devices have failed to win back market share ceded to rivals such as Apple Inc’s iPhone and Samsung Electronics Co’s line of Galaxy devices powered by Google’s Android operating system.

Under new Chief Executive John Chen, BlackBerry is trying to transform into a more services-oriented company, with an emphasis on MDM. John Sims, who heads BlackBerry’s enterprise division, said he did not expect the move to hurt the company’s own MDM business. “We have organized the company into four divisions, and we have indicated that each of the divisions needs to be successful in its own right” said Sims. “Today’s announcement is an example of how the devices business needs to pursue its success as an entity by opening the BlackBerry 10 platform to other MDM players.” “We believe MDM as a capability is just table stakes these days, and really, the market has moved beyond that into how do you manage applications, manage data in transit on devices,” he said.

BlackBerry is better positioned than its rivals to offer such services, he added.—Reuters

Google hopes test drives steer Americans to embrace its robot cars

MOUNTAIN VIEW, (California), 14 May—Google Inc’s self-driving car technology likely will not be available for several more years. But the Internet company is already beginning the job of making the public comfortable with the futuristic vehicles.

A fleet of Google’s robot cars ferried more than two dozen reporters around Mountain View, California, on Tuesday, in 30-minute ride-alongs that showcased their ability to automatically and safely navigate around city streets packed with cyclists, pedestrians and traffic signs.

The demonstrations, along with a morning of press briefings by Google managers developing the technology, marked the company’s most concerted effort to date to provide an up-close look at the cars conceived five years ago in its secretive Google X division. The public needs to understand that a self-driving car is “not something that you need to fear but something that you need to embrace,” said Ron Medford, a former National Highway Traffic and Safety Administration official who is now director of safety for Google’s self-driving car project. “We do find that when people experience it, we get remarkable results and responses,” Medford said at the event at the Computer History Museum, during which Google explained the technology that makes the cars work.

Google founders Larry Page and Sergey Brin tout the driverless car as revolutionary technology that could eventually sharply reduce fatalities on the road. But it remains to be seen whether it’s ready for widespread use.

Lately, some of Google’s ambitious “moonshot” projects have stirred unease. A Google self-driving vehicle drives around the parking lot at the Computer History Museum after a presentation in Mountain View, California on 13 May, 2014.—Reuters
Aviation industry to work on voluntary tracking ahead of UN rules

MONTREAL, 14 May — The United Nations aviation agency said on Tuesday that the industry would voluntarily begin to improve aircraft tracking while the body develops mandatory standards following the disappearance of Malaysia Airlines flight MH370.

The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) gave no firm timeline for when those binding standards on flight tracking would go into effect, reflecting the challenge of reaching an agreement with industry and governments around the world on a long-standing problem.

“A standard takes longer, it takes time. The process of cooperation is long but it’s important,” said Nancy Graham, director of ICAO’s Air Navigation Bureau, at a press conference. Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Razak called for the body to adopt real-time tracking of civilian aircraft and other measures. “In an age of smartphones and mobile Internet, real-time tracking of commercial airplanes is long overdue,” he said in a signed article in the Wall Street Journal. Najib also recommended changing airplane communications systems so they could not be disabled in mid-flight and prolonging the battery life of “black boxes”, which record cockpit conversations and aircraft data, to make them easier to locate after accidents.

“These changes may not have prevented the MH370 or Air France 447 tragedies,” he said, referring to an Air France flight that crashed on route to Paris from Brazil in 2009. “But they would make it harder for an aircraft to simply disappear, and easier to find any aircraft that did.”

Najib also accepted that Malaysian authorities delayed getting a search operation for MH370 underway after Boeing 777 disappeared from air traffic control screens on a flight from Kuala Lumpur to Beijing just over two months ago.

“The response time should and will be investigated,” he said.

No trace of Flight MH370 has been found since it went missing on 8 March, prompting an intensive search in commercial aviation history.

The countries that belong to ICAO’s governing council met with industry groups on Monday and Tuesday in Montreal. They agreed global tracking of aircraft was needed following the disappearance of flight MH370, but did not commit to a binding, global standard when they would do so.

Instead, a task force set up by global airline industry group the International Air Transport Association (IATA) agreed to come up with proposals for better tracking by the end of September, and IATA said its members would begin implementing them voluntarily, before any rules were in place.

Reuters

South Korean crew member says ‘we were ordered’ to leave sinking ferry

SEOUL, 14 May — A member of crew of a South Korean ferry that sank last week said on Thursday he and his colleagues were “under command” to abandon ship.

The Sewol, weighing almost 7,000 tonnes, sank on a routine trip from the port of Incheon, near Seoul, to the southern holiday island of Jeju. Investigations are focused on human error and mechanical failure.

The unidentified crew member, speaking confidentially to reporters on the way to court back into detention, was speaking behind a surgical mask and wearing a baseball cap with a jacket hood. More than 300 people, most of them students and teachers from the same school, are dead or missing presumed dead in the 16 April disaster. As the ferry began sinking, the crew told the children to stay in their cabins.

Reuters

Italy threatens to release refugees into EU unless help increases

ROME, 14 May — Italy threatened to allow refugees to cross its borders into neighbouring countries on Tuesday unless the European Union takes charge of a sea operation to manage the flow of migrants crossing in boats from North Africa.

Interior Minister Angelino Alfano demanded more help after the Italian navy task force ‘Mare Nostrum’ rescued more than 200 migrants and recovered 17 bodies when the boat carrying them sank off the Libyan coast.

“The European Union has two options: either it comes to the Mediterranean to put the EU flag on Mare Nostrum or we will let migrants with right of asylum leave for other countries,” Alfano wrote on messaging site Twitter.

The European Commission for Home Affairs, Cecilia Malmstrom, did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

With less than two weeks before European parliamentary elections, immigration has become a hot political topic. Italian politicians have long demanded more help from the rest of the European Union to deal with the crisis, which disproportionately affects the bloc’s southernmost countries.

They have called for a change to rules which oblige asylum seekers to remain in the country in which they first arrive. Many migrants hope to travel onwards into northern European countries with stronger economies than Italy, which has grown little in a decade and where unemployment is near 40-year highs.

At least 34,800 people have made the treacherous crossing from North Africa to Europe so far this year, compared to 43,000 in all of 2013. This puts the annual total on track to surpass the 60,000 who made the trip in 2011 when the Arab Spring revolutions loosened border controls, according to the UN refugee agency UNHCR. Hundrels of people have died after their flimsy and overcrowded boats sank on the route.

Reuters

Estonian-based NATO jet fighters fly first interception

TALLINN, 14 May — Estonian-based NATO jet fighters, made scram-bled interception around Tuesday noon to address unidentified objects nearing Baltic air space, first interception since its arrival in Estonia, Estonian Defence Ministry announced.

The announcement posted on home page of Estonian Defence Ministry did not reveal exactly what the NATO jets identified.

Estonian Air Force chief of staff Taavi Tiir said Danish F-16 jets, which currently stationed at the Amari base near the Amari airbase some 50 kilometres outside Tallinn, reacted quickly and the staff of the air force base acted professionally. Four Danish fighters arrived in Estonia on May 1, turning Amari into the Baltic’s second airbase in the region. The fighters and 60-strong ground crew, will stay in Estonia until the end of August, and are likely to be replaced by jets from another NATO air force.
Turkey plans to build two nuclear power plants

ANKARA, 14 May—Turkey and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) discussed on Tuesday about the country’s plans to build two nuclear power plants.

"We discussed the construction of nuclear power plants in Akkuyu and Sinop in line with technical specifications of the agency," Turkish Energy Minister Taner Yildiz said at a press conference with Director General of the IAEA Yukiya Amano in Ankara.

"There are technologies universities of nuclear power plants in France, Russia, South Korea, Japan and the United States. We plan to open one in Turkey," the minister added.

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Pop singer Justin Bieber accused of attempted robbery

Recording artist and entertainer Justin Bieber attends game four of the second round of the 2014 NBA Playoffs between the Oklahoma City Thunder and the Los Angeles Clippers at Staples Centre.—Reuters

Los Angeles, 14 May — Pop singer Justin Bieber has been accused of attempted robbery, a Los Angeles Police Department official said on Tuesday, following media reports that he had tried to snatch a young woman’s mobile telephone.

Bieber, 20, has not been arrested or questioned, said LAPD spokeswoman Rosario Herrera. A spokeswoman for Bieber did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Detectives have interviewed the victim, who reported the alleged crime, Herrera said. The incident occurred at about 10:30 pm on Monday in the Van Nuys area of Los Angeles.

Media reported Bieber allegedly tried to take a young woman’s mobile phone, according to Sgt Paul McLaughlin with LAPD’s Devonshire Division, which includes Northridge and other areas of the San Fernando Valley.

Reuters

Lady Gaga
Dubai concert censored to respect culture

Dubai, 14 May — A planned Lady Gaga concert in Dubai in September will be censored to respect cultural traditions, the United Arab Emirates daily Gulf News reported on Tuesday.

Lady Gaga, who is known for her outrageous stunts and provocative costumes, canceled a concert in Indonesia in 2012 because of security concerns over objections by Islamic groups to her style.

The Gulf News quoted Marco Rios, the chairman and CEO of AMI Live, one of the three firms involved in bringing Gaga to Dubai, as saying: “There will be some edits for Dubai. It cannot be the full show, because it wouldn’t be allowed. So it’s a special show for Dubai and for the culture.”

Reuters could not immediately reach a representative for Lady Gaga for comment.

The UAE, where expatriates make up most of the population, has had to contend with controversy surrounding international pop artists’ shows in the Muslim state.

In 2012, many Emiratis were enraged by a concert Madonna held in Abu Dhabi, one of seven emirates in the UAE, which included erotic dancing and a Hebrew prayer.

Lady Gaga’s concert in Dubai, part of her arIRAVE: The ARTPOP Ball tour, is set for 10 September.

Reuters

Cannes set to open, with fans, stars and tight security

CANNES (France), 14 May — Film fans already are standing outside security cordons with no idea which stars may show up, and security guards are keeping a constant vigil for potential jewel thieves as the 67th Cannes Film Festival prepares to open on Wednesday.

With huge yachts bobbing in the Mediterranean and luxury boutiques along the famous La Croisette boulevard making finishing touches to their displays, the 12-day pageant that is the international film world’s answer to Hollywood’s Oscars kicks off with the world premiere of “Grace of Monaco.”

“I think the selection has so many talents now that it’s like (being) a kid in a candy store,” Danish director Nicolas Winding Refn said as he arrived on Tuesday.

Winding Refn is one of nine judges on a majority female jury headed by New Zealand director Jane Campion, the only woman ever to win the festival’s top Palme d’Or prize.

There are 18 films in competition for the Palme d’Or, which will be handed out along with other prizes at the end of the festival on 24 May. It is a huge draw for the industry and public alike, with an estimated 127,000 visitors expected, plus 30,000 accredited professionals, 4,000 journalists and 700 technicians, according to a periodical distributed by the festival.

Benedicte Bourdon, 30, visiting for the first time with her parents from the northwestern French city of Cherbourg, said she had no idea which stars would show up on the other side of a security cordon where she was standing outside a hotel, but being there was a thrill. “It’s great fun to be here,” Bourdon said.

“Films can make you feel emotion or laugh, and some make you reflect on life.”

Last year some of those who attended the festival were less than welcomed, having made off with jewels worth several million dollars.

The security presence this year is conspicuous, with dark-jacketed men standing outside or immediately inside fancy boutiques, but it is no more than usual, a security guard said.

“It was already at the maximum,” said the guard who did not want to give his name for what he said were “security reasons.”

The opening film stars Nicole Kidman as the Hollywood actress Grace Kelly who became the Princess of Monaco when she married Prince Rainier, and died following a car crash in 1982 in the hills of the principality, not far from Cannes.—Reuters

Contestants of Miss Tourism International pose for photos during the 2014 Miss Tourism Int’l China Final in Wuhan, capital of central China’s Hubei Province, on 12 May, 2014. The Miss Tourism International China Final kicked off here on 12 May 2014. Xinhua

Musician Lady Gaga arrives at the 2014 Vanity Fair Oscars Party in West Hollywood, California on 2 March, 2014.—Reuters

Lady Gaga's concert in Dubai, part of her arIRAVE: The ARTPOP Ball tour, is set for 10 September.
Rush hour bombs targeting Shi’ites kill 24 in Baghdad

BAGHDAD, 14 May — A series of car bombs exploded across Baghdad at rush hour on Tuesday, killing at least 24 people in the deadliest attacks since last month’s elections, from which votes are still being counted.

The apparently co-ordinated blasts targeted mainly Shi’ite districts of the capital.

“I was trying to pick up a passenger when a fireball and a thunderous blast shook my taxi,” said Kadhim Ali, a driver who narrowly escaped one of the three explosions in the slums of Sadr City. “I saw people with their clothes stained with blood shouting for help.” Preliminary results from the 30 April parliamentary election are expected within the coming days.

Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki, a Shi’ite, is seeking a third term despite worsening violence that critics blame in no small part on his policies towards the country’s Sunni minority.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the bombings, but Sunni Islamist insurgents have been regaining ground in Iraq over the past year and are known to target Shi’ites.

There were blasts in several other neighbor-hoods, and three soldiers were killed by a roadside bomb while patrolling in Doura District, security sources said. The past year has seen violence return to levels unseen since the darkest days of the US military “surge” under President George W Bush, with hundreds of civilians killed every month.

Government forces are fighting Sunni militiamen across western Anbar province, northern Iraq and in the countryside surrounding Baghdad. Shi’ite militia, once kept in check by Maliki and the Americans, have resurfaced to join the battle.

Further north, a suicide bomber driving a car blew himself up at an Iraqi army checkpoint in Rashad, around 40 km (25 miles) southwest of the disputed city of Kirkuk, killing five soldiers, security sources said.

No hurry for Financial Fair Play decisions, says UEFA

TURIN, 14 May — UEFA says there is no hurry to announce punishments for clubs, including Paris St Germain and Manchester City, that have breached new rules designed to make wealthy clubs for spending more money and say they appear, Kadyrbayev and Tsarnaev, are also expected to argue that some of the charges against their clients are too vague and to seek to forbid prosecutors to read some of their early statements to police at the trial, set to begin in June.

Their attorneys have argued that the intense publicity surrounding the April 15, 2013, blasts that killed three people and injured 264 and the upcoming trial of Tsarnaev, the surviving member of a pair of ethnic Chechen brothers also accused of shooting dead a police officer, will make it all but impossible to find an impartial jury to hear the case at US District Court in Boston.

Federal prosecutors contend that three men, Kazakh exchange students Dias Kadyrbayev and Azamat Tazhayakov and Cambridge, Massachusetts, resident Robel Phillipos, went to Tsarnaev’s dorm room three days after the attack and removed a backpack and laptop computer as police were searching for the suspected bomber.

Kadyrbayev and Tazhayakov face charges of conspiracy and obstruction of justice, which carry the penalty of up to 25 years in prison, while Phillipos faces a less serious charge of lying to investigators, which carries a possible 16-year sentence.

The Kazakhs have been held in federal custody on immigration violations since their arrest days after the attack. Phillipos is out on bail. The three may be present in court on Tuesday to testify about whether statements they made to police after their arrests were made voluntarily, according to court filings. If they appear, Kadyrbayev and Tazhayakov will be permitted to wear civilian clothes rather than prison jump suits, US District Judge Douglas Woodlock ruled over the weekend.

Friends of accused Boston bomber to seek relocation of trial

BOSTON, 14 May — Lawyers for three friends of the accused Boston Marathon bomber charged with hampering the investigation into the deadly 2013 blasts are due in court on Tuesday to ask a judge to dismiss the charges or move their upcoming trial out of town.

Attorneys for the three men, college friends of accused bomber Dzhokhar Tsarnaev, are also expected to argue that some of the charges against their clients are too vague and to seek to forbid prosecutors to read some of their early statements to police at the trial, set to begin in June.

Their attorneys have argued that the intense public
Bruce planning no chances with Hull’s FA Cup final team

London 14 May — Hull City manager Steve Bruce will take no risks with any player less than 100 percent fit for Saturday’s FA Cup final against hot favourites Arsenal, he said on Tuesday.

“When it comes to such a big game I’ll have to weigh it up and make sure everybody’s in the right frame of mind,” the former Manchester United and Norwich City defender told a news conference.

“Physically they have all got to be 100 percent.”

Promoted Hull, who finished fifth from bottom in the Premier League this season, have reached a major final for the first time.

“It’s a new experience for me as a manager and it’s a wonderful achievement for the club and the city,” Bruce said.

“It’s a working-class city and if we can bring the cup back and give it something to shout about it would be terrific.”

The much-travelled Bruce took time to sympathise with Tim Sherwood who was sacked as manager of sixth-placed Tottenham Hotspur earlier on Tuesday.

“I never thought I’d see the day but it’s now becoming like it is in Europe or South America — in fact it’s probably worse now,” said the Hull boss.

“We keep getting told the average lifespan is 13 months and another good young manager has just left the job.

“From the outside I don’t know how much more he could have done. In terms of results he’s been terrific.”

Bruce, 53, said the insecurity surrounding the profession made him determined to enjoy Saturday’s final all the more.

“I’ve been in management for 15 years now and two or three people have lost their jobs in the last 48 hours so I’m going to take a deep breath and enjoy the occasion,” he explained.

—Reuters

Terry signs new Chelsea contract

London, 14 May — Chelsea captain John Terry has signed a new one-year contract, the Premier League club said on their website (www.chelseafc.com) on Tuesday.

The 33-year-old central defender has played more than 500 games for Chelsea, who he joined as a 14-year-old in 1991.

He has won the Champions League and Europa League, three Premier League titles, five FA Cups and two League Cups. Terry played 78 times for England before announcing his international retirement in September 2012.

“I’m delighted to have signed an extension to my contract with Chelsea taking me into my 20th year with the club,” he said.

“I’d like to thank the fans and club for their continued support, and the manager (Jose Mourinho) who was instrumental for me last season.”

Chelsea chief executive Ron Gourlay added: “We are very pleased John, who is an undoubted Chelsea legend, will continue to lead the team next season, as he has done for so many years with unrivalled achievement.

“Both Chelsea FC and John have been clear throughout that we wanted his outstanding career at the club to continue, and it is important the matter has been concluded so soon after the end of the season, allowing us to look forward to and plan for 2014-15.”

Media reports said Chelsea midfielder Frank Lampard will also sign a new deal, although the future of a third experienced England international, Ashley Cole, is less clear.

Mourinho said last week that he hoped all three players would stay.

—Reuters

Djokovic reaches third round in Italian Open

Rome, 14 May — Novak Djokovic came back from a right wrist injury with beating Czech veteran Radosevic 6-3, 7-5 in the second round of the Italian Open on Tuesday. The second-ranked Serb, who showed no signs of pain after withdrawing from last week’s Madrid Open, committed just nine unforced errors to Stepanek’s 27.

“I was one of the most difficult conditions I’ve ever played in my life,” said Djokovic.

“Playing when it’s very windy on the court, especially on clay, the clay gets in your eyes. It was very difficult to get any kind of rhythm. Stepanek is a very experienced player, so that’s why I had to be super-focused every game because I knew he had this variety of shots,” he said.

—Reuters

Li Na reaches 500th-win record

ROME, 14 May — Top seed Li Na beat Casey Dellacqua in straight sets in the second round of Internazionali BNL d’Italia in Rome on Tuesday to record the 500th professional match win of her career.

The Chinese player compiled an 84% first serve percentage and converted six of seven break points as she lost to wild-card Camila Giorgi 6-4, 7-6 (7-2).

Djokovic put behind the memory of his shock opening-round exit from Madrid to make a thumping start to his Italian Open campaign, beating qualifier Pere Riba 6-0, 6-3.

The third-seeded Wawrinka advanced in just 50 minutes, winning 83 per cent of his service points and breaking his Spanish opponent four times.

Fifth-seeded Spaniard David Ferrer also advanced as he dismissed Mikhail Kukushkin 6-1, 6-2. Milos Raonic fought off a second-set fightback to beat Simone Bolelli 6-3, 7-6 (5) in the second round. The eighth-seeded Canadian saved two set points, serving at 5-6, 15/40 in the 12th game before rallying from a 1-4 deficit in the tie-break to clinch victory in one hour and 40 minutes.—Xinhua