Participants of UPWC-NCCT meeting hope to conclude second draft single text document at Thursday’s meeting

By Ye Myint

“More trust could be built between the two sides by a series of meetings seeking compromise on a single text document for the nationwide ceasefire agreement,” said U Hla Maung Shwe of Myanmar Peace Centre on Wednesday.

Giving an interview to media after a first-day single text meeting between Union Peace-Making Work Committee and National Ceasefire Coordination Team-NCCT, he expressed his willingness for political dialogue before the end of this year. Under a proposal to conclude drafting the single text document this July, both sides paid more attention on completion of the document but points temporarily agreed at Wednesday’s meeting have to be submitted to the leaders of both sides, he added.

Lt-Gen Thet Naing Win, general secretary of KNU, Pado Saw Kwe Htoo Win, secretory of KNU, were among the attendees from UPWC led by Union Minister U Aung Min. An eight-member team of NCCT formed with 16 ethnic armed groups was led by Pado Saw Kwe Htoo Win. An eight-member team of NCCT formed with 16 ethnic armed groups was led by Pado Saw Kwe Htoo Win, general secretary of KNU. Pado Saw Kwe Htoo Win asserted in his briefing to media at Myanmar Peace Centre that hosted UPWC-NCCT’s single text meeting that both sides reached agreements over a use of terminology that made disputes between the two sides before and most of the points facing both sides difficult to accept.

Dr Salai Hlyan Hmon Sar Khaung, another member of NCCT and also the head of Chin National Front, defined Wednesday’s meeting as a more constructive discussion seeing progress in building mutual understanding.

Discussions on the detailed principles covered the government-proposed self-determination that ethnic armed groups called for. UPWC and NCCT launched the two-day talks to discuss a first draft single text document for a nationwide ceasefire at Myanmar Peace Centre on 5 April. Should no consensus be reached at the end of the two-day meeting on Thursday, the talks will be extended until Friday, officials said.

Marble sculptors to urge Ministry of Mines to ban illegal marble mining

Col Khun Okkar, chairman of Pa-O National Liberation Organization, voiced.

“Three Main National Causes” and a genuine federal union based on democracy, equality and the right of self-determination that ethnic armed groups called for.

Ministry of Mines to ban illegal marble mining

YANGON, 21 May — A marble sculptor’s group in Mandalay is planning to lodge a complaint to the Ministry of Mines about illegal marble mining in Madaya, Mandalay Region.

Local marble sculptors are experiencing job shortages as Chinese nationals, who have obtained the right to mine from locals, are exploiting the resources for the Chinese market.

Officials said that the locals have only leased the blocks and are therefore not allowed to sell the mines, but must return them to the ministry if they do not want to continue work there, according to the Mining Law.

Illegal sales of blocks to Chinese are, however, rampant and the result is the destruction of the local, formerly huge job market for sculptors, a marble sculptor said, adding that the marble stones are all being sent to China for sculpting.

The foreign miners started to buy mining blocks at Yechaung and Myaingtaung areas from local miners in early March, according to a local sculptor.
**High Level Advocacy Workshop on International Disaster Law organized**

**NAY PYI TAW, 21 May—**The natural disaster management law was enacted on 31 July 2013 for effectively carry out natural disaster management in the nation, Dr Daw Myat Myat added that authorities are undertaking reduction from impacts of natural disasters, readiness and response for the state of emergency and recovery of the victims from the disasters. It was jointly organized by Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement, Myanmar Red Cross Society and International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.—MNA

**Nobody injured as Singapore Airlines plane skids off runway in Yangon**

**YANGON, 21 May—**An Airbus A-330 model 9V STS aircraft of Singapore Airlines that carried more than 250 passengers skidded off the runway No. 21 at the Yangon International Airport on Wednesday morning, with officials saying that nobody was injured in the incident. The right wheel and left wing of the plane were damaged. Deputy Director-General of the Department of Civil Aviation U Win Swe Tun said, that “Action is being taken by the Singapore Investigation Team that arrived here Wednesday afternoon.” About 200 passengers who bought tickets to Singapore were transferred onto another aircraft of Singapore Airlines, he added.

With rainy season in Myanmar now started, officials said the rain may have played a role.—MNA

**Post-enumeration activities underway**

**NAY PYI TAW, 21 May—**With the assistance of UNFPA, the Department of Population under the Ministry of Immigration and Population is taking post-enumeration activities after taking the census nationwide. According to officials, there are three major processes involved — receiving, preparation and scanning of questionnaires as part of post enumeration activities.

Director of the department of population Dr Nyi Nyi, who is leading the receiving process of the project, said that 25% of the whole project has been finished. Questionnaires from Mandalay Region, Rakhine, Kachin and Kayin States have been received. At present, those of Shan State (North) are still being checked. He added that any facts about questionnaires collected are yet to be released by the department. Director of the department of population Daw Khang Soe is currently leading the data processing (scanning process) of the project. She said that except India, all world countries use pencils in taking census under the instructions of DRS Company, which provides technical service for collecting data. A preliminary report of the census is expected to be released by the end of August 2014.—NLM

**Myanmar, Canada see environmental conservation**

**NAY PYI TAW, 21 May—**Deputy Minister for Environmental Conservation and Forestry Dr. Daw Thet Thet Zin received Member of the Privy Council of Canada and Former Member of the Canadian Parliament The Hon. Jim Abbott and Member of the Canadian Parliament and Chairman of the Standing Parliament Committee on Natural Resources The Hon. Leon Benoit, Embasy Connections Canada President and Vice-President Mr. Gerald Sherman and Mrs. Carol Sherman at the ministry in Nay Pyi Taw on 19 morning.

They discussed conservation of environment and natural resources between the two countries, investment in forestry sector, technical assistance and promotion of relations between the peoples of two countries.—MNA

**Social organizations to perform fundraising concert on 1 June for IDPs in Kachin and Northern Shan states**

**YANGON, 21 May—**Lut Latt Nyen Chan Pann Ye Lian Social Network, Shwethanzin Music Foundation and the Action Times Foundation will make a trip to Kachin and Northern Shan States in order to donate cash for internally displaced persons at relief camps there for the third time.

Funding concert will be performed by Kachin vocalists in Yangon, Mandalay, PyinOoLwin, Naungghkio, Kyaukme, Hsipaw, Lashio, Kutkai and Muse towns. The trip will start in the evening of 1 June in Yangon, with the performers expected to arrive in the north on 8 June.

“We do not expect to get more support as famous vocalists are not interested in this activity because of the long trip. We have a few active singers including my son to perform at the shows,” said U Win Maw, Chairman of Shwethanzin Foundation at a media conference on Wednesday in Yangon.

He added the foundation has a plan to perform at the fundraising shows and provide aids to the victims around Buthidaung and Maungtaw townships in Rakhine State.

Kachin Singer M Seng La said about his mission that he wants to help those with both physical and mental issues and hopes that his song for peace will bring a little joy.

Kachin vocalist M Seng La is presenting her own song for peace to the attendees at a media conference on Wednesday at Orchid Hotel City Hall near Sula Pagoda in Yangon.—KHAING THANDA LWIN
Vice-President urges ministries to cooperate in human resource development

Nay Pyi Taw, 21 May—Vice-President Dr. Sai Mauk Kham highlighted the need to nurture human resources in his speech at a meeting of the central planning and implementation committee for human resource development held in Nay Pyi Taw on Wednesday.

To build a modern and developed nation, it is important to draw human resource development programs to nurture qualified workers and assign them to required sectors, the Vice-President told the meeting.

He said human resource development means training workers or staff of an organization so that they possess skills, knowledge and a good attitude.

He said that one of the weaknesses of Myanmar most foreign governments and organizations point out is the slow human resource development and the purpose of the meeting is to discuss the human resource development programs of respective ministries, regional governments, and private sectors. After the Vice-President’s speech, Union Minister for Education Dr. Daw Khin San Yi, Union Minister for Science and Technology Dr. Ko Ko Oo, Deputy Minister for Health Dr. Than Aung and officials explained the measures planned to fulfill the task.—MNA

Human resources development plays a vital role to emerge skilled workers

Rooqgtsa of Thai Ministry of Defence and Singaporean Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Hian Kong Robert Chua who attended the 8th ASEAN Defence Ministers’ Meeting (ADMM) at Royal Myanmar Golf Country Club in Nay Pyi Taw on Wednesday morning.

After the golf friendly, the Union minister hosted a luncheon to them at the golf club. MNA

Vice-President U Nyan Tun to attend 23rd World Economic Forum on East Asia

Yangon, 21 May—Vice-President U Nyan Tun left Yangon on Wednesday morning to attend the 23rd World Economic Forum on East Asia in Manila.

The Vice-President was seen off at Yangon International Airport by Yangon Chief Minister U Myint Swe and region ministers, the Philippine Ambassador and other officials.

He was accompanied by Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs U Thant Kyaw and officials.

Union Ministers U Win Shein, U Win Myint and U Hay Aung, who will also attend the forum, left on Tuesday for the Philippines.—MNA

MOAI, JICA sign on grant agreement for food security for underprivileged farmers

Yangon, 21 May—On 14th May, the Agricultural Mechanization Department-ADM under the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation-MOAI and Japan International Cooperation Agency-JICA successfully signed a grant agreement of the food security project for underprivileged farmers (1KP)-FY2013 after signing of exchange of note between the two governments on 24th March.

The project is to provide agricultural machinery of two hundred and thirty million Japanese Yen (230,000,000 JPY) worth to AMD grant aid scheme of the government of Japan.

The project is following the similar project package of previous year, 2KR-FY 2012 grant aid. Under this year’s project, agricultural machinery will be provided to AMD tractor stations that covers approximately 9833 acres of farmland in five target townships; Pyinmana, Natatalin, Otwin, Madaya and Shwebo.

The project specifically focuses on improving small farmers’ access to AMD’s machinery service by granting four-wheel tractors, combine harvesters and accessories to AMD tractor stations that provide machinery services to local farmers. It is also expected that AMD machinery operators will gain technique of operation and maintenance of modern agriculture machinery.—MLM

Ministers of ADMM participate in golf friendly

Nay Pyi Taw, 21 May—Union Minister for Defence Lt-Gen Wai Lwin played the golf friendly together with Cambodian Deputy Prime Minister and Defence Minister Mr Tea Banh, Secretary of National Defence of the Philippines Mr Voltaire Tuvera Gazmin, Deputy Minister for Defence Maj-Gen Kyaw Nyunt, Deputy Minister of Defence of Cambodia General Neang Phat, Maj-Gen Somsak Roongsita of Thai Ministry of Defence and Singaporean Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Hian Kong Robert Chua who attended the 8th ASEAN Defence Ministers’ Meeting (ADMM) at Royal Myanmar Golf Country Club in Nay Pyi Taw on Wednesday morning.

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Union Minister U Aye Myint poses for documentary photo with delegates to 4th ASEAN Human Resources Conference at Myanmar International Convention Centre-MICC in Nay Pyi Taw.

Nay Pyi Taw, 21 May—Cooperation in conducting technical trainings to the workers in ASEAN countries to emerge skilled workers was the main topic at the 4th ASEAN Human Resources Conference at Myanmar International Convention Centre-MICC in Zabuthiri Township in Nay Pyi Taw.

The Union Minister also discussed capacity improvement of migrant workers and promotion of production and economy among the ASEAN countries. The conference was attended by the senior officials, and delegates form ASEAN countries, China, Japan, ROK, ILO, ADB and ASEAN Secretariat. MNA

Union Minister for Labour, Employment and Social Security U Aye Myint said: “Human resources development plays a vital role to emerge skilled workers in ASEAN and professionalism training system is the best way to fulfill the technological needs of job finders and employers.”

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**Chin State plans to build dam in Haka**

KYAUKPADAUNG, 21 May—A feasibility study is being conducted for damming Thees River to supply water to Haka in Chin State and to generate electricity, officials said.

“Most of the towns in Chin State are located in hilly regions. Haka, Tedin and Falam townships are facing a shortage of water. To solve these problems, officials said, a dam will be built downstream of Thees River, with Japanese experts conducting a feasibility study there. A water supply project will be implemented on Ramfalo Creek, 25 miles from Haka. The project has been submitted to the Hluttaw, said Upper House MP U Steven Tha Beik of Chin State No. 4 constituency. Springs are drying up in Creeks and natural springs are drying up in Chin State due to deforestation and outbreaks of forest fire.

Linlet Kyel Sin

**Mobile medical team provides health care to locals in NyaungU District**

KYAUKPADAUNG, 21 May—In order to give health care services to rural people with now access to transport, a mobile military medical squad provided medical help to residents of the villages of NyaungU and Kyaukpadaung townships, NyaungU District, Mandalay Region, on Tuesday.

Under the guidance of the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services, a Mandalay, 21 May — A trade fair took place at Mandalay city hall from 18 to 21 May, with a body-building contest for men and beauty contest for women among the highlights.

Local and foreign companies displayed their products including cosmetics, electronic equipment, and textiles, attracting a large number of visitors.

On Tuesday evening, the Mr. and Miss Mandalay 2014 contest was held at the same venue.

Indian motorcycles enter Mandalay market

MANDALAY, 21 May—Motorcycle companies from China, Thailand, Vietnam and Indonesia have opened showrooms of motorcycles in Mandalay, with the Indian-manufactured TVS motorcycle new on the market. The showroom for the TVS brand opened on 34th Street at the corner of 77th and 78th streets in Chanayethazan Township. During the Maha Thingyan festival, sales promotions were held at the showroom, triggering huge response from the public.

150cc motorcycles are in high demand by youths from other townships and those from hilly regions of the nation, officials said.

Thiha Ko Ko (Mandalay)

**Trade fair at Mandalay City Hall a success with locals**

A total of 16 men and 18 women participated in the contest, with officials handing out cash prizes.

Thiha Ko Ko (Mandalay)

**New transformer supplies electricity in Chanayethazan Tsp after incident**

MANDALAY, 21 May—Following the damage of a large transformer at Yadanabon Market in Chanayethazan Township of Mandalay due to an animal on 18 May, the old transformer was replaced by authorities of the local Hemazala sub-power station. Electricity supply has now been restored.

On Tuesday afternoon, the electrification was back to normal when the new transformer was installed.

Maung Pyi Thu (Mandalay)

**Trade fair at Mandalay City Hall a success with locals**

Mandalay, 21 May—A township level scout trainer course concluded at No 1 Basic Education High School in Mohnyin of Kachin State on Tuesday afternoon. 120 basic education teachers attended the training course and participated in practical and theoretical exercises.

The trainers will in future organize scout groups and give so-called multiplier course to them at respective schools.

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Thiha Ko Ko (Mandalay)
Thai army chief summons political rivals to seek end to crisis

BANGKOK, 21 May — Thailand’s army chief summoned leaders of rival political groups and parties, Election Commission members and senators to a meeting on Wednesday, a day after he declared martial law, to discuss a way out of the country’s political turmoil. Although the military denied Tuesday’s surprise intervention amounted to a coup, General Prayuth Chan-ocha appears to be setting the agenda by forcing groups and organizations with a central role in the crisis to meet. “General Prayuth has called a meeting at the Army Club with all sides to talk about ways out of the country’s crisis,” deputy army spokesman Winthai Suvaree told Reuters, adding it would start at 1:30 pm (2:30 am EDT).

The Election Commission was meeting separately during the morning to consider the caretaker government’s proposal of a 3 August election. Anti-government protesters disrupted an election in February that was later annulled. They have said they will do the same for any re-run held before electoral changes designed to reduce the influence of ousted former premier Thaksin Shinawatra.

Twenty-eight people have been killed and 700 injured since this latest chapter in a near-decade-long power struggle between Thaksin and the royalist establishment flared up late last year. The turmoil has brought the country to the brink of cessation and raised fears of civil war. General Prayuth said he had imposed martial law to restore order, and the caretaker government says it is still running the country. “Certainly, it’s not an outright military coup by definition because the caretaker government is still in office, but on the ground it looks like the military is in charge,” said Thitinan Pongsudhirak, a political analyst at Chulalongkorn University.

He said Prayuth needed to convince everyone with a stake in the outcome of the need for “reforms before and after elections”. “He’s taking a lot of risk. Prayuth, because the imposition of martial law puts him in a very tight spot,” said Thitinan. Prayuth is expected to give a statement to the media during the meeting.

Philippines to host international conference on disaster risk reduction

MANILA, 21 May — The Philippines will host the Asia- Europe Meeting (ASEM) conference on disaster risk reduction and management from 4 to 6 June, the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) said on Wednesday. The DFA said around 150 senior government officials, academics, and business leaders from Asia and Europe will gather here to discuss how to handle future “mega-disasters” such as super typhoon Haiyan. The DFA said the conference is being held at a “crucial” time when the decade-old Hyogo Framework of Action (HFA) adopted by the world community as the global paradigm on disaster risk reduction and management (DRRM) is about to end in 2015. The Philippines aims to contribute to the new global architecture on DRRM with the ASEM Manila Conference document to be called “The Tacloban Declaration,” which will embody new policies and principles for disaster risk reduction and management.

India invites Pakistan PM to attend Modi’s swearing in ceremony

NEW DELHI, 21 May — India has invited Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif to attend the swearing in ceremony of its new prime minister Narendra Modi, said local media on Wednesday. New Delhi has also invited other heads of state or government of the member countries of the South Asia Association for Regional Cooperation to be present at the ceremony on 26 May.

Modi has called on Pakistan to stop all alleged hostile activities against India for improving relations. However, the Pakistan High Commission in Delhi has rejected any precondition for talks on improving bilateral relations.

UN chief urges all sides in Thailand to refrain from violence

UNITED NATIONS, 21 May — UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon on Tuesday urged all sides in Thailand to refrain from violence and fully respect human rights after the Thai army invoked martial law across the country.

Ban has consistently called on all sides to work together to seek a solution to the prolonged political stalemate through constructive dialogue, said a statement issued by his spokesperson.

The UN chief urged all sides to exercise utmost restraint, refrain from any violence and fully respect human rights, the statement said, noting that the way to secure Thailand’s peace and prosperity is “through full respect for democratic principles and engagement in democratic processes.”

In the face of a looming street chaos in the Thai capital, the US army declared Martial Law before dawn Tuesday, saying it was aimed to keep the country stable after six months of protests.

France calls for political solution to Thai political deadlock

PARIS, 21 May — France reiterated the necessity to reach a political solution to stop crisis in Thailand after the country’s army declared martial law nationwide until order had been restored, French Foreign Affairs Ministry said on Tuesday.

In a statement posted on the Quai d’Orsay website, the ministry said it took note of Thailand army’s decision to put Southeast Asian second largest economy under martial law to avoid chaos in the capital’s streets.

“We follow closely the situation’s developments ... France renews its call for a peaceful solution to the political crisis through dialogue and respect of constitutional and democratic principles,” the ministry said.

“In the current circumstances, we call for the respect of the caretaker government’s prerogative (the country’s) only legitimate interlocutor,” it added.

Under martial law, military forces have broad powers over civilian authorities to force a return to calm after anti-government protests which began in November 2013.

Under martial law, the military has confined them to one hand wants a “neutral” prime minister installed to oversee electoral reforms. The government, on the other hand, wants a general election that it would probably win, given Thaksin’s enduring support among the rural and urban poor.

Acting Prime Minister Niwathamrong Boon-songphaan, who took over when Thaksin’s sister, Yingluck Shinawatra, was forced to step down as premier by a court two weeks ago, proposed on Tuesday that an election should be held on 3 August.

Somsak Srisutchiyakorn, a member of the Election Commission, said all sides had to consider the proposal. “The situation has changed now. We have martial law, therefore the Election Commission, the army and the government should talk first,” Somsak told Reuters. “I can’t say yet whether a 3 August election will happen.”

Reuters

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Xinhua

India’s prime minister designate Narendra Modi (L) displays a letter from the Indian President inviting him to form the new government outside the Presidential Palace in New Delhi, India, on 20 May, 2014. India’s prime minister designate Narendra Modi on Tuesday met President Pranab Mukherjee at the latter's official residence in the national capital, and claimed his right to form the next government.

Xinhua

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Xinhua
China’s Xi urges new Asia security order without Cold War views

SHANGHAI, 21 May — Chinese President Xi Jinping on Wednesday called for a new security framework in Asia that is free of an outdated Cold War mentality, as the United States is seeking to play a bigger role in contributing to regional stability.

In his speech to a regional security summit, Xi said that security in Asia should be ensured by people in Asia and, without naming any country, warned that military alliances in the region have become nothing more than destabilizing factors.

The comments were made at a time of regional concerns over China’s growing assertiveness and the so-called pivot of the United States to Asia, under which Washington is strengthening its security alliance with countries such as Japan and the Philippines, both of which have been locked in bitter territorial disputes with Beijing.

“We need to keep pace with changing circumstances and evolving times,” Xi told a summit of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia. “One cannot live in the 21st Century with an outdated thinking from the age of the Cold War and a zero-sum game.”

“We need to innovate our security concept and establish new regional security architecture,” he told leaders from the 26 countries belonging to the conference, including Russian President Vladimir Putin and Iranian President Hassan Rouhani.

Xi said China stands firm on the path of peaceful development and is committed to resolving territorial disputes through negotiations. But at the same time he underscored that “no country should attempt to dominate regional security affairs and infringe upon the legitimate rights and interests of other countries.”

The president noted that Asia, which is now an engine for the world’s growth, is diverse in values, social systems and economic development, so that differences of each country, along with sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity, must be respected. The regional security summit, also attended by UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, takes place at a time when China and Russia are facing criticism by the West over their aggressive handling of sovereignty issues.

China has been criticized by the United States, Japan and some other Asian countries for its growing maritime assertiveness.

Most recently, China’s deployment of an oil rig in a disputed part of the South China Sea has triggered a tense standoff with Vietnam. On Russia, the United States and the European Union, as well as Japan, are imposing sanctions such as travel bans and asset freezes for its annexation of Crimea in March, as observers warned the United States and Japan attended the fourth summit of the regional forum, which has gained more international recognition than before, mainly coupled with China’s rise. It is comprised of some two dozen countries from East Asia, Central Asia, Southeast Asia, South Asia and the Middle East.

Ukraine beefs up security ahead of presidential election

KIEV, 21 May — Ukraine has deployed tens of thousands of police and volunteers to maintain public order ahead of Sunday’s presidential election, an interior ministry official said on Tuesday.

“The Interior Ministry is taking targeted steps to ensure safety of civilians and members of election commissions,” said Andryy Chaly, head of the Interior Ministry’s Department for Mass Public Events, at a Press conference.

Around 55,700 police forces and 20,000 volunteers would be mobilized to guarantee security during the voting across Ukraine, he said, adding extra security measures would be taken in the country’s eastern Donbass and Luhansk regions, which had plunged into chaos following anti-government protests.

Ukraine’s presidential election is set to take place despite waves of violence and political instability in the country’s eastern regions, where government forces have launched a major offensive against pro-Russian activists to regain control.

UN human rights representative Ivan Simonovic cast doubts on Monday over the prospects of holding the presidential election in eastern Ukraine, where he said the situation there had deteriorated so much that the region could collapse. A total of 18 candidates would compete for the country’s top post, with former Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko and businessman Petro Poroshenko emerging as front runners.

Pakistan fighter jets bomb suspected militant hideouts

ISLAMABAD, 21 May — Pakistan fighter jets bombed suspected militant hideouts in the tribal region of North Waziristan near the Afghan border on Wednesday, killing at least 32 people, military sources said.

Disagreement over how to handle the Taliban insurgency has soured relations between Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and Pakistan’s powerful army, which has been pushing for a major military offensive against militants.

Sharif has been trying to engage the Taliban in talks but negotiations have failed repeatedly since he came to power a year ago. It was unclear whether Sharif had authorised the latest air strikes overnight.

“Fighter jets started bombing militant positions early on Wednesday,” said a senior military official in Miranshah, the capital of North Waziristan.

“Before the launch of the air strikes, we had confirmed intelligence information about hideouts of the militants and their top commanders.”

Another military source said at least 32 people died in the air strikes, including important commanders” had been killed. Despite Sharif’s insistence on talks, the military has carried out a series of brief air raids in the region. It was unclear if the latest air strikes signalled the start of a broader military campaign against the Taliban.

North Waziristan residents said dozens of houses used as hideouts by the militants had been targeted. It was not immediately clear if any civilians were killed.

“It was around 3 am in the morning when I heard huge explosions,” tribesman Naseeb Gul told Reuters by telephone.

“I saw four helicopters flying over the area and hitting some villages,” he said.

Reuters

Pakistan Air Force fighter jets fly during the National Day military parade in Islamabad on 23 March, 2008.

US Senate OKs honouring veterans over 1942 Japan air raids

WASHINGTON, 21 May — The US Senate passed a bill on Tuesday to honour veterans involved in the 1942 air raids on Japan, regarded as a key offensive during World War II. The members of the “Doolittle Tokyo Raiders” team will be awarded the Congressional Gold Medal, one of the highest honours in the United States, once President Barack Obama signs the bill as it has already cleared the House of Representatives.

The bill passes the 80 American airmen who volunteered for “an extremely hazardous mission” for “outstanding heroism” and “service to the United States.” Of the 80, four are still alive, according to US reports.

The team led by Lt Col James Doolittle was engaged in the air strikes on Tokyo, Yokohama, Yokosuka, Nagoya and Kobe on 18 April, 1942, roughly four months after Japan’s attack on Pearl Harbor.

The move caused “only minor damage,” but “it forced the Japanese to recall combat forces for home defence, raised fears among the Japanese civilians, and boosted morale among Americans and our Allies abroad,” according to the National Museum of the US Air Force.

Reuters
The United Nations headquarters building (Vienna International Centre) is pictured in Vienna on 14 May, 2014.

**WORLD**

### Iran and IAEA end nuclear talks, no early sign of breakthrough

**VIENNA, 21 May —** The UN nuclear watchdog sought in talks with Iran on Tuesday to advance a long-stalled investigation into Teheran’s atomic activities, but it was not immediately clear whether any headway was made.

A spokeswoman for the International Atomic Energy Agency confirmed the two sides met in Teheran, but said the IAEA was not planning to issue a statement about the talks on Tuesday, leaving open the possibility one might be made later.

Diplomatic sources had said the Vienna-based UN agency and Iran were expected to discuss IAEA requests for information about detonators that can, among other things, be used to set of a nuclear explosive device.

It could have provided an opportunity for progress on a key issue ahead of a quarterly IAEA report on Iran’s nuclear programme, due this week, which will be debated by the UN agency’s 35-nation governing board at a meeting in early June. Under a phased cooperation pact agreed between the two sides in November, Iran was to take seven transparency steps by 15 May to help allay international concerns about its nuclear programme, which the West fears may be part of a military project.

On the most sensitive of those — for Iran to provide information about the development of so-called Explosive Bridge Wire detonators — diplomats have said the UN atomic agency was seeking further clarifications from Teheran.

How Iran responds to the IAEA’s questions is regarded as a litmus test of its readiness to start engaging with the investigation into what the UN agency calls the possible military dimensions of the country’s nuclear programme.

Iran denies Western allegations that it has been seeking to develop the capability to make nuclear weapons but has offered to work with the Vienna-based IAEA to resolve its concerns. The IAEA-Iran talks are separate from those between Teheran and six world powers — the United States, France, Germany, Britain, China and Russia — aimed at reaching a broader deal to settle the decade-old nuclear dispute by late July.

But they are complementary as both focus on fears that Iran may covertly be seeking the means and expertise to assemble nuclear weapons. Iran and the powers held a new round of negotiations last week, but made little progress.

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### US to disclose legal justification for drone strikes on Americans

**WASHINGTON, 21 May —** The US government will disclose its legal justification for the use of drones against US citizens suspected of terrorism, a senior Obama administration official said on Tuesday.

The US solicitor general has made the decision not to appeal a federal appeals court’s decision in April requiring the release of a redacted memorandum spelling out the justification for the policy, said the official, who was not authorized to speak publicly.

The court and the Justice Department have not set a time for the document’s release. While the legal analysis that justifies the use of drones will be disclosed, some facts will still be excluded from the document, the official said.

In a case pitting executive power against the public’s right to know what its government does, the 2nd US Circuit Court of Appeals last month reversed a lower-court ruling preserving the secrecy of the legal rationale for the killings, such as the killing of US citizen Anwar al-Awlaki in a 2011 drone strike in Yemen.

Ruling for the New York Times in the case, a unanimous three-judge panel said the government waived its right to secrecy by making repeated public statements justifying targeted killings. Civil liberties groups have complained that the drone programme, which deploys pilotless aircraft, lets the government kill Americans without constitutionally required due process.

The US use of drones against militants in countries such as Pakistan and Yemen has drawn international criticism and fanned anti-American sentiments in some Islamic countries.

In a March 2012 speech at Northwestern University in Illinois, Attorney General Eric Holder had said it was “entirely lawful” to target people with senior operational roles in al-Qaeda and associated forces.

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### Berlin Air Show kicks off with leaders’ applause

**BERLIN, 21 May —** The Berlin Air Show 2014, a biennial event, was opened here on Tuesday, with applause from German leaders and industry players.

German government showed strong support to the fair, with both Chancellor Angela Merkel and Economy Minister Sigmar Gabriel paying visits to the ground. “The aerospace industry plays a key strategic role for our economic welfare,” said Merkel in her opening remark, calling the five-day trade fair “an excellent platform” for showcasing innovation and cooperation.

More than 1200 exhibitors from 40 countries will attend the fair, which is expected to attract over 200,000 trade and general public visitors, according to the organizer.

Around 300 aircraft of all types and sizes are planned to be demonstrated on the ground or in the air.

On Tuesday, 50 flying performances, including by Europe’s most modern wide-body transporter Airbus A400 M, the newest wider body commercial aircraft Airbus A350 XWB, and Lockheed Martin F-16 fighter jet, were scheduled.

Airbus, which presented with a large pavilion, showed its confidence in marketing outlook. Airbus’ sales chief John Leahy said on Tuesday that orders received by Airbus would match with or “even slightly ahead” of those to Boeing this year. The company claimed that its A350 XWB and A380 are more eco-efficient and cost less than Boeing 777 and 747.

Meanwhile, Airbus Chief Operating Officer Guenter Butsche had condemned tax breaks worth 8.7 billion US dollars that Boeing received from Washington state of the United States as “illegal subsidies”.

Last November, Washington state legislation approved the tax breaks to encourage Boeing to produce its 777X jet in its region.

A conference of “Airbus Ministers”, which includes ministers in charge of civil aerospace industry from Germany, France, Britain, and Spain, was held on Tuesday in Berlin as part of the air show.

Ministers told a Press conference after the meeting that they would support the European Commission to raise complaint against the tax breaks to the World Trade Organization.

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Preservation of colonial buildings in Yangon

By Myint Win Thein

Yan gon boasts the largest number of colonial buildings in Southeast Asia and this is one of the reasons why tourists enjoy walking through downtown Yangon. However, most of them have been neglected for years and need renovation to continue to attract tourists to Yangon. Some experts say that time is running out to save these buildings while attempts to renovate a few of them ended up in disputes, and maintenance tasks could not be carried out. One of these houses is the former Secretariat building where General Aung San was assassinated in 1947—a place that is deteriorating more each day.

Without these historic buildings Yangon will look like other Southeast Asian cities, which were demolished to give way to skyscrapers and shopping malls.

Now efforts are being made to preserve these buildings with the help of the Yangon Heritage Trust, a non-profit organization. These heritage sites should be renovated as soon as possible, as a lack of maintenance is also a form of demolition.

In addition, new development in Yangon should also be in harmony with these landmarks most of which are located along Strand Road and Pansodan Road. Now, a footbridge is being constructed at the corner of the roads, and Yangon Heritage Trust is protesting against the construction of the foot bridge as it blocks the beauty of the heritage buildings. A responsible official for the construction said they were building the footbridge for the safety of the people who have to cross the road.

As the preservation of these heritage buildings is as important as public safety, they should be taken into account when new development projects are planned.

Joint Declaration of the ASEAN Defence Ministers on Defence Cooperation Towards Peaceful and Prosperous ASEAN Community

We, the Defence Ministers of the Kingdom of Cambodia, the Republic of Indonesia, the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Malaysia, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, the Republic of Philippines, the Republic of Singapore, the Kingdom of Thailand, and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, and the Minister of Energy at the Prime Minister’s Office of Brunei Darussalam, gathered in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar on 20 May 2014 for the Eighth ASEAN Defence Ministers’ Meeting (hereinafter referred to as “ADMM”); ADHERING with full commitments to the principles and purposes enshrined in the ASEAN Charter;

RECALLING the establishment of the ADMM in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in May 2006, as a monumental milestone for the evolution of ASEAN security and defence cooperation in contributing towards building the ASEAN Political Security Community;

RECALLING the Bali Declaration of ASEAN Community in a Global Community of Nations (Bali Concord III) in 2011, which calls for further reinforcement in strengthening the ASEAN Community in line with the ASEAN Charter, in which the fundamental principles, values, and norms are stipulated;

BEARING IN MIND the need for ASEAN Member States to respond effectively to regional security challenges in accordance with the principles of comprehensive security as stipulated in the ASEAN Charter;

GUIDED by the fundamental principles enshrined in the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC) and the ASEAN Charter, including the renunciation of the threat of use of force and exercise of self-restraint, mutual respect for independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity as well as upholding international law;

INSPIRED by and united with close cooperation and collaboration to implement as guided in the ASEAN Community Blueprints to the way of ASEAN Community by 2015 with the view of promoting a people-oriented ASEAN in which all ASEAN Member States are to share and benefit from each other;

EXPRESSING with the positive results of the Eighth ADMM, which was held in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar, on 20 May 2014 under the theme “Defence Cooperation Towards Peaceful and Prosperous ASEAN Community” in keeping with the goals of a cohesive, peaceful and resilient region with shared responsibility for comprehensive security;

DETERMINED to strengthen a dynamic, cohesive, resilient and integrated ASEAN Community and reaffirming the ADMM’s role as the highest ministerial defence and security consultative and cooperative mechanism within ASEAN that promotes ASEAN norms of dialogue and consensus-based decision making and adhering to the established ASEAN protocols and practices;

NOTING WITH SATISFACTION the significant progress which has been made in the area of defence and security cooperation since the ADMM was established in 2006;

RECOGNISING the existing civil-military cooperation that plays a very important role and encouraging them to enhance interoperability in addressing non-traditional security challenges;

EMPHASISING the important role of the ADMM to contribute to ASEAN’s efforts in maintaining its unity and solidarity in order to continue to play its central role in the regional architecture;

REAFFIRMING the ASEAN centrality in the evolving regional security architecture and ASEAN’s role as the primary driving force in cooperating and collaborating with the Plus countries to deal with security issues and non-traditional threats;

WELCOMING the outcomes of the Second ADMM-Plus held in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam, on 29 August 2013, which encourages the establishment of practical measures to reduce vulnerability to miscalculations and to avoid misunderstanding and underestimations at sea;

REAFFIRMING the strategic importance of the ADMM-Plus as a premier forum for strategic dialogue in defence and security issues among ASEAN and the Plus countries;

COMMENDING the remarkable achievements of the ADMM-Plus Experts’ Working Groups in the five priority areas of cooperation, namely, Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR), Maritime Security, Peacekeeping Operations, Military Medicine, and Counter Terrorism;

COMMENDING the notable achievements of the ASEAN militaries in building trust and confidence through a number of meetings and activities, while noting with satisfaction the results of the 11th ASEAN Chiefs of Defence Forces Informal Meeting (ACDFIM), which was held in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar on 5 March 2014;

OBSERVING the complex and fast changing regional security environment and the devastating effects of natural disasters;

SUPPORTING the outcomes of the 24th ASEAN Summit and the Nay Pyi Taw Declaration on Realisation of the ASEAN Community by 2015, which calls for the strengthening of regional security cooperation for the full and effective implementation of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC), in accordance with universally recognized principles of international law including the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), especially calling on all parties to exercise self-restraint and non-use of force, as well as refrain from taking actions that would further escalate tension and to work towards an early conclusion of the Code of Conduct in South China Sea (CCOS) as reflected in the ASEAN’s Six Point Principles on the South China Sea and welcoming confidence-building measures of communication lines and hotlines and non-use of force commitments among ASEAN Member States that will promote further peace and stability;

Endorsing the HEA’s Six Point Principles on the South China Sea and welcoming confidence-building measures of communication lines and hotlines and non-use of force commitments among ASEAN Member States as reflected by the concerted efforts in the search and rescue mission of the missing airplane flight MH370 and recognising the unwavering support from all Member States in this new phase of this unprecedented search.

DO HEREBY DECLARE TO:

1. Adopt the ADMM Three-Year Work Programme 2014-2016, which will serve as a guide in prioritising activities of the ADMM, while noting with satisfaction the achievements of the Three-Year Work Programme 2011-2013;

2. Adopt the Concept Paper on Establishing a Direct Communications Link in the ASEAN Defence Ministers’ Meeting Process, which will provide a permanent, rapid, reliable and confidential means by which any two ASEAN Defence Ministers may communicate with each other to arrive at mutual decisions in handling crisis or emergency situations, in particular related to maritime security;

3. Adopt the Additional Protocol to the Concept Papers for the Establishment of an ASEAN Defence Ministers’ Meeting and the ASEAN Defence Ministers’ Meeting Plus, which will refine and clarify the working mechanisms and procedures of the ADMM and the ADMM-Plus;

4. Acknowledge the adoption of the Terms of Reference for Consultative Group of ASEAN Defence Industry Collaboration, which could start the implementation of collaboration of activities;

5. Enhance practical cooperation in non-traditional and transnational security concerns and develop coordination mechanisms for military participation in the conduct of combined trainings and exercises in HADR, emergency response operations, search and rescue missions, post-crisis management and rehabilitation, as emphasised by the ADMM Three-Year Work Programme;

6. Deepen friendly ties between ASEAN and the Plus countries on strategic as well as defence and security issues affecting the region, which contribute to the promotion of regional peace and security;

7. Welcome the adoption of the new workplans of the six ADMM-Plus Experts’ Working Groups that will strengthen practical cooperation under the ADMM-Plus and look forward to the successful implementation of the work plans;

8. Increase mutual understanding among ASEAN defence establishments;

9. Deepen regular consultations on defence matters and work together to counter threats and challenges to regional peace;

10. Facilitate interactions between the defence and military officials of ASEAN Member States and develop practical cooperation in the field of defence and security by enhancing confidence-building measures through increased opportunities for exchanges and interactions;

11. Explore possibility for practical cooperation on traditional security concerns;

12. Welcome the significant achievements of the inaugural ADMM-Plus Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief and Military Medicine Exercise (ADMM-Plus HADR and MM Exercise) held in Brunei Darussalam in March 2013, the ADMM-Plus Counter Terrorism Exercise (CTX) in Indonesia in September 2013, the ADMM-Plus Maritime Security Field Training Exercise (FTX) in Australia in October 2013 and ADMM-Plus Table-Top Exercise (TTX) on Peacekeeping Operations in the Philippines in February 2014 as land mark cooperation amongst defence forces of ASEAN Member States and the Plus countries;


Done at Nay Pyi Taw, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, this Twentieth Day of May in the Year Two Thousand and Fourteen, in a single original copy in the English Language.
Lightning hits ancient pagoda in Yekyi Tsp

YEKYI. 21 May—The 108 feet high Penningyi Pagoda, located in the precinct of Mingalayama Monastery near Pathein-Monywa road in Yekyi Township of Ayeyawady Region, was stricken by a lightning at 4.30 pm on 18 May while there was raining heavily.

The lightning destroyed the four feet long and six feet high area of the middle terrace of the pagoda, but there was no casualty.

Min Zaw Oo (Yekyi)

Outstanding trainees awarded in Myanmar-Japan centre’s trainings

MANDALAY. 21 May—The Republic of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry and Japan International Co-operation Agency-JICA jointly have established the Myanmar-Japan Human Resource Development Centre. Keidanren of Japan awarded the outstanding trainees from the courses conducted in 2013.

The Japanese organization held a ceremony to clarify the plan to select scholarship award winners to be sent to Japan as an observation trip in 2014, at Yadanabon Super Centre in Chanayethazan Township on 18 May.

Officials of Mandalay Region CCI and Keidanren presented prizes to outstanding trainees.

Dr Than Than Aung, training manager of Myanmar-Japan business course conducted in 2013, explained presentation of scholarship awards and visits to Japan.

Thida Ko Ko (Mandalay)

Motorcycles without licences legalized in Mawlamyneyun

MAWLAMYINEYUN. 21 May—Personnel of Maubin District Directorate of Road Administration, Customs Department, General Administration Department, Myanmar Police Force, Myanmar Economic Bank and Myanmar Insurance issued registration to the motorcycles without licences in Mawlamyneyun of Ayeyawady Region on Tuesday and Wednesday.

The staff members issued licence to over 300 motorcycles on Tuesday through one-stop service.

“The Directorate of Road Administration does not open its office in our town. If we get the licence for motorcycle, we must go to the town where the office is kept open. Now, the staff arrived here to issue the licences for motorbikes, so we can save our time and money,” said a local motorbike owner.

Motorcycle licences were issued to 2,833,309 motorbikes for eight times from 1999 to 2012, and the licences have been issued to 3.7 million motorcycles and trawlergy across the nation, according to the statistics of the directorate.

Zaw Lin Phyo (Mawgyun)

Youth trainees to visit Yangon, to participate in contests

MYEIK. 21 May—The government opens the maritime course and aviation course for the youths in the summer to be able to emerge outstanding new generation youths.

A total of 60 trainees from the youth maritime course led by instructors from Myeik and Kyunsu townships and a 25-member team from youth aviation course (Myeik) will pay a visit to Yangon by war vessel from Taninthayi Naval Region Command Headquarters. They will join excursions in Yangon and take part in the naval subject, basic military training, rowing and naval signals contests as of 23 May.

—Khaing Htoo (Myeik District)

Basic education schools accept school enrolment in Myeik

MYEIK. 21 May—Basic Education Schools in Myeik Township accept school enrollment of students for 2014-15 academic year as of Tuesday morning.

With the aim of enabling all school going-age students to attend the school, the Ministry of Education sets a plan on free enrolment fee for primary and middle school students this year. In addition, the ministry will provide school textbooks to them free of charge.

Ninth standard students are to pay K 1900 each as enrolment fee and the matriculation students, K 3200 for volume-I of school textbook and K 3500 for volume -VII, and those of matriculation K 3500 for one set of school textbook.

—Zaw Myo Naing (Myeik District IPRD)

Coordination made between onion growers, brokers

NATOGYI. 21 May—The Mandalay Region Minister for Planning and Economic and officials, and members of Myingyan Township Brokerage held a talk with onion growers of villages in Natogyi Township of Mandalay Region on Tuesday.

They discussed surplus provision of onion in trading, brokerage charge and transport fare from the brokerage to warehouse.

Locals in Myingyan, Taungtha, Mahlaing, Pyawbwe, Kyaunkse, Myittha, Meiktila and Kyaukpaduang township are engaged cultivation of onion and they send their products to Yangon, Mawlamyne, Bago and other major cities.

Than Aung Zaw (Natogyi)
Syria starts moving remaining chemical weapons, Pentagon says

WASHINGTON, 21 May — Syria is starting to relinquish the remaining stockpile of materials from its chemical weapons arsenal as it awaits swift removal, a precursor for the destruction of its chemical weapons and its declared chemical stockpile of isopropyl chlorophenol, a precursor for producing sarin nerve gas.

“Now 7.2 percent of Syria’s chemical weapons material remains and awaits swift removal for onward destruction,” Pentagon spokesman Rear Admiral John Kirby told reporters.

The news followed an announcement by the joint mission of the United Nations and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemicals that Syria had destroyed its entire declared stockpile of isopropyl chlorophenol, a precursor for producing sarin nerve gas.

A US defence official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said Syrian President Bashar al-Assad’s forces had taken steps to prepare some of its remaining chemicals for transport.

Syria has been removing chemical weapons under a deal reached last year that averted Western military strikes threatened after a sarin gas attack on rebel-held suburbs around the Syrian capital in August.

Assad’s Western foes suspect him of deliberately dragging out the process and say his forces are using chlorine bombs, including in an attack on a rebel-held village this week.

Damascus denies that forces loyal to Assad have used chlorine or other more poisonous gases and blames all chemical attacks on rebel forces fighting in the three-year-old civil war. It has also blamed the security situation for its failure to meet deadlines to ship out the chemical stocks.

Syria did not declare chlorine as part of its stockpile.

Chlorine is thousands of times less lethal than sarin but is illegal under a chemical weapons convention that Syria signed and its use would breach the terms of the deal with Washington and Moscow.

Britain, France and the United States say they have intelligence suggesting Syria failed to declare some of its chemical weapons materials.

Bombings kill at least 118 in central Nigerian city of Jos

Jos, 21 May — Back-to-back bomb blasts killed at least 118 people and wounded 45 in the crowded business district of the central Nigerian city of Jos on Tuesday, emergency services said, in an attack that appeared to bear the hallmarks of the Boko Haram insurgents.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility. But the militant group Boko Haram, which has set off bombs across the north and centre of Nigeria in an increasingly bloody campaign for an Islamic state, was likely to be the prime suspect in what would rank among their deadliest single attacks in five years of insurrection.

Boko Haram grabbed world headlines by bombing more than 200 schoolgirls on 14 April from the north-eastern village of Chibok. Britain, the United States and France have pledged to help rescue them.

If the Jos attack was the handiwork of Boko Haram, it would show the growing reach of Africa’s top oil producing and most populous country, striking out beyond their heartland in Nigeria’s semi-arid and weakly governed northeast. Several bombs have exploded outside that region over the past month. It was also likely calculated to stoke civil strife in Nigeria’s most combustible region over the past month. It was also likely calculated to stoke civil strife.

Boko Haram grabbed world headlines by bombing more than 200 schoolgirls on 14 April from the north-eastern village of Chibok. Britain, the United States and France have pledged to help rescue them.

Egyptian teenage scientist plans to seek asylum in United States

LOS ANGELES, 21 May — An Egyptian teenager who travelled to the United States to take part in a prestigious science fair has decided to seek asylum, saying he fears returning home after being accuses of taking part in anti-government protests in Cairo, his US lawyer said on Tuesday.

Abdullah Assem, who has invented eye glasses for quadriplegics to operate computers and communicate with others, flew to Los Angeles on 12 May to present his creation at the Intel International Science and Engineering Fair, lawyer Farida Chehata said.

Three days later, the gifted 17-year-old contacted officials with the Los Angeles office of the Council on American-Islamic Relations and expressed concern about returning to Egypt, according to Chehata, who is a staff attorney with the council.

With the support of his parents in Egypt, Assem decided to stay in the United States and seek asylum, said Chehata, who will represent the boy in his application. He has not yet filed the application with US immigration authorities.

“It’s unfortunate and it’s very sad to see children with a lot of potential to do a lot of great things, to have that stifled by the government over there for whatever reason and without due process,” she said.

US chipmaker Intel Corp sponsors the annual fair, which is the world’s largest science competition for precollege students, with more than $5 million in awards available for competitors from more than 70 countries.

Assem was arrested on 24 April in Cairo on charges of participating in protests and burning two police vehicles, after he traveled to the Egyptian capital from his Middle Egypt hometown of Assuit to obtain electronic equipment for an academic project, Chehata said.

Chehata, who called the charges against the teen fabricated, said he had not been participating in protests. She added he fears he will not get a fair trial in Egypt and that he will be sent to prison for years or crimes he did not commit.

She said Egyptian authorities initially did not want to let Assem fly to the United States for the science fair following his arrest, but ultimately permitted him to leave for Los Angeles a day after Egyptian media reported on his situation.

Assem is staying with a family friend in the Los Angeles area, Chehata said.

A representative from the science fair could not be reached for comment.

Officials at Egypt’s public prosecutor’s office and Ministry of Education were not immediately available to comment after hours, and an Egyptian Foreign Ministry spokesman declined to comment.

A spokesman for US Citizenship and Immigration Services also declined to comment.

Four people injured in north France blast

PARIS, 21 May — Four people have been injured likely due to an explosion of a nitrogen bottle in Renault auto maker’s plant in Maubeuge, north of France, a local TV channel reported on Tuesday.

Citing firefigters, the news channel BFMTV said the explosion happened at 10:20 am local time (0820GMT) while officials of Renault’s manufacturing site said “today, an accident occurred (in the plant),” without giving further details.

Two workers were in serious situation, the report added.—Xinhua
Microsoft launches larger Surface tablet targeting lightweight laptops

New York, 21 May—Microsoft Corp unveiled its new Surface Pro 3 tablet computer on Tuesday in New York with a bigger screen than previous models to take aim at the laptop market and demonstrate the company’s ability to make its own devices.—Kyodo News

**US utility’s control system was hacked, says Homeland Security**

BOSTON, 21 May—A sophisticated hacking group recently attacked a US public utility and compromised its control system network, but there was no evidence that its operations were affected, according to the Department of Homeland Security.

DHS did not identify the utility in a report that was issued this week by the agency’s Industrial Control Systems Cyber Emergency Response Team, or ICS-CERT.

“While unauthorized access was identified, ICS-CERT was able to work with the affected entity to put in place mitigation strategies and ensure the security of their control systems before there was any impact to operations,” a DHS official told Reuters on Tuesday.

Such cyber attacks are rarely disclosed by ICS-CERT, which typically keeps details about its investigations secret to encourage businesses to share information with the government. Companies are often reluctant to go public about attacks to avoid potentially negative publicity.

ICS-CERT said in the report posted on its website that investigators had determined the utility had likely been the victim of previous intrusions. It did not elaborate.

The agency said the hackers may have launched the latest attack through an Internet portal that enabled workers to access the utility’s control systems. It said the system used a simple password mechanism that could be compromised using a technique known as “brute force,” where hackers digitally force their way in by trying various password combinations.

Justin W. Clarke, an industrial control security consultant with security firm Cylance Inc, said it is rare for such breaches to be identified by utilities and even more rare for the government to disclose them. “In most cases, systems that are so antiquated to be susceptible to such brute forcing technologies would not have the detailed logging required to aid in an investigation like this,” Clarke said.

**Facebook to expand video ads to seven countries outside US**

SAN FRANCISCO, 21 May—Facebook Inc is expanding its new video advertising service, allowing marketers to show the television-like spots to users of the social network in Britain, Brazil and five other countries, the company told Reuters.

The move marks a significant ramp-up of one of Facebook’s most closely watched new advertising products, which analysts believe could help the Internet company capture a bigger slice of lucrative brand advertising budgets. The 15-second video ads appear in users’ news feeds and play automatically with the sound muted until they are clicked on. Face book began selling the ads in the United States in March to a small group of marketers including insurer-aname com pany Progressive Corp and television broadcaster NBC, a unit of Comcast Corp.

Facebook said the performance of the initial group of video ads in the United States has been strong, but declined to elaborate. As it did in the United States, Facebook is moving cautiously to roll out the auto-play video ads in its overseas markets to avoid annoying users.

The company will initially work with a limited group of advertisers in France, Germany, Brazil, Japan, Canada and Britain starting next month. Each ad must pass a quality-control test that Facebook administrators in conjunction with video analysts firm Ace Metrix. Most of the commercials in international markets will not appear on Facebook’s website until September, as the Internet company spends several months working closely with marketers to ensure that the spots meet its quality standards, a Facebook spokesman told Reuters.

But he said that companies whose commercials are deemed acceptable could begin airing them on Facebook in June, in time for the World Cup international soccer tournament, a popular event for brand advertisers.
Israel, China agree to expand bilateral cooperation

Tel Aviv, 21 May — Israeli President Shimon Peres on Tuesday met with visiting Chinese Vice Premier Liu Yandong in Tel Aviv, Israel, pledging to step up cooperation between the two countries in diverse fields.

During the meeting, Peres recalled his successful visit to China last month. “China has created a miracle of sustainable high speed development due to the extraordinary leadership of the Chinese leaders and hard struggle of the Chinese people,” said Peres, who believed strengthening the cooperation in technology and innovation fields between the two countries is reciprocal.

Liu, who arrived in Israel Sunday for a five-day official visit, said that during the Second World War, the Chinese and Jewish peoples fought shoulder to shoulder against the world’s fascism, stood together through the dark time and forged profound friendship.

China and Israel have developed amicable relations and fruitful cooperation since two countries established diplomatic ties more than two decades ago, said Liu.

The Chinese vice premier also said China hopes to boost the bilateral cooperation in areas such as technology, innovation, education, culture, health care and humanities. An inter-government economic and technological cooperation mechanism has been established.

Peres Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Liu on Monday signed a memorandum on the establishment of a joint bilateral committee to expand innovation cooperation between the two countries.

“China would like to take this opportunity to further integrate resources, continuously boost and deepen bilateral exchange and cooperation on the fields mentioned above. So that it would better benefit the people from the two countries,” Liu said.

UK to offer Scotland talks on more powers a month after independence vote

London, 21 May — The British government will start talks on granting Scotland more powers within a month of an independence referendum later this year if Scots choose to stay part of the United Kingdom, a government minister will pledge on Thursday.

In a speech designed to persuade Scots that they can and will enjoy even greater autonomy if they decide to stay inside the UK, Alistair Carmichael, the minister responsible for Scotland, will issue the government’s most detailed promise on greater powers to Scotland so far.

“In the event of a no vote, I will invite the representatives of Scot- land’s main parties to meet in October to begin that process,” Carmichael said, according to advance extracts of a speech in Glasgow released by his office.

“There will be a Confer- ence on the New Scot- land. It will work in the in- terests of the people of this country. And more powers will come.”

Scotland will vote on 18 September on whether to break away from the UK. Opinion polls show most Scots will reject inde- pendence even though the pro-independence Scot- tish National Party (SNP) has made some headway in cutting the “no” side’s lead.

Scotland already enjoys a large measure of devolution. It has had its own parliament since 1999 with the power to legislate in policy areas such as education, health and the environment. But polls show many Scots want more powers and favour such a power transfer over out- right independence.

Any talks on more powers would be likely to focus on giving Scotland the right to control tax policy and on extending its purview to most or all policy areas apart from defence and foreign affairs.

It remains unclear how comprehensive a transfer of powers Britain would be willing to offer, however.

Politicians from across the spectrum, including Prime Minister David Cameron, have already promised Scotland more, unspecified, powers if it remains in the 307-year-old union.

But the “no” cam- paign, which includes all three of Britain’s main po- litical parties, is anxious to ensure Scots take the promise seriously and feels that setting out a timetable will give such a pledge more weight.—Reuters

Five convicted of killing Russian journalist Politkovskaya

Moscow, 21 May — Five men were convicted on Tuesday of murdering 2006 of investigative jour- nalist and Kremlin critic Anna Politkovskaya, including three defendants who had been acquitted in a previous trial.

Politkovskaya’s killing drew attention to the risks faced by Russians who challenge the authori- ties and deepened Western concerns for the rule of law under President Vladimir Putin, who was then serv- ing his second term.

Another jury’s 2009 acquittal of three of the men who were found guilty of murder on Tuesday emb- arrassed Russian prosecu- tors and was later thrown out by the Supreme Court, which ordered a new trial.

The defendants were three Chechen brothers, one of whom was accused of shooting Politkovskaya in the lobby of her Mos- cow apartment building on 7 October, 2006, as well as her uncle and a former po- lice officer.

The convictions are a victory for Russian pros- ecutors and the state, but rights activists and rela- tives of Politkovskaya say that justice will not be done until those who ordered her contract-style killing are identified and convicted.

“The murder will only be solved when the name of the person who ordered it is known,” a lawyer for Polit- kokvskaya’s family Anna Stavitskaya, was quoted as saying by RIA news agency. She welcomed the jury’s verdict but said the men found guilty “are only a few of the people who should be brought to jus- tice”, RIA reported.

A spokesman for the Federal Investigative Committee, Vladimir Mar- kin, said the authorities were doing all they can to identify and track down the person behind the killing, Russian news agencies re- ported. Kremlin critics say they doubt that will ever happen because of suspi- cions the trail could lead too close to the government.

Politkovskaya, a re- porter for Novaya Gazeta who was 48 when she was shot dead while returning home after shopping for groceries, was best known for her dogged reporting on human rights violations in the North Caucasus prov- ince of Chechnya.

Lawyers for the de- fendants, Rustam Makhmu- dov, his brothers Ibrahim and Dzhahad, their uncle Lom-Ali Gai- takayev, and former Mos- cow police officer Sergei Khadzhikurbanov — said they would appeal.

Investigators say Gai- takayev organized the logistics of the killing while in jail for another matter, while Khadzhikurbanov was in charge of preparing for the slaying and Ibrahim and Dzhahad Makhmuov helped carry out.

Ibrahim and Dzhahad Makhmuov and Khadzhik- urbanov were previously acquitted.—Reuters

Chinese Vice Premier Liu Yandong (L) meets with Israeli President Shimon Peres in Tel Aviv, Israel, on 20 May, 2014.—Xinhua
Yemen threatens to kill at least 16 people—local officials

SANAA, 21 May—At least 16 people were killed north of the Yemeni capital Sanaa on Tuesday in fighting between Shi’ite Muslim tribesmen and government forces and allied Sunni Muslim rivals, local government sources said.

Boots of intense sectarian conflict since last year have undermined attempts at national reconciliation in Yemen, a neighbor of major oil exporter Saudi Arabia and home to one of al Qaeda’s most active wings. The sources said the fighting erupted when fighters loyal to the Shi’ite Houthi tribe attacked military and security outposts near the city of Omran, in the province that carries the same name, killing six soldiers and one officer.

The army responded to the attack, killing nine of the fighters.

But a Houthi source said the army opened fire on civilian supporters of the group holding a sit-in and that civilians were killed in the attack.

Violence last erupted there on Saturday when a group of armed Houthi fighters marched to the pro-governmental and demand- to stage a demonstra- tion, but were refused entry by the army. Three people were killed.—Reuters

JAPAN'S FUKUSHIMA OPERATOR BEGINS GROUNDWATER RELEASE TO OCEAN

Tokyo, 21 May — The operator of Japan's destroyed Fukushima nuclear plant began releasing groundwater that it said is within legal radiation safety limits into the Pacif- ic Ocean on Wednesday, in a bid to manage huge amounts of radioactive wa- ter built up at the site.

Tokyo Electric Power, or Tepco, has been fighting a daily battle against contaminated water since the Fukushima nuclear station was wrecked by a massive earthquake and tsunami in March 2011. The controversial re- lease, which was agreed by local fishermen after extended talks, coincides with a breakdown of a wa- ter treatment system for the highly contaminated water held in makeshift tanks.

It comes amid revelations this week in the Asahi Shimbun newspaper that the majority of work- ers at the plant fled during the height of the meltdown after the quake and tsunami knocked out cooling and backup power.

Groundwater flows down from nearby hills and 400 tons enters basements of the wrecked reactor buildings on a dai- ly basis, according to Tep- co’s estimates, mixing with highly radioactive water used to cool reactors.

Workers then pump out the contaminated water, treat it and store it in more than 1,000 makeshift tanks that cover the facility grounds. The tanks that hold the most contaminat- ed liquids are nearly full and workers are rushing to build more capacity.

Tepco said 560 tons of groundwater captured and stored before it en- tered the basements is to be released on Wednesday, using a bypass system that funnels it towards the sea after checking for radiation levels.

Using the bypass, Tep- co hopes to divert on aver- age 100 tones of untainted groundwater a day into the ocean.

A water treatment facility known as the Ad- vanced Liquid Processing System, designed to re- move the most dangerous nuclides, was completely shut down again this week. The system has not been fully operational since it was installed nearly two years ago.

Reuters

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The Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Ministry of Energy
Invitation for Expression of Interest (EOI) from Interested Parties

For Sales and Distribution of Jet Fuel

1. The Myanmar Petroleum Products Enterprise (MPPE) is a state-owned entity which is responsible for carrying out the retail and wholesale distribution of petroleum products under the Ministry of Energy (MOE) in Myanmar. The MPPE is currently distributing jet fuel in 11 airports in the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

2. In order to better serve consumers in the importation, storage, distribution and sales of jet fuel in Myanmar’s airports and to improve the management of the business while conducting environmentally friendly operations, the Government and the MPPE are seeking an experienced partner to form a joint venture. The purpose of the future joint venture company is to operate and improve the existing Air Fuel Distribution Enterprise’s business activity at the Yangon International Airport.

3. Interested foreign companies should submit an Expression of Interest (EOI) as per the Memorandum of Association and Certificate of Incorporation for LOEI shall be as follows:

(a) Certificate of incorporation
(b) Memorandum of association
(c) Articles of association
(d) Company profile
(e) Financial statements for last three years
(f) Pre-qualification applications that cannot include all the documents under the above paragraph (3) and that cannot reach the above address by 16:30 hours on 16-6-2014 and detailed information regarding EOI are available at http://www.energy.gov.mm/index.php/en/information/announcement and applicants can personally contact jetfueltender@gmail.com and the following address if they have any further queries:

Managing Director
Myanmar Petroleum Products Enterprise
Ministry of Energy
Office No. 5, Nay Pyi Taw, 067-411155
Fax: 067-411155
Email: jetfueltender@gmail.com

FINLAND HOLDS LARGEST MILITARY EXERCISES

HELSINKI, 21 May—Large-scale military exercises were held on Tuesday in Rovajari, the Finnish Lapland area and Lohitaja, the western coastal city of Finland.

The military drills will last for about two weeks until 5 June, said the Finnish Defence Forces.

Nearly 5,000 conscripts and Defence Force staff from the Army, the Frontier Guard Troops, as well as the Air and Navy Forces, participated in the exercises in Rovajari.

The troops started to be deployed there on Tuesday before the formal exercises began on Thursday. Meanwhile, the Finnish Defence Forces also started an air defense military exercise in Lohitaja on Tuesday.

The drill will last ten days until 29 May.

Around 2,000 troops took part in the exercise.

Xinhua
Want to marry Prince Harry? Fox spins a twist with new dating show

LOS ANGELES, 21 May — Former Beatle Paul McCartney has cancelled his remaining two concerts in Japan on Wednesday and Saturday due to illness after pulling out of two earlier ones, organizers of the show said on Tuesday.

McCartney’s health condition worsened after he came down with a virus after arriving in Japan last Thursday. Doctors have recommended bed rest, a spokesperson said.

“I was really looking forward to playing in Japan again after we had such an amazing time here Japan again after we had the film is about a young couple, played by 24-year-old British environmental consultant who bears more than a passing resemblance to Britain’s Prince Harry, and was given the task of persuading 12 American girls that they were vying to date the fun-loving royal.

Paul McCartney cancels all concerts due to ill health

TOKYO, 21 May — An English country manor, a gaggle of giggling bachelorettes, a slew of butlers and one very mysterious ginger-haired Prince Charming are at the centre of Fox’s new dating show, where the bachelor is not quite what he seems.

Meet Matt Hicks, the 24-year-old British environmental consultant who bears more than a passing resemblance to Prince Harry, and was given the task of persuading 12 American girls that they were vying to date the fun-loving royal.

As far as I was aware, impersonating a member of the royal family was treason and I’m pretty sure the punishment for that was being locked in the Tower of London,” Hicks told Reuters.

Premiering on Tuesday, Fox’s “I Wanna Marry Harry?” spins a twist on the televised dating format used most notably by ABC for “The Bachelor,” where one man is charged with finding love from a group of 25 women, honing it down to the lucky one over a series of glamorous and drama-filled dates.

Hicks, brought up in Hertfordshire, a neighbouring county to London, went to Southampton University, graduating with a degree in geology and oceanography, a different path from his royal look-alike’s military career.

“I was really looking forward to playing in Japan after we had the film is about a young couple, played by 24-year-old British environmental consultant who bears more than a passing resemblance to Britain’s Prince Harry, and was given the task of persuading 12 American girls that they were vying to date the fun-loving royal.

Earth story by Japanese woman director presented in Cannes

CANNES, (France), 21 May — A movie on the Earth by Japanese female director Naomi Kawase was screened here on Tuesday, competing for the Palme d’Or (Golden Palm), the top prize of the Cannes Film Festival.

In the movie Futatsume no mado (Still The Water), her eighth feature film, Kawase explores the mystery of nature, like her always style.

“The film is about a young couple, played by Jun Yoshinaga and Nijiro Murakami, who find a body out at sea and decide to investigate.

“Our soul is complex, vague and unpredictable. In this story I hope to see Man mature upon coming into contact with the god we call Nature,” said the director.

The Japanese director likes to explore nature’s “divine” influence on the human “cycle of life and death,” according to the festival’s official daily digest.

Kawase’s “ever delightful and poetic mise-en-scene lives and breathes the soft forms of nature and the soundtrack of the natural world,” commented the daily, Highlighting the importance of the film for her, Kawase said it needed complicated skills to finish the movie. “I think that Still

‘Godfather,’ ‘Manhattan’ cinematographer Gordon Willis dead at 82

NEW YORK, 21 May — Gordon Willis, the cinematographer responsible for stirring camera work in such film classics as the “Godfather” trilogy and several of Woody Allen’s best-known films, has died aged 82.

Willis died on Sunday in Falmouth, Massachusetts, funeral home Chapman Cole & Gleason confirmed. The cause of death was not immediately available.

“This is a momentous loss,” American Society of Cinematographers President Richard Crudo told Hollywood trade website Deadline. “He was one of the giants who absolutely changed the way movies looked.”

Willis received an honorary lifetime achievement Oscar in 2010 and was nominated for best cinematography Academy Awards for Allen’s “Zelig” and “The Godfather: Part III.”

“Willis was a brilliant, irascible man, a one of a kind,” “Godfather” director Francis Ford Coppola said in a statement. “A cinematic genius with a precise aesthetic. My favourite description was that ‘he ice-skated on the film emulsion.’ I learned a lot from him.”

Willis’ work was credited with lending unique, often stunning imagery to a roster of films ranging from the romance “Manhattan” and lavish musical “Pennies From Heaven” to the Watergate thriller “All the President’s Men.” In thrillers such as Alan Pakula’s “The Parallax View” and “Klute,” for which Jane Fonda won her first Oscar, Willis’s camera work evoked a dream-like, fugue state that critics credited with elevating the films to the status of classics.

The Queens, New York-born Willis worked often with Coppola, Pakula and especially Allen, with whom he made eight films.

“Gordy was a huge talent and one of the few people who truly lived up to all the hype about him,” Allen said in a statement.

Willis’ films with Allen included the black-and-white “Manhattan,” “Annie Hall,” “The Purple Rose of Cairo,” “Interiors,” “Stardust Memories” and “Broadway Danny Rose.”

New project with Brad will be experimental: Angelina Jolie

LOS ANGELES, 21 May — ‘Maleficent’ actress Angelina Jolie has revealed that her much-awaited on-screen reunion with fiance Brad Pitt would be a “very experimental and raw” film.

The Oscar-winning actress, 38, is also serving the scriptwriter of the project, reported Us magazine.

“It’s not a big movie, it’s not an action movie. It’s the kind of movie we love, but aren’t often cast in. It’s a very experimental, independent-type film where we get to be actors together and be really raw, open, try things,” she said.

Jolie also said that they don’t take each other for granted despite being in a relationship for such a long time. “He’s my family. He’s not just a lover and partner, which is wonderful, but he’s my family now... We have history, we work hard to make it great, we don’t kind of relax about it and take each other for granted,” she said.—PTI
Nuns, backed by pope, warn of human trafficking at World Cup

**VATICAN CITY, 21 May — Roman Catholic nuns backed by Pope Francis on Tuesday raised the alarm over increased risks of human trafficking, exploitation of workers, forced prostitution and sexual tourism at the football World Cup in Brazil.**

The nuns, whose campaign is also backed by the US embassy to the Vatican, announced an international campaign called “Play in Favour of Life — Denounce Human Trafficking,” on the risks they say will be associated with the June-July games, as they pose in front of Saint Peter’s basilica in Rome on 20 May 2014. Roman Catholic nuns backed by Pope Francis on Tuesday raised the alarm over increased risks of human trafficking, exploitation of workers, forced prostitution and sexual tourism at the soccer World Cup in Brazil next month.

The nuns, whose campaign is also backed by the US embassy to the Vatican, announced an international campaign called “Play in Favour of Life — Denounce Human Trafficking,” on the risks they say will be associated with the June-July games, as they pose in front of Saint Peter’s basilica in Rome on 20 May 2014. Roman Catholic nuns backed by Pope Francis on Tuesday raised the alarm over increased risks of human trafficking, exploitation of workers, forced prostitution and sexual tourism at the soccer World Cup in Brazil next month. — Reuters

Argentine football fan who has called several conferences at the Vatican to study ways of combating human trafficking, Sister Gabriella Bot- tani, an Italian nun who works in Brazil, said human traffickers and others took advantage of large events like the World Cup to exploit the most vulnerable. She said young people from the countryside are lured with the promise of a job and forced into prostitution.

Children in rural areas may be kidnapped and taken to cities hosting the venues and forced to beg.

“Without this awareness, without acting together in favour of human dignity, the World Cup finals may turn out to be a terrible shame instead of a feast for humanity,” she told a news conference at the Vatican.

Sammut said the initiative had the full backing of Pope Francis, an avid football fan who has called several conferences at the Vatican to study ways of combating human trafficking. Others who are already being exploited as sex workers may be forced to move to one of the 12 venue cities because they would be more profitable to their pimps.

In countries like Brazil, she said, large events could also give rising to kidnapping for adoption. “It is amazing how so many forces of evil can converge to cause so much harm against human freedom.”

The nuns said statistics showed that sexual exploitation rose 30 percent in connection with the World Cup in Germany in 2006 and 40 percent at the World Cup in South Africa in 2010.

The nuns will be raising awareness of the dangers of human trafficking and other crimes connected to the World Cup through their blog grittopelavida.blogspot.com.br/ their Facebook page here and other social media.

Volunteers will be handing out leaflets in cities in Brazil and other Latin American countries, warning of human trafficking and how to spot it. Several demonstrations are planned. Catholic nuns have for years been in the front line in the fight against human trafficking. They have formed the International Network of Consecrated Life Against Trafficking in Persons, known as Talitha Kum (Little Girl, Arise), a phrase in Aramaic taken from the Bible. It has members in more than 30 countries.

— Reuters

**Indonesian election presents US with Modi-style visa headache**

**WASHINGTON, 21 May — The emergence of Prabowo Subianto as a serious contender in Indonesia’s election this week means the United States faces the awkward possi- bility of having to welcome another Asian leader it had denied entry to because of alleged links to mass killings.**

The situation has arisen days after Washing- ton found itself having to change course and promise a visa to Indian Prime Min- ister-Elect Narendra Modi after his landslide election win. Modi was barred from the United States in 2005.

The possibility of another Washington U-turn became apparent after

Indonesia’s second-largest party on Monday suddenly switched its support to Prabowo from frontrunner Joko “Jokowi” Widodo ahead of July 9 presidential polls.

Prabowo was once one of Indonesia’s most revered men, accused of kidnapp- ing, human rights abuses and a coup attempt after the 1998 overthrow of his for- mer father-in-law, the late President Suharto.

A New York Times report in March said that in 2000 the US State De- partment denied the former general a visa to attend his son’s university graduation in Boston, but has never said why.


**UKIP cites safety fears as leader skips diversity event**

**LONDON, 21 May — The leader of the UK Independence Party (UKIP) on Tuesday cancelled a planned appearance at an event designed to counter charges his party was racist because of concerns about its safety, party officials said.**

Most polls show UKIP, which wants Britain to leave the European Union and to end “open door” immigration, is on course to come first or second in elections to the European Parliament on Thursday.

But several left-leaning lawmakers have ac- cused the party of racism. UKIP has been dogged by political correctness and accusations of racism.

Reinstated, Farage’s comments sparked a media backlash, including from right-lean- ing newspapers that have traditionally been critical of what they say are the government’s lax immigra- tion controls.

UKIP, which took out a full-page national newspaper advert on Monday, say it wasn’t racist, or- ganised an event in London on Tuesday aimed at showing its ethnic diversity and countering the racism charge.

However, it ended in disarray after the leader of the steel band hired to play the party table said he thought UKIP was racist and carrying an- ti-UKIP placards heckled the speakers.

Winston McKenzie, a UKIP candidate attending the event to Farage had been right to cancel his apperance.

“When I saw the way some people were behaving, I 100 percent agreed with Mr Farage,” McKenzie told the area’s local newspaper, the Croydon Advertiser. — Reuters
**Local Sports**

**MFF Ooredoo Futsal Cup 2014 to start on 27 May**

The group fixtures for MFF Ooredoo Futsal Cup 2014 were arranged at the office of Myanmar Football Federation in Thwunna of Yangon on Wednesday afternoon.

Altogether 42 Futsal clubs are included in eight groups and they will take part in the cup that will kick its matches at the National Indoor Stadium in Thwunna as of 27 May. Deserved prizes will be awarded to the winning teams.—By Nyi Myat Thawdar, Photo: Soe Nyunt

Myanmar lost to Palestine 0-2 in the second match of the Group (A) in the AFC Challenge Cup held in Maldives on Wednesday evening.

Palestinian strikers failed to control the ball with their talented skills. Palestinian winger David was not deployed in the match due to injury and Palestinian strikers Kuas Ko and Yan Pang could not show their regular skills. Sithu Aung’s kick bounced from the bar in the 51st minute and Yan Pang’s kick was saved by the Palestinian keeper in the 73rd minute.

Palestinian strikers scored two winning goals before the first half whistle and in the 53rd minute respectively.

Palestine stands first with six points in two wins and Myanmar, three points in one win and one loss.

By Po Thaw Zin

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**11 year old qualifies for US Open**

San Francisco, 21 May — Lucy Li, an 11-year-old from California, has become the youngest ever to qualify for the US Women’s Open after going two under par in her sectional qualifier, the youngest ever to qualify — Lucy Li, an 11-year-old school girl beat second-place qualifier Kathleen Scavo by seven strokes to earn her way into the field for the 19-22 June championship at Pinehurst in North Carolina.

Lexi Thompson, at 12 years, four months in 2007, previously held the mark as youngest to qualify. Li will not be the youngest player ever to participate in the US Women’s Open as Beverly Klass was 10 when she competed in the 1967 championship, prior to the qualification process. The young Californian has already tasted the limelight, having won her age group at Augusta National’s inaugural Drive, Chip and Putt Championship last month ahead of the Masters. Last year, Li qualified for the match-play portion of the US Women’s Amateur Public Links Championship but lost in the first round.— Reuters

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**I need to change ‘chip’ and think of Argentina, says Messi**

Buenos Aires, 21 May — Lionel Messi wants to change the Barcelona “chip” in his head to an Argentina one to do well at the World Cup, the national captain said on Tuesday.

Messi told reporters on arrival in Buenos Aires that he would try to put a disappointing season in Spain behind him with Barcelona failing to win a major trophy for the first time in six years.

“Now I must think of the national team and change my chip,” Messi, who signed a new contract with Barcelona on Monday, said. “Many times it was the reverse, I’d go to Barcelona and play well, let’s hope it’s the other way round. When I join my friends at the (Argentine FA) training complex it’ll be another story.”

Before Messi won over Argentina fans with his performances in the World Cup qualifiers, he was criticised in his home country for not replicating his Barcelona form in the light blue and white striped national shirt.

Messi headed from Ezeiza international airport on the outskirts of the capital to his home town of Rosario for a break before beginning training next week under coach Alejandro Sabella for the tournament in Brazil starting on 12 June.

“I hope that when I get together with my (Argentina) team mates my head will change because it was a complicated season. We had the chance to win the (Liga) tournament and we couldn’t. I went through a lot of things at a personal level, it wasn’t easy with the injuries.”

Messi, who suffered hamstring problems, suffered a drop in form from the high standards he set in previous seasons, but he hopes to be back to his clinical best to lead Argentina to a third world title in Brazil.— Reuters

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**Toure could leave Man City over birthday snub, says agent**

London, 21 May — Ivory Coast midfielder Yaya Toure is upset with Manchester City after an apparent birthday snub and could leave the Premier League champions, his agent said on Tuesday.

According to Dimitri Seluk, who represents the Ivory Coast international, Toure was dismayed that, despite the club giving him its matches at the National Indoor Stadium in Thwunna as of 27 May. Deserved prizes will be awarded to the winning teams.—By Nyi Myat Thawdar, Photo: Soe Nyunt

Seluk said is true. He Tweeted.

“Jokes aside. Please do not take words that do not come out of MY mouth seriously. Judge my commitment to @MCFC by @MCFC by my Tweets.”

However, Toure later tweeted: “Everything Dimitry said is true. He speaks for me. I will give him an interview after the World Cup to explain.”

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