President U Thein Sein hosts special advisor to UN Secretary-General

NA Pyi Taw, 27 May — President U Thein Sein received Mr Vijay Nambiar, the United Nations Secretary-General’s special advisor on Myanmar, and his delegation at the Presidential Palace in Nay Pyi Taw on Wednesday.

The president said at the meeting that Myanmar is deeply concerned with the issue of boat people but ready to provide humanitarian assistance in accordance with United Nations policy and international obligations.

He added that although the boat people recently rescued at sea by the Myanmar navy were Bangladeshi and not from Myanmar, the country is providing them with emergency relief.

The two sides discussed regional cooperation to fight people smugglers and address the issue of migrants by creating job opportunities, as well as the need to increase international awareness of the real situation in Myanmar.

Also present were Union Ministers Lt-Gen Ko Ko, Lt-Gen Thet Naing Win, U Wunna Maung Lwin, U Soe Thane, U Aung Min, U Khin Yi, Dr Daw Myat Myat Ohn Khin and officials.— MNA

SECM to announce underwriter licensees in June

YANGON, 27 May — The Securities and Exchange Commission of Myanmar will announce successful applicants for underwriters’ licenses next month, an official of the Ministry of Finance and Revenue said Wednesday.

The SECM has received 57 service provider applications for the Yangon Stock Exchange, SECM chairman and deputy minister for Finance Dr. Maung Maung Thein said last month. Among the applications, 20 are for underwriters, 30 for consultants or advisers and seven for brokers and dealers.

SECM invited applications for the service licenses — underwriters, dealers, brokers and consultants — setting different levels of capital requirements for each in January.

The Yangon Stock Exchange will debut in October this year.

Staff of UNHCR gather addresses of Bengali boat people from Bangladesh

TAUNGGYI, 27 May— Staff from Maungtaw 3-mile office from United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), AZG, IOM and WFP collected addresses of Bengali boat people from Bangladesh and provided drinking water and some equipment in Taunggyi Letwe, Maungtaw District, on 25 May.

They staff gave talks to 21 youths of under 18 years old and helped them call their families from Bangladesh.

Township IPRD

River Ayeyawady Gallery plans 1-yr anniversary exhibition

YANGON, 27 May— River Ayeyawady Art Gallery plans to mark its one-year anniversary with an exhibition in June, founder U Nay Min Latt said Wednesday.

The event is scheduled to open to the public from 27 June to 1 July, with the organizer planning to feature about 100 paintings by local artists in a wide range of styles and media.

Subject matter may include traditional arts and culture, still life and landscapes, and ethnic nationalities of Myanmar, U Nay Min Latt said.

The gallery has commissioned original contributions from partner artists, with 15-20, including renowned veteran U Win Pe, promising to provide artworks for the coming exhibition, the gallery’s founder told The Global New Light of Myanmar.

“We also invited unknown artists with the aim of exploring their artistic skills,” he said.

“Three exhibitions, including a collection of watercolour paintings, will be sponsored by the gallery for participating artists who want to exhibit their handicrafts in July and August.”

The rental for the ground floor of the gallery is K70,000 per day and for ground plus first floor is K100,000, an official of the gallery said.

The River Ayeyawady Gallery is located on 35th Street (middle block) in Kyauktada Township in downtown Yangon. It has hosted more than 100 exhibitions since opening in April 2014.—GNLM
Pyidaungsu Hluttaw suspends commercial tax for all recharges from mobile users until new fiscal year

The Pyidaungsu Hluttaw on Wednesday discussed an important motion concerning a 5% commercial tax for all recharges from mobile users, with members of parliament calling for its suspension until the 2015-2016 fiscal year.

Union Minister for Finance U Win Shein cited two foreign mobile operators, Telmex Myanmar and Ooredoo Myanmar, as stating that the service of telecommunications is internationally regarded as the same as that of information and technology.

“Theyir complaint has caused confusion in differentiating the two kinds of services.”

According to the union minister, the government has informed the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw of the rescheduling of the new tax for the new fiscal year in line with the 2015 Union Tax Law.

He said he would accept the parliament’s decision on whether to excuse the application of the new tax in 2015-2016 fiscal year.

The parliament decided in favour of the suspension of the 5% commercial tax for all recharges from mobile users.

Another motion discussed at the parliament was concerned with inviting tenders for privatization of an old broadcasting station, which was built on nearly 90 acres of land in Mayangon township in 1958. The current broadcasting station is on Pyay Road near the Hanthawady Roundabouts in Kamayut township.

Mps called for the suspension of the selloff, demanding the requirements of the tender be reexamined and stressing the need to form an investigative committee to ensure transparency.

Deputy Minister for Information U Pike Htway pledged greater transparency in tendering. According to him, the old station will be turned into a media complex.

The parliament approved the suspension of the tenders for privatization of the old broadcasting station.—MNA

Pyithu Hluttaw

New exams to improve outcomes for students: deputy education minister

The deputy minister for Education Dr Zaw Min Aung told the Pyithu Hluttaw on Wednesday, at the 53rd-day session of the Lower House.

The deputy minister was responding to a question from U Kyin Thein of Bago Constituency about whether the new examinations are an improvement to the education system.

Dr Zaw Min Aung said the new examinations were introduced in order to scrutinize qualification of students and to provide necessary assistance to schools in townships, districts, regions and states with a high rate of “D” grade students in both examinations.

The new examinations for fourth and eighth standards will be introduced in order to improve educational outcomes for students, Deputy Minister for Education Dr Zaw Min Aung told the Pyithu Hluttaw on Wednesday, at the 53rd-day session of the Lower House.

According to the union minister, the government has informed the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw of the rescheduling of the new tax for the new fiscal year in line with the 2015 Union Tax Law.

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The parliament approved the suspension of the tenders for privatization of the old broadcasting station.—MNA

Pyithu Hluttaw

Plan to open Myanmar Theravada Buddhist Centre (Mascow) on 1 July

The merit sharing ceremony for Myanmar Theravada Buddhist Centre (Mascow) will be held at the centre in Moscow in Russia on 1 July.

Sitatgu Sayadaw Dr Ashin Nanissara, Dhammaduta Sayadaw Dr Ashin Chekinda, families of Defence Services (Army, Navy and Air) led by the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services and wife, Myanmar Ambassador U Tin Yu and wife and Myanmar trainees made donations for the centre. The merit sharing ceremony will be attended by eight members of the Sangha led by the Sitagu Sayadaw, one each from the US, England and Germany, many, one nun from Singapore, Theravada Buddhist monks from Russia and members of the Sangha from Mahayana Buddhist organizations and laypersons.

Well-wishers may donate USD 50 each for 200 trust funds, USD 20,000 for a 20x50-foot reception building and USD 10,000 for water pipelines and septic tank.

Well-wishers may call U Hsan Min Naing (PymOoLwin) on 09-30125171, U Kyaw Zaw Ye (Russia) on 79099422796, Kyawzawye85@gmail.com, and Kyaw Myat Thu (Russia) on 79299693184 and other trainees.

Information for Public Remonstration

1. New Era Union Party, headquartered at No 647 on Merchant Street in Ward 3, Pabedan Township, Yangon Region, has submitted its application for the registration as a political party to the Union Election Commission on 27 May, 2015, in accord with Section 5 of the Political Parties Registration Law, along with the following party’s name, flag and emblem.

2. It is hereby announced that those who want to remonstrate with the UEC about the party’s name, flag and emblem they may submit a complaint along with the strong evidences within seven days starting from issuance of this announcement in line with the Section 14 (d) of the Political Parties Registration Rules.

Information for Public Remonstration

1. United Kayin National Democratic Party, headquartered on Bogyoke Road in Yadanadipa Ward 9 in Hpa-an, Kayin State, has submitted its application for the registration as a political party to the Union Election Commission on 27 May, 2015, in accord with Section 5 of the Political Parties Registration Law, along with the following party’s name, flag and emblem.

2. It is hereby announced that those who want to remonstrate with the UEC about the party’s name, flag and emblem they may submit a complaint along with the strong evidences within seven days starting from issuance of this announcement in line with the Section 14 (d) of the Political Parties Registration Rules.

New Era Union Party, United Kayin National Democratic Party apply for registration as political parties

The Union Election Commission has been scrutinizing and passing the applications for registration as political parties.

New Era Union Party and United Kayin National Democratic Party applied for registration as political parties to the UEC on Wednesday.—MNA

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw

Defence Ministry explains rights to pensions at Amyotha Hluttaw

The law does not allow any privileges to the spouse of a deceased soldier with less than 10 years of service in military, Deputy Minister for Defence Maj-Gen Kyaw Nyunt responded to a query raised at the Amyotha Hluttaw on Wednesday.

Military personnel who die due to a service-connected disability after seven years in retirement are entitled to special family pension which is 70% of their last salary, the deputy minister said, adding that defence personnel with less than 10 years of service who retire due to disability are allowed to enjoy the same benefits as those with 15 years of service since their retirement, but the plan exclude their spouses.

The Pyithu Hluttaw sent a bill that restricts marriages of Myanmar Buddhist women, which the Amyotha Hluttaw approved.—MNA

Amyotha Hluttaw
President U Thein Sein sends messages of felicitations to Azerbaijan, Nepal

China.com website launched

Union Attorney-General meets French Ambassador for Human Rights

YANGON, 27 May—Attorney-General of the Union Dr Tun Shin Wednesday received a delegation led by Mrs Patriziana Sparacino-Theillay, French Ambassador for Human Rights, at the Office of the Attorney-General of the Union.

They discussed draft status of four marriage and religious bills in Myanmar, arrangements for signing peace agreement, economic development and investment laws.—MNA

YANGON, 27 March—Oscar-winning actor and UNESCO ambassador Forest Whitaker on Wednesday visited the Yangon office of a non-governmental organization promoting peaceful co-existence between ethnic communities.

The American movie star, on his first trip to Myanmar, visited the Centre for Diversity & National Harmony to learn about and discuss its programs, CDNH director Dr Kyaw Yin Hlaing said.

Given Mr Whitaker’s international profile, his visit to the CDNH and Myanmar could raise public awareness of the need for greater tolerance in society, as well as drawing local and international attention to efforts toward peace and reconciliation in the country, Dr Kyaw Yin Hlaing said.

With a resume spanning dozens of films as an actor, director and producer, Mr Whitaker won a best actor Academy Award for his portrayal of Ugandan dictator Idi Amin in 2006’s Last King of Scotland.

The actor and peace activist was named a UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador for Peace and Reconciliation in 2011. Since then, he has worked with UNESCO to support or develop initiatives that empower youths and keep them from entering or re-milling in cycles of violence.

During his visit to the CDNH, the Mr Whitaker heard about Myanmar’s ongoing peace process and works carried out in Rakhine State for mitigation of communal violence in Myanmar’s Rakhine State in 2012 and aims to promote harmony between communities.

Oscar-winning actor and peace activist Forest Whitaker is welcomed by Dr Kyaw Yin Hlaing, Director of the Centre for Diversity & National Harmony, in Yangon on Wednesday.—Photo: Ye MYINT

Oscar winner Whitaker visits Myanmar as part of UNESCO ambassadorship

Union FM sends messages of felicitations to Azerbaijan, Nepal

Protesters denounce foreign media for portraying boat people as Myanmar nationals

By Ye MYINT

Thursday, 28 May, 2015 | 3
Kalay fire damage bill already surpasses 2014 total

Kalay, 27 May — As of May, Kalay in Sagaing Region has recorded five cases of fire this year, with the damage bill already higher than last year’s total, according to the Fire Services Department.

Local people suffered losses worth roughly K500,000 in four fires in 2014. This year, five separate fires have caused damage in excess of K1.5 million. “Some vendors sell fuel along roadsides in Kalay and do not abide by the rules of the Fire Services Department,” a local resident said. “They do not keep fire extinguishers at the shops. In fact, the authorities should not allow any fuel station in downtown Kalay.”

Staff Officer U Phone Sei Kyu, 27 May — Er of Kalay District FSD said, “Most of the outbreaks of fire were based on negligent acts of users. Moreover, they have made poor attempts at following the regulations of the Fire Services Department.”

Fire stations in Kalay Township have received 15 fire trucks to bolster firefighting capacity. Personnel of FSD and firefighters are working hard in disseminating knowledge about fire prevention measures to local residents.

Shin Nay Min

Taninthayi Region Police Force selects model officers

Dawei, 27 May — Taninthayi Region Police Force held the police code of conduct examination for selection of model officers at its headquarters in Dawei, Taninthayi Region, recently. Eleven shortlisted candidates took the examination. According to the Taninthayi Region Police Force, a plan is under way to select the police of the year based on performance in the field and in the examination.

The police sat the written examination at Ye Zarni Hall and physical test at the region sports ground, prior to interviews at police headquarters.

Region IPRD

New school buildings under construction in Seikpyu Tsp

Seikpyu, 27 May — New school buildings are under construction in Seikpyu Township, Magway Region, as part of the government’s strategy to upgrade the education sector across the nation.

Mya Khaing Mar Company was assigned by local authorities to construct a 90-foot-long, 30-foot-wide one-storey concrete building at the basic education school in Letse Village. Magway Region Hluttaw allotted funding to improve the school buildings and repair damage where necessary in its fiscal 2014-15 budget.

Township IPRD

Villagers receive funds through Emerald Green Project

Nay Pyi Taw, 27 May — The Department of Rural Development held a ceremony to provide funds for implementation of the Emerald Green Project, aimed at eliminating rural poverty, in Thagala Village, Pobbathiri Township, on Tuesday.

Staff officer of the department U Than Win Soe gave a speech, while chairman of the project supervisory committee U Tin Shwe delivered K160,000 each to 213 villagers participating in the project.

The villagers are required to spend the amount on livestock breeding, agriculture, fishery and small-scale industries.

Shwe Ye Yint

Basic education students begin enrolment in Natogyi Tsp

Natogyi, 27 May — Basic education schools launched enrolment for the 2015-16 academic year in Natogyi Township, Mandalay Region, on 25 May. A total of 161 basic education schools started admission of students free of charge, according to the Township Education Office.

“We have delivered notebooks and school textbooks to the students. This year, the Ministry of Education gives one uniform each to students at the primary level,” headmaster U Win Maung Myint of Natogyi Basic Education High School said.

About 30,000 students are pursuing basic education in Natogyi Township this year.

Khin Zar Mon Myint
(Law)
**Police lecture residents on crime reduction, traffic safety**

**Mandalay, 27 May** — No. 9 police station in Ma-haungmye Township organized an educational talk on crime reduction at the Dhammayon on 36th Street in the township on 26 May.

Police Captain Kyi Soe of the station spoke of the need for local residents to cooperate with the police force to reduce crime, while also explaining operations against gambling and people smuggling.

Police Captain Than Htut of No 18 Anti-Drug Squad spoke about operations targeting narcotic drugs and stimulant tablets in Mandalay Region while IP Win Ko Ko of No 55 traffic police squad explained prevention of traffic accidents and the need to abide by road rules.

**Thiha Ko Ko (Mandalay)**

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**Free clinic provides healthcare in Myanaung Tsp**

**Myaunng, 27 May** — A free clinic in Myaunng, Ayeyawady Region, provided health care services to rural people at Basic Education Primary School in Shadaw Village, on 26 May.

Dr Phone Pyae Naing, Head of Township Traditional Medicine Department Daw Than Than Swe and health staff treated 230 local people, with the assistance of Deputy Township Administrator U Aung Win and local authorities.

Under the leadership of Township Administrator U Min Min Tun, the free clinic has been running its tasks since May 2013 at Myaunng monastery in Myaunng every Saturday.

Local residents donate cash to the fund of the clinic for its longevity. — Win Bo (Township IPRD)

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**Water supply eases shortage in rural areas**

**Taungtha, 27 May** — Local residents in Taungtha Township, Mandalay Region, are facing water shortages stemming from this summer’s extremely hot and dry weather conditions.

With reservoirs running dry, chairman of the Township Management Committee U Aung Kyaw Nyunt organized supplies of drinking water for the villages.

In the morning of 26 May, Township Fire Services Department and Department of Rural Development distributed 2,000 gallons of water to Minhla, Mohnaungkhin, Pintaw, Thasi, East Magyibin and Khatetkon villages with the assistance of township authorities and departmental officials.

As of 10 April, Township FSD, the Township Development Affairs Committee and DRD have been supplying potable water to local residents via four water bowsers.

**Kyaw Myo Naing (Taungtha)**

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**Bullock-cart and equestrian contests mark umbrella-hoisting at Jade Pagoda**

**Mandalay, 27 May** — To commemorate the hoisting of a golden umbrella atop Warawana Jade Pagoda, bullock-cart and equestrian contests are being held at a nearby field in Hsinyaw Myinhmu village, Amarapura Township, Mandalay, until 5 June.

At the opening of the contests, jointly organized by the Myanmar Equestrian Federation and Mandalay Region Sports and Physical Education Department, pagoda supporter and President of the Asian Chinlone Federation U Soe Naing said the event aimed to promote Myanmar’s traditional sports to tourists.

A total of 130 pairs of oxen and more than 20 horses are involved in the contests. The bullock-cart contest includes senior and junior classes, with the overall first prizewinner set to receive K2.2 million. — Thiha Ko Ko (Mandalay)
Modi urges farmers to boost output, skirts issue of rural distress

NEW DELHI, 27 May — Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday urged farmers to boost lentils and oilseeds output to cut expensive imports but skirted the issue of rural distress that has turned peasants against his one-year-old government.

There has been an increase in suicides by farmers after untimely rains and hailstorms damaged crops and weak prices hit farmers' income in the countryside, home to 70 percent of Indians. “We spend a lot of money to import lentils and (edible) oils and we must resolve to raise production so that we become self-sufficient in the next 10 years,” Modi said in a comparison to a TV channel for farmers. India, among the world’s leading producers of grain, cotton and sugar, imports edible oils and lentils at an annual cost of about $10 billion and $2 billion respectively. Vegetable oils are its No. 3 import item after crude oil and gold. Modi, who is trying to boost investment in industry that would create new jobs outside agriculture, said farmers should increase production so that they can prosper even as the average size of farms shrinks due to a growing population. “Our average farm productivity comes to two tonnes per hectare against the global average of three tonnes a hectare and we must strive to reach the global level,” he advised. India’s near 250 million tonnes of grain output pales in comparison with rival China, which produces nearly 600 million tonnes despite having a lower farm area and smaller average land holdings. To overcome the problem, Modi has asked scientists to work closely with farmers to introduce high-yielding crop varieties. India is also flirting with the idea of adopting genetically modified (GM) technology to raise productivity. Scientists have already completed field trials and trials of mustard and will submit a report to the government in a month.

Modi’s clarion call cut little ice with farmers. “It’s a pity Modi asks us to raise production and productivity but refuses to address the issue of agrarian distress and farmers’ suicides,” said Dharmendra Kumar, a farmer from Uttar Pradesh.

“Please remind Modi about his election promise of paying 50 percent profit over farmers’ cost of cultivation,” Kumar said by telephone when told about Modi’s speech.—Reuters

Indonesian court delays appeal hearing of French death row convict

JAKARTA, 27 May — An Indonesian court has fixed 3 June to hear a last-ditch appeal by a French drug trafficker on death row, after a verdict expected this week was delayed by the absence of the presiding judge, a judge said. Serge Atlaoui had been due to face the firing squad with other convicts last month, but won a last-minute reprieve for the completion of his legal appeals.

France’s foreign minister has warned Indonesia it would face repercussions if the Southeast Asian nation went ahead with his execution. Indonesia has harsh penalties for drug trafficking and resumed executions in 2013 after a five-year lull. President Joko Widodo has rejected clemency pleas from foreign nationals who are among a group of around 60 drug convicts scheduled for execution. Fourteen have been executed this year.

The Jakarta administrative court is reviewing Atlaoui’s challenge against the president’s refusal of clemency. “As our presiding judge is in training, the court hearing could not take place and we postponed to next week,” Judge Indaryadi said in a court session on Tuesday.

The hearing has been rescheduled for 3 June and a verdict is expected soon after, vThe Attorney General’s Office has said Atlaoui’s current legal challenge would be his last appeal. Atlaoui was sentenced to death for his involvement in an ecstasy factory in Jakarta that was capable of producing 100 kg (220 lb) of the illegal pills every week.—Reuters

Indonesian judge Ujang Abdullah (C) speaks with the lawyer of French drug trafficker Serge Atlaoui and the government prosecutors during a hearing at the administrative court in Jakarta, Indonesia on 13 May, 2015.—REUTERS

Japan to expand support to Myanmar on postal services

Tokyo, 27 May — Japan agreed on Tuesday to help Myanmar launch new postal services in the hope of making its postal system more convenient for users.

Based on a memorandum signed on Tuesday, Japan will support Myanmar in introducing money transfer services at its post offices and other services using information-com- munication technology, officials of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications said.

The two countries signed the first memorandum on postal business in April last year, enabling Japan to start offering technical expertise to My- anmar by sending experts from Japan Post Co.

The move has helped Myanmar improve over-the-counter services at its post offices and shorten the period of postal delivery, according to the ministry. The internal affairs and communications minister, Sanae Takaichi, said she expects the postal-related business in Myanmar to provide “a lot of busi- ness chances” to Japanese companies.—Kyodo News

Singapore Airlines jet flying to Shanghai lost power in both engines

SINGAPORE, 27 May — A Singapore Airlines plane flying from Singapore to Shanghai suffered a temporary loss of power in both engines during bad weather last Saturday, the airline said on Wednesday.

The Airbus A330-300 plane, which was carrying 182 passengers and 12 crew, “encountered bad weather at 39,000 feet about three- and-a-half hours after depar- ture,” it said in a statement. “Both engines experienced a temporary loss of power,” it said. The pilots “followed operational procedures to restore normal operation of the engines” and the flight, SQ696, continued its journey and arrived at its destination. “The engines were thoroughly inspected and tested upon arrival in Shanghai with no anomalies detected.” The airline said it is “reviewing the incident with Rolls-Royce, the maker of the engines, and Air- bus.” — Kyodo News

Cambodia rescues another 59 trafficked labourers from Thai fishing vessels

PHNOM PENH, 27 May — Cambodia has saved another 59 Cambodian people, who were trafficked to work as illegal fishermen in Indonesia, Koy Kuong, spokesman for the Cambodian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, said on Wednesday.

“With the cooperation from the Indonesian authorities, the Cambodian Embassy (to Indonesia) has rescued 21 Cambodian la- bourers from Thai fishing vessels in Ambon Island and 38 others from Thai fishing boats in Benjina Island in Indonesia,” he said in a news statement.

The spokesman said the first group will return to Cambodia later this week, as the second one will ar- rive in the first week of next month. Early this month, a group of 59 Cambodian fishermen and laborers was also rescued from fishing vessels in Indonesia and re- turned home on 11 May. Trafficked fishermen are frequently forced to work long hours while being physically and psycho- logically abused. They are often unpaid and forced to serve on voyages for months or even years. —Xinhua

The country has been divided for a decade between the former telecommunications tycoon, and his legions of supporters from the poor countryside, and the Bangkok-based elite which sees him as a threat to the old royalist-military establishment.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs said in a statement that an interview Thaksin recently gave was being investigated.

It gave no details of the interview but last week Thaksin spoke to South Korean media about how he thought was behind a military coup last year in which a government loyal to him and led by his sister, former premier Yingluck Shinawatra, was ousted.

“The content of what Thaksin Shinawatra said in an interview affects na- tional security and the reputa- tion and honour of Thai- land,” the ministry said in its statement.

It referred to three sec- tions of the criminal code, including one that relates to insulting the monarchy, and the Computer Crimes Act.

The ministry gave the numbers of two passports held by Thaksin which it said were revoked.

He was stripped of his post offices and shorten the period of postal delivery, according to the ministry. The internal affairs and communications minister, Sanae Takaichi, said she expects the postal-related business in Myanmar to provide “a lot of business chances” to Japanese companies.—Kyodo News

Thailand revokes passports of ousted former PM Thaksin

BANGKOK, 27 May — Thailand has revoked two passports belonging to ousted former Prime Min- ister Thaksin Shinawatra after he gave an interview that posed a risk to national security and his reputation, the foreign min- istry said on Wednesday.

Thaksin, who lives abroad to avoid a jail sentence handed down for graft in 2008, was ousted in a 2006 coup but remains a major influence over Thai politics.
S Korea, US, Japan agree to ramp up pressure on N Korea

SEOUL, 27 May — Top negotiators of the United States, Japan, and South Korea — three of six countries involved in stalled talks aimed at ending North Korea’s nuclear program — agreed on Wednesday to increase “pressures and sanctions” on North Korea to dissuade the North from military provocations.

“We agreed on the importance of enhancing pressures and sanctions on North Korea even as we work to keep all diplomatic options on the table and open,” Sung Kim, US special representative for North Korea policy, told journalists after the trilateral meeting with his counterparts from South Korea and Japan.

Kim also said the three governments also agreed to work with the international community to address the “grave” human rights situation in North Korea.

Junichi Ithara, director general of the Japanese Foreign Ministry’s Asian and Oceanian Affairs Bureau, told reporters they held “earnest discussions” on how to deal with nuclear and missile-related developments in North Korea and views “converged on many points.”

As for steps to be taken against North Korea, South Korea’s chief delegate Hwang Joon-kook, special representative for Korean Peninsula peace and security affairs, said, “Discussions are under way (on) what concrete steps may be taken in the context of which kind of steps will be effective.”

Kim and Hwang are scheduled to visit China on Thursday for similar consultations with Wu Dawei, China’s chief nuclear envoy. Kim stressed the importance of maintaining “five-party unity” along with Russia and China in dealing with the North Korea issue.

The six-party talks, which also involve those two countries as well as North Korea, have been deadlocked since late 2008.

The trilateral talks came at a time of heightened tensions on the Korean Peninsula.

North Korea’s National Defence Commission announced in a statement on 20 May that the country has succeeded in miniaturizing nuclear warheads, saying its “nuclear striking means have entered the stage of producing smaller nukes and diverse models.”

It’s 9 May announcement that it had succeeded in test-firing of a subminiature tactical missile triggered security concerns in South Korea that the North could deploy SLBMs in a year or two after completing the last stages of development.

In addition to the fresh show of force, South Korea’s state intelligence agency presented a report to parliament recently on North Korean leader Kim Jong-Un’s reported reign of terror.

The National Intelligence Service, in a closed-doors report to parliament, said North Korea’s Defence Minister Hyong Yong Chol was executed for treason by anticraft gunfire around 30 April and more than 70 senior officials have been killed since he took power in December 2011.

G7 finance chiefs meet with growth problem to fix

DRESDEN, (Germany), 27 May — Little more than a gentleman’s club in recent years, G7 finance ministers and central bankers have their work cut out this week to revive global growth and defuse tensions over China’s claims to economic power.

Topping the agenda for the financial chiefs from the Group of Seven industrial nations is how to keep a faltering global recovery on track as the threat of a Greek default, rising oil prices and bond market turmoil fuel investor nervousness.

The United States is likely to use the talks, beginning late on Wednesday and running through to Friday, as an opportunity to press Europe to reach a funding-for-reforms deal with Greece, an official close to the discussions said.

“I would expect the Americans to put pressure on the Europeans in Dresden about Greece,” the official said.

“The Americans are stressing the geopolitical risks and telling us we have to find a solution, that we cannot really put the euro area and Europe at risk because of Greece.”

Hosts Germany have given the meeting in Dresden the heading “Towards a Dynamic Global Econo-

my”, but they and officials from the United States, Japan, Canada, France, Italy and Britain must also grapple with the rise of a power not even present: China.

German Finance Minister Wolfgang Schauble told Reuters last week that officials could talk informally at the meeting about the increased importance of the Chinese yuan.

The inclusion of the yuan in the International Monetary Fund’s currency basket would mark another stage in China’s rise as a global economic player, requiring the United States to accept a dilution of its power in international finance.

Having ignored US urgings not to sign up to a China-led development bank, European G7 members have signalled an openness to add the yuan this year to the basket of currencies makes up the IMF’s Special Drawing Rights (SDR) — a virtual currency that defines the value of IMF reserves, used for lending to countries in financial difficulty.

The United States and Japan are again more cautious. Including the yuan in the basket would increase China’s influence at the IMF — an institution Washington was instrumen-

tal in designing and through which it has projected “soft power” for the last 70 years.

The yuan, also known as the renminbi, is already the world’s fifth most-used trade currency. Beijing has made strides this year in introducing the infrastructure needed to float it freely on global capital markets.

A senior US Treasury official said on Tuesday China’s currency liberalisation plans were welcome and would be needed before the yuan was able to join the IMF currency basket.

While the Europeans are vying for commercial advantage in the world’s second biggest economy, Washington sees Beijing also as a strategic challenger that may not feel bound by rules written by the West. Greece, which is scrambling to strike a deal with its international lenders before an IMF loan falls due on 5 June, poses a more pressing problem.

A senior US Treasury official said Washington would emphasise the need to find a pragmatic solution. Failure could have unpredictable consequences for the European and even global economies, said the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

Iran nuclear deal unlikely by 30 June — French envoy

GERARD ARNAUD ADDRESSES THE SECURITY COUNCIL DURING A MEETING INSIDE the situation in the Middle East, including Palestine, at United Nations headquarters in New York on 22 July, 2014.

WASHINGTON, 27 May — An Iran nuclear deal is not likely by 30 June because technical details will remain to be defined and Iran will not get sanctions relief before the end of the year in the best of cases, western ambassadors said on Tuesday.

Six major powers are seeking to negotiate an agreement under which Iran would limit its nuclear programme in exchange for the easing of economic sanctions that have crippled its economy.

Envoys to Washington from Britain, France and Germany, three of the P5+1 group that also includes China, Russia and the United States, sketched out the expectations for the end game as a self-imposed 30 June deadline approaches.

“It’s very likely that we won’t have an agreement before the end of June or even (right after),” French ambassador Gerard Araud said in an appearance at the Atlantic Council think tank.

The Iranians want to force the six powers’ ministers to decide the issues rather than lower-level officials, Araud said, saying he expected some melodrama toward the end with late nights and doors slamming as both sides jockey for a deal.

“If we are going to get the best deal ... afterwards, you will have to translate it into the technical annexes, so it may be that we could have a sort of fuzzy end to the negotiation,” he said.

Speaking after the event, Araud said it could take a few weeks of July to complete the technical annexes envisaged under an agreement, if one can be reached.

Iran and the P5+1 reached a framework agreement on 2 April, but several issues remain unresolved, including the pace of sanctions relief and the monitoring and verification measures to ensure Iran does not pursue a clandestine nuclear programme.

Iranian officials say they must receive sanctions relief immediately upon reaching an agreement.

Western officials argue that sanctions will be eased gradually and only after Iran has taken steps to limit its nuclear programme.

“Iran needs some time to start the implementation of this agreement, so in the best case sanctions relief would not happen before the end of this year,” German ambassador Peter Wittig said.

Peter Westmacott, Britain’s ambassador, said it would be hard to tighten sanctions if no deal is struck, particularly if the major powers are blamed for the failure.

“My sense is that we are probably not far away from the high-water mark of international sanctions against the Iranian economy,” he said.

Reuters
Thursday, 28 May, 2015

There is no such thing as an unproductive life

By Kyaw Thura

If you’re not like in movies. Despite this, many people seem to take life for granted, living as if in a daydream. As Bill Gates put it simply, it is one thing to be born poor, but it is quite another to die poor.

Philosophically, a purposeful life is to make best use of one’s talent and ability. In this respect, a prime example is the success story of Singapore over several decades under the dynamic leadership of Lee Kuan Yew, who transformed the country from a small port city into a wealthy global hub. Lee convinced his people that “man” is the greatest resource of all in improving the socioeconomic status of a country. It is therefore important for the government to develop a framework for human talent to flourish. Singapore is living proof that building capacity for unfortunate people is in deed a change for the better.

Write for us

We appreciate your feedback and contributions. If you have any comments or would like to submit editorials, analyses or reports please email wallace.taw@gmail.com with your name and title.

Due to limitation of space we are only able to publish “Letter to the Editor” that do not exceed 500 words. Should you submit a text longer than 500 words please be aware that your letter will be edited.

Myanmar, Bulgaria to exchange forest management

NAY PYI TAW, 27 May—Union Minister for Environmental Conservation and Forestry U Win Tun received Bulgarian Ambassador Mr Evgeni Stefanov Stoychev at the ministry, here, Wednesday to hold talks on technical exchange of forest management between Bulgaria and Myanmar.

They also discussed the ministry’s policy, law and rules for management of forests, conservation of bio-diversity, preparations for designating Inlay Lake as a human and bio society, drafting rules and standards for environment impact assessment, emergence of national land utilization law and national land resources law, investment in wood-based industries and cooperation in mapping technology.

Union Minister for Environmental Conservation and Forestry U Win Tun holds talks with Bulgarian Ambassador Mr Evgeni Stefanov Stoychev. — MNA

Japan grants US$116,644 for school in Kawa Township, Bago Region

YANGON, 27 May—The Japanese Government, under its Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects (GGP) Scheme, has granted US$116,644 for a humanitarian assistance program entitled “The Project for Construction of Moe Ganein Basic Education Branch Middle School in Kawa Township, Bago Region.”

The handover and opening ceremony of the school took place in Moe Ganein Village, Kawa Township, Bago Region on 26 May 2015. Mr. Kazuyoshi SUZUKI, Second Secretary of the Embassy of Japan, U Huy Win, Bago Region Director for Education Department, U Ye Lwin, Bago District Education Officer, Daw Khin Mar Yee, Kawa Township Education Officer, U Soe Than, Kawa Township Administrator, governmental officials, Committee Chair- man, committee members of the construction project, and local residents attended the ceremony.

The two school buildings of Moe Ganein Basic Education Branch Middle School could not fulfill the classroom needs of the increasing students. Due to insufficient number of classrooms, the students had to study in very congested classrooms. Under such circumstances, the Japanese Government, under its GGP scheme, provided funding for construction of a two-storey R.C.C building with 6 classrooms and full furniture. The project will benefit 613 students of the school.

Monastic education/books to be donated

Mr. Kazuyoshi SUZUKI, Second Secretary of the Embassy of Japan, poses for documentary photo with students.

Union Electric Power minister meets Vice Administrator of NEA, Yunnan Province governor

NAY PYI TAW, 27 May—Union Minister for Electric Power U Khin Maung Soe on his trip to China held a meeting with Mr. Liu Qi, Vice Administrator, Chinese National Energy Administration (NEA), on progress of electric power projects being implemented by the two countries, on 22 May.

They agreed on discussions on implementation of the projects in Myanmar with investment of China without environmental and social impacts. They also exchanged views on difficulties in technology and investment for the projects.

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Industrial Bank of Korea to donate computers, school equipment to monasteries

YANGON, 27 May—A total of 66 employees from Industrial Bank of Korea (IBK) plan to donate 30 sets of computer, 50 sets of desks and chairs, and school remodeling paint worth US$ 9,150 to Aungzeyarmun Monastery, near Shwepyitha Bridge, Hlinthaya Township, and US$ 137,000 to a child development centre, community library, summer child development training, treatment and support of children affected by AIDS, excursion to Shwechinthae monastery in Seikkhums Ward, Shwebo, Sagaing Region, from 2 to 4 June.

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Amphibian discovery illuminates Myanmar’s “hidden biodiversity”

By Tim Johnson

T AUNGGYI, Myanmar, May 27 Kyodo

A team of Japanese and Chinese biologists has discovered a new species of crocodile newt from Myanmar, a forerunner of a wave of new amphibian species awaiting description as the relatively unexplored country’s “hidden biodiversity” is gradually revealed by science.

Conservationists, however, warn that the new species’ only known populations in and around Taunggyi, the capital of Shan State in eastern Myanmar, are threatened by habitat loss, degradation and fragmentation, as well as commercial exploitation.

Describing their find in the latest issue of a Thai university journal, the Natural History Bulletin of the Siam Society, the taxonomists from Kyoto University and the Kunning Institute of Zoology named the new species “Tylototriton shanorum,” dedicating its scientific name to the people of Shan State.

“Effective management for the protection of this new narrow-ranged species must be taken into action urgently,” they advised, underscoring the need for timely conservation measures for the Shan Crocodile Newt.

“Several crocodile newts—also known as ‘knobby newts’ due to two rows of blunt protrusions that run down their back—are found in Myanmar, China, Vietnam, Laos, Thailand, Nepal, India and Bhutan. More than half of these medium to large-sized newts have been identified only in the last decade and most are legally protected—at least on paper.

In Taunggyi, which is set spectacularly on a mountain ridge at an altitude of 1,436 meters, the news, which are mostly terrestrial, live under rocks, logs, and debris in the vicinity of permanent or temporary shallow ponds, ditches and marshes to which they migrate during the rainy season for breeding.

According to Pe Than Kyaw, a Taunggyi University biology professor who has studied the news’ population dynamics and reproduction, they were long thought to be the more wide-ranging Himalayan Crocodile Newt, a closely related species found in neighboring countries and commonly encountered in the international pet trade.

He hoped the identification of the Shan Crocodile Newt as a genetically distinct species will stimulate local research into its life cycle and habitat requirements, while he stressed the need for field studies to determine its distribution and come up with effective conservation measures.

However, considering the fast pace of decline in the extent and quality of newt and other wildlife habitats in the growing township of some 400,000 people, the clock may be ticking for these possibly rare tailed amphibians.

Some meandering spots where locals recalled finding newts in their youth were found littered with plastic bags and other rubbish, while their main breeding ponds on the campus of Taunggyi University, despite being in an area set aside as a “newt preserve,” may soon dry out completely as nearby construction of a university building is poised to cut off the inflow of water in the absence of mitigation measures.

Other factors in the news’ decline include being run over by vehicles during their seasonal migrations to and from breeding ponds as well as loss of shady, moist places to hide, according to Pe Than Kyaw.

“Their populations have been decreasing year by year,” he lamented.

Like other news in the enigmatic Asian genus Tytotriton, the new species, though not as colorfully appealing as some, is also menaced by overhunting for the international pet trade.

“Many Tylototriton kept in Europe seem to be pregnant,” said Kyoto University associate professor Kanto Nishikawa, the lead author of the new species description paper, adding that ones captive-bred ones are sometimes found in Japanese pet shops as well.

Indeed, another source said many, if not most, crocodile newts imported into Europe in the 1980s and 1990s sold as the Himalayan Crocodile Newt may well have been the newly described species.

Commercial trade in wild newts “should be stopped from the viewpoint of conservation,” Nishikawa said, while noting that the often unregulated and sometimes illegal newt trade also helps spread a dangerous fungus of Asian origin that has been killing off native salamander species in Europe in recent years.

An even more serious threat to these stout-bodied newts — which are sluggish and easily captured when found in shallow water in the breeding season — is from being collected for export to China where they are used in traditional medicine, according to Pe Than Kyaw.

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A decades-old account from Taunggyi states that certain superstitious locals used to regard these then-abundant “water lizards” as omens of bad luck and would maliciously tamper them at every opportunity, a fate which befall 10 out of 40 newts that were tagged and released on the university’s campus in an experiment.

These days, however, locals who come across a newt are more likely to consider it fortuitous, representing as it does “money...something to sell to China,” the professor said.

The new species was identified on the basis of type specimens collected from Taunggyi over a decade ago by Kyi Soe Lwin, currently a project officer with Indo-Myanmar Conservation, an NGO that works to conserve Myanmar’s wildlife, and other local scientists.

Teaming up with researchers from the California Academy of Sciences, they pushed the zoological frontend by extensively surveying Myanmar’s amphibians and reptiles, to the extent possible given the country’s delicate political and security environment.

But as the country reengages with the world after decades of isolation, civil conflict and economic decline, its impressive biodiversity faces numerous challenges, ranging from wildlife poaching and illegal logging to extensive conversion of forest land for agribusiness.

On Wednesday, international wildlife conservation group WWF featured the Shan Crocodile Newt in its annual “Magical Mekong” report, which highlighted 10 new species discovered in 2014 in the Greater Mekong Region including Myanmar.

They were among a total 139 new species of flora and fauna — including 16 amphibians, 23 reptiles, nine fish and one mammal — discovered last year in the region that also encompasses Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, and Vietnam.

“This discovery is only the tip of the iceberg,” the professor said. “There are thousands of as-yet-unidentified species in the country, the report warned that these newts “may disappear just as we’re getting to know them.”

“Even if we can’t stop construction and/or destruction, we can do something like mitigation,” Nishikawa said. “Practically, it’s important and much better than doing nothing.”
Queen Elizabeth to unveil EU referendum plans as parliament opens

Cameron, who says he would prefer to stay inside a reformed EU but isn’t “rolling anything out” if it fails to change, was re-elected on 7 May on a pledge to reshape ties with the bloc before allowing Britons to vote on whether to stay or leave.

Queen Elizabeth, 89, will detail the plans in a speech written for her by Cameron’s government as she opens parliament with an annual display of pomp.

Among other measures expected to feature was a reform of human rights laws designed to weaken the influence of the European Court of Human Rights, but several newspapers reported hours before the speech that the bill had now been delayed.

Cameron’s Conservative Party is divided over the plan, and the newspapers said the prime minister had backed away from an early fight within his own camp.

On the EU, the Queen will say the new government plans to pass a law in its first year that would allow the referendum to occur by the end of 2017.

In a gesture meant to underscore Cameron’s seriousness, the law will be introduced into parliament just a day later, on Thursday, as Cameron embarks on a European tour to try to charm sometimes reluctant counterparts into backing EU reform. It will include talks with French President Francois Hollande in Paris and German Chancellor Angela Merkel in Berlin.

Cameron has said he would be ready to hold the referendum before 2017 if he completes the renegotiation early, something some EU proponents advocate. But he is under pressure from some Eurosceptic lawmakers who want him to ask for more and to take his time.

Turkey’s rulers firmly believe that Turkey cannot be the regional power they wish it to be required to be ready for defence industry cannot fight the kind of war we are fighting,” said Burak Bekdil, a defence analyst and colonel.

Turkey’s President Tayyip Erdogan’s sights are set on the centenary of the modern Turkish republic’s foundation.

“Our goal is to completely rid our defence industry of foreign dependence by 2023,” he said, adding that Turkey would invest $18 billion a year on defence just over half of its equipment made domestically. Defence exports rose 18 percent last year to $1.65 billion (1.07 billion pounds), and a tank and infantry rifle are nearly ready for mass production.

Warship and fighter jet projects are in the early design phase but Erdogan hopes they will go into production by 2023, when he wants defence exports to total $25 billion.

Turkey’s rulers firmly believe that Turkey can become a self-reliant regional power they will be ready to hold the referendum because of liberation,” he said at the Battle of Gallipoli, adding that by 2023 a locally-made combat plane will “fly the Turkish skies”.

Turkey’s desire for self-reliance is understandable as it shares a 1,200 km (750-mile) border with Syria and Iraq, where Islamic State has carved out a self-declared caliphate.

Senior ministers say either option could prompt a walkout by one of the major parties and a collapse of the administration.

The government underlined this point earlier this month when it said several senior figures have said could lead to the collapse of the regional assembly in the British-controlled province.

A deal struck between the Northern Ireland parties and the British Government late last year was supposed to have eased the way for welfare reforms by promising the local administration a package including loans which would have helped mitigate the cuts enacted in other parts of the United Kingdom.

However the social welfare reforms, submitted by the majority Democratic Unionist Party (DUP), were voted down by the nationalist Sinn Fein and SDLP parties via a mechanism where they can essentially veto legislation.

The DUP leads the power-sharing government with Sinn Fein under the terms of a 1998 peace deal that ended three decades of sectarian violence in Northern Ireland.

The devolution of corporation tax setting powers to Northern Ireland to allow it to compete with the lower rate across the border in Irish Republic is also contingent on the reforms being implemented.

The administration is expected to be able to survive until the end of July, but at that point either Britain’s Secretary of State to the region would likely have to step in to enact a budget or London would take back control of welfare.

Senior ministers say either option could prompt a walkout by one of the major parties and a collapse of the administration.

The debate came the day after Northern Ireland First Minister Peter Robinson, leader of the DUP, was admitted to hospital. He remains in hospital where his condition was said by DUP deputy leader Nigel Dodds to be improving.
Iraq Shi‘ite militia take lead in campaign to reverse Islamic State gains

Baghdad, 27 May — Iraq’s Shi‘ite paramilitaries and members of Iraqi security forces gather in Nibai, in Anbar Province on 26 May, 2015. Iraq’s Shi‘ite paramilitaries and members on Tuesday they had taken charge of the campaign to drive Islamic State from the western province of Anbar, giving the operation an openly sectarian codename that could infuriate its Sunni Muslim population. — Reuters

“Iraq’s Shi‘ite paramilitaries and members of Iraqi security forces gather in Nibai, in Anbar Province on 26 May, 2015. Iraq’s Shi‘ite paramilitaries and members on Tuesday they had taken charge of the campaign to drive Islamic State from the western province of Anbar, giving the operation an openly sectarian codename that could infuriate its Sunni Muslim population. — Reuters"

An EU vehicle was followed by the fall of the UNICEF heritage city of Palmyra in Syria, the two biggest gains by Islamic State fighters since the United States began air strikes on them in Iraq and Syria last year.

The loss of Ramadi, a week ago, was swiftly followed by the fall of the Sunnis tribal fighters allied to the government said. As they passed through farmland south of Ramadi, the militiamen told people to return home and stay inside, promising they would not be harmed.

The loss of Ramadi a week ago was swiftly followed by the fall of the UNESCO heritage city of Palmyra in Syria, the two biggest gains by Islamic State fighters since the United States began air strikes on them in Iraq and Syria last year.

Islamic State controls swathes of territory in both countries, where it has proclaimed a caliphate to rule over all Muslims according to strict mediaeval precepts.

Its gains in the past week have raised doubts about the US strategy to bomb the militants from the air but leave fighting on the ground to local Iraqi and Syrian forces.

In Iraq, the regular military’s failure to hold Ramadi has forced the government to send in the Iran-backed Shi‘ite paramilitaries. Washington fears this could enrage residents in the overwhelmingly Sunni province and push them into the arms of Islamic State.

A spokesman for the Shi‘ite militias, which are known as Hashid Shaabi, said the codename for the new operation would be “Labaik ya Hussein”. This is a slogan in honour of a grandson of the Prophet Mohammed killed in a seventh century battle that led to the schism between Shi‘ite and Sunni Muslims.

The labaik ya Hussein operation is led by the Hashid Shaabi in cooperation and coordination with the armed forces there,” the spokesman, Ahmed al-Assadi, told a news conference. “We believe that liberating Ramadi will not take long.”

In Washington, Pentagon spokesman Colonel Steve Warren said the key to victory would be a unified Iraq “that separates itself from sectarian divides, coalesces around this common threat”.

A leading member of the coalition against Islamic State, took the Iraqi government to task, saying there could be no military solution without a political solution among Iraq’s communities.

“We linked the coalition’s support to political commitments by the new Iraqi government, what we call an inclusive policy,” Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius told lawmakers. “This contract is what justified our military engagement and I say clearly here that it must be better respected.”

The Paris meeting on 2 June will be attended by more than 20 foreign ministers including US Secretary of State John Kerry are due to attend, aims to plot a strategy including on how to reverse the recent losses to Islamic State.

Amnesty International: Hamas committed war crimes against Gaza civilians

Gaza, 27 May — Amnesty International said in a report on Wednesday that Islamist Hamas committed war crimes against Palestinian civilians in the Gaza Strip during last year’s war with Israel.

A ceasefire last August ended 50 days of fighting between Gaza militants and Israel in which health officials said more than 2,100 Palestinians, mostly civilians, were killed. Israel put the number of its dead at 67 soldiers and six civilians. “Hamas forces carried out a brutal campaign of abductions, torture and unlawful killings against Palestinians accused of ‘collaborating’ with Israel and others during the military offensive against Gaza,” the human rights group’s report said. A Hamas spokesman criticised the report as being unfair, unprofessional and not credible.

The report is dedicated against Palestinian resistance and the Hamas movement ... it deliberately exaggerated its descriptions without listening to all sides and without making an effort to check the truthfulness of details and information,” said Fawzi Barhoum, a Hamas spokesman.

In a previous report in March, Amnesty also criticised Israel and accused it of war crimes during the conflict. Apart from the many deaths, at least 16,245 homes were destroyed or rendered uninhabitable. Gaza militants fired thousands of rockets and mortar bombs at Israel.

In Wednesday’s report, Amnesty listed a number of cases it described as “spine chilling” in which Palestinians accused by Hamas of helping Israel were tortured and killed. “The de facto Hamas administration granted its security forces free rein to carry out atrocities, including against people in its custody. These spine-chilling actions, some of which amount to war crimes, were designed to ex- act revenge and spread fear across the Gaza Strip,” Amnesty said. Hamas controls the Gaza Strip, a coastal enclave on the Mediterranean which borders Israel and Egypt.

The Palestinians have joined the International Criminal Court since the end of the war, a move opposed by Israel, and the ICC is examining possible war crimes in the conflict. But joining the court also exposes Palestinians to possible prosecution if a case is opened. — Reuters
Arrested FIFA officials face extradition to US

ZURICH, 27 May — Six football officials, including some high-ranking members of world governing-body FIFA, were arrested by Swiss police on Wednesday and detained pending extradition to the United States.

The arrests were made shortly after a dawn at a Zurich hotel where FIFA officials are staying ahead of this week’s FIFA presidential election.

The Swiss Federal Office of Justice (FOJ) released a statement saying the six officials, who were not formally named, were suspected by US investigators of having received or paid bribes totalling millions of dollars.

The FOJ also confirmed that FIFA president Sepp Blatter was not among those arrested.

“The US Attorney’s Office for the Eastern District of New York is investigating these individuals on suspicion of the acceptance of bribes and kickbacks between the early 1990s and the present day,” the statement said.

“The bribery suspects — representatives of sports media and sports promotion firms — are alleged to have been involved in schemes to make payments to the football functionaries — delegates of FIFA and other functionaries of FIFA sub-organizations — totalling more than US$100 million.”

The New York Times, citing anonymous law enforcement officials, said the US federal charges include racketeering, money laundering and wire fraud and span two decades of misconduct in football’s world governing body.

More than 10 officials were expected to be indicted, but not all were in Zurich, the newspaper reported.

Most of the officials are in Switzerland for the FIFA Congress, where Blatter faces a challenge from Jordan’s Prince Ali Bin Al Hussein in a presidential election on Friday when the Swiss added an ingredient that will attempt to secure a fifth term at the helm.

FIFA did not make any immediate comment on the arrests.

“These are not the first criminals to have had children,” he said. “I mean, there are criminals who go to jail all the time and they have children, and the children of these particular criminals will be dealt with in the same way that the children of criminals are normally dealt with.”

Opposition Leader Bill Shorten likened the children’s case to child abuse, saying they should never have been taken there and would be “scared” from the experience.

He said he would seek a briefing from the government’s security agencies but supported foreign fighters facing the full force of the law.

The New York Times said more than a dozen plain-clothed Swiss law enforcement officials arrived at Zurich’s Baur au Lac hotel early on Wednesday, took keys from the registration desk and headed up to the rooms.

No special treatment for Australian Islamic State fighter’s family

Oxford University unveils new Hadid-designed Middle East wing

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Oxford University unveils new Hadid-designed Middle East wing

Oxford, 27 May — Zaha Hadid, the Iraqi-born architect, has designed a futuristic addition to the Oxford University campus: a curvy bridge building for St Antony’s College’s Middle East Centre that was inaugurated on Tuesday.

The Centre’s US-born director Eugene Rogan said that when an architectural model of the building was first revealed to alumni, many objected that the design didn’t look Middle Eastern. They were expecting domes and geometric patterns typical of the region’s historic architecture, he said.

The new building “looks like the Middle East of the 21st century, so why should we be lagging behind the region we study?” Rogan said.

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Nepal restricts children’s movement, fearing post-quake trafficking

KATHMANDU, 27 May — Nepal has banned the movement of children without accompanying parents or certified guardians amid concerns that traffickers could target kids rendered homeless or orphaned by recent earthquakes, an official said Wednesday.

“Children have been temporarily barred from travelling without their parents. Guardians will need to get certificates from District Child Welfare Board for taking children from one district to another,” Ram Prasad Bhattarai, spokesman of the Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare, told Kyodo News.

Bhattarai said police and local administration across the nation have been issued instructions to keep an eye on suspicious people traveling with children. He said the measure was taken after 54 children were found to have been rescued from Bhad岗 district and five from Nuwakot district by strangers promising food and education earlier this month.

“These children are now under our protection and the people who were taking them away are under investigation for suspected trafficking attempt,” Bhattarai said.

The ministry has also put on hold for three months the process of international adoptions, and has banned the registry of new orphans.

“Those children are seen as potential sources of energy as well and the country’s main domestic source of energy as well as an agricultural and manufacturing power. About 30 other people who were previously unaccounted for have been contacted, Hays County officials said.

Dogs and boats were being used to search for the missing. The river rose so quickly and with such force, it caused a flood gauge to break, Hays County officials said.

There was no damage estimate available for Texas, which has a $1.4 trillion-a-year economy and is the country’s main domestic source of energy as well as an agricultural and manufacturing power.

Vehicles were stranded by flood waters in south Houston, Texas on 26 May, 2015.  Reuters
Jessica Lange to return to Broadway in ‘Long Day’s Journey Into Night’

NEW YORK, 27 May — Two-time Oscar winner Jessica Lange will return to Broadway next year in a revival of American playwright Eugene O’Neill’s masterpiece “Long Day’s Journey Into Night,” the Roundabout Theatre Company said on Tuesday.

The Pulitzer Prize-winning play, which will be part of the theatre company’s 50th anniversary season, will be Lange’s third time on Broadway. The 66-year-old also starred in “The Glass Menagerie” in 1992.

“Long Day’s Journey Into Night” will begin previews on 31 March, 2016, and officially open on 19 April, 2016.

Lange will reprise her role as the morphine-addicted matriarch, Mary Tyrone, from the London stage production in 2000, for which she was nominated for an Olivier Award.

She will star opposite Irish actor Gabriel Byrne, 65, in O’Neill’s semi-autobiographical family drama.

Lange won the best actress Academy Award for her role in 1994’s “Blue Sky” and a supporting Oscar in 1983 for “Tootsie,” opposite Dustin Hoffman.

Jessica Lange in California, this on 6 Feb, 2014 file photo. — Reuters

Tetsuko Kuroyanagi, veteran actress and host of “Tetsuko’s Room,” a talk show broadcast daily on weekdays by TV Asahi, will be broadcasting its 10,000th episode in its 40th year.

“Tetsuko’s Room” is regarded as “a kind of status” and the show is like “a saloon in the TV world,” according to Kuroyanagi, who has beenquares, as it reached its 10,000th episode in its 40th year.

Asahi

Since several of So-ny’s new witnesses might have trouble obtaining vi-sas to travel to the United States from the Dominican Republic, Hellerstein offered to hold the hearing in Puerto Rico, a US territory, and asked the attorneys to find out whether that would solve the visa issues.

Mayimba sued Sony in 2012. Last August, Hel-lerstein ruled that Shakra’s single and another artist’s song illegally copied from Arias’ work and found Sony/ATV Latin and Sony/ATV Discos liable for distributing the infringing songs. In his August ruling, Hellerstein said in a statement released by TV Asahi.

Musician Shakira performs “Empire” on stage at the 2014 Billboard Music Awards in Las Vegas, Nevada May 18, 2014. — Reuters

London, 27 May — Rare photos of screen icon Marilyn Monroe, taken just weeks before her untimely death, are going to auction in London.

The stunning snapshots were taken by her friend, photographer George Barris, on Santa Monica beach in 13 July, 1962, just three weeks before she was found dead at 36 in her Los Angeles bedroom.

The set also includes photos of Monroe in her Brentwood, California, home, reported Daily Mirror.

Eight of the prints, sev-eral of which show Monroe romping on the beach in a towel or bikini, are expect-ed to sell for 8000 pound at Dreyer & Blooms-bury Auctions in London on 4 June.

Barris, who met Mon-roe in 1954 on the set of her hit film “The Seven Year Itch,” originally in-

Tetsuko Kuroyanagi, veteran actress and host of “Tetsuko’s Room,” a talk show broadcast daily on weekdays by TV Asahi, poses for a photo on the set of the show in Tokyo on 24 Feb, 2015. The show, recognized by Guinness World Records in 2011 for achieving the most TV talk show episodes hosted by the same presenter, achieved another milestone on 27 May, 2015, as it reached its 10,000th episode in its 40th year.

Kyodo

As a good will ambas-ador, Kuroyanagi has vis-ited more than 30 countries including Kosovo, Afghan-istan and South Sudan, and raised more than 5 billion yen ($40.8 million) for UNICEF’s programmes to protect children from con-flict, disasters and poverty.

She is also known for her best-selling childhood memoir “Totto-chan: The Little Girl at the Window.” About eight million copies of its Chinese translation have been sold since it was put on sale in China in 2003, with the phenom-enon earning the name “a miracle in the Chinese chil-dren’s book industry.”

Kyodo News

Judge to hold hearing on whether Shakira’s copyright accuser lied

Alvin Hellerstein said in federal court in Manhattan on Tuesday that new evidence presented by two Sony Corp (6758.T) units, the defendants in the case, has caused him to “lose trust” in the trial testimony.

He ordered Sony and Mayimba Music, owner of the rights to the song “Loca con su Tigueras,” composed by Ramon Arias Vasquez, to appear for a seven-day hearing in August on what Sony says is proof of a cas-sette tape at the centre of the copyright accusations was fabricated.

Since several of So-ny’s new witnesses might have trouble obtaining vi-sas to travel to the United States from the Dominican Republic, Hellerstein offered to hold the hearing in Puerto Rico, a US territory, and asked the attorneys to find out whether that would solve the visa issues.

Mayimba sued Sony in 2012. Last August, Hel-lerstein ruled that Shakra’s single and another artist’s song illegally copied from Arias’ work and found Sony/ATV Latin and Sony/ATV Discos liable for dis tributing the infringing songs. In his August ruling, Hellerstein said in a statement released by TV Asahi.

In the past few months, however, Sony submitted evidence that the tape was a fabrication made in 2011, and that Arias lied under oath about it, Hellerstein said in a 30 April order. — Reuters

Marilyn Monroe’s final photoshoot to be auctioned in London

London, 27 May — Rare photos of screen icon Marilyn Monroe, taken just weeks before her untimely death, are going to auction in London.

The stunning snapshots were taken by her friend, photographer George Barris, on Santa Monica beach in 13 July, 1962, just three weeks before she was found dead at 36 in her Los Angeles bedroom.

The set also includes photos of Monroe in her Brentwood, California, home, reported Daily Mirror.

Eight of the prints, sev-eral of which show Monroe romping on the beach in a towel or bikini, are expect-ed to sell for 8000 pound at Dreyer & Blooms-bury Auctions in London on 4 June.

Barris, who met Mon-roe in 1954 on the set of her hit film “The Seven Year Itch,” originally in-

tended to use the pictures for a book he was working on about the iconic actress, but he scrapped it after her death. — PTI

“Tetsuko’s Room,” talk show already in Guinness, hits another milestone

Tokyo, 27 May — A talk show, recognized by Guinness World Records in 2011 for achieving the most TV talk show episodes hosted by the same presenter, achieved another milestone on Wednesday as it reached its 10,000th episode in its 40th year.

Tetsuko Kuroyanagi, veteran actress and host of “Tetsuko’s Room,” a talk show broadcast daily on weekdays by TV Asahi, celebrated the feat with the day’s guests, Masahiko Kondo and Noriyuki Higashiyama — middle-aged singers/actors/Kuroyanagi has known since their teen age debuts in show busi-ness.

Asked about her new goal after reaching the 10,000 mark, the 81-year-old presenter said on the latest episode she would like to continue 10 more years until she turns 90.

Domestic and foreign celebrities who appeared on the show include ac-tor Hisaya Morishige, the guest on the first episode, broadcast on 2 February, 1976, actor Ken Takakura, Nobel laureate for litera-ture Kenzaburo Oe, car-toonist Osamu Tezuka, former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and US singer/songwriter Lady Gaga.

Untold stories spoken by celebrities on the show also included those related to their World War II ex-perience, as “Tetsuko’s Room” is regarded as “a kind of status” and the show is like “a saloon in the TV world.”

Entertainment

A US judge who ruled that a US territory, is prepared to stand and is prepared to head to Puerto Rico to sort out the truth.

US District Judge

While the sale of the prints in China will be limited, Hellerstein said on Tuesday that Monroe fans worldwide may be able to purchase reproductions of the prints in future.

On about the iconic actress, “Totto-chan: The Little Girl at the Window,” About eight million copies of its Chinese translation have been sold since it was put on sale in China in 2003, with the phenom-enon earning the name “a miracle in the Chinese chil-dren’s book industry.”

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World Cup perfect at 32 teams, says CONCACAF chief Webb

ZURICH, 27 May—The World Cup is football’s jewel and should not be tarnished by being increased to more than 32 teams, CONCACAF confederation president Jeffrey Webb said on Tuesday.

Webb, whose region represents north and central American countries and the Caribbean islands, said he would welcome another spot for his confederation but said 32 teams was the right number for the globe’s most popular sporting extravaganza.

“The World Cup is the jewel of football and, for me, you shouldn’t increase the spaces in a World Cup for political reasons,” he said after a meeting of CONCACAF member associations in Zurich for this week’s FIFA Congress.

“You should only increase the spaces in the World Cup because of the development of the game. Are we going to dilute the World Cup to appease various associations?”

“No, we must have real leadership and courage to stand up and address this issue,” added Webb.

“Thirty-two countries are great. If you look at the standard, you look at the television ratings, it’s tremendous. Every single game. Do you want to go to a World Cup where you know what the score is going to be every single game?”

FIFA’s executive committee is meeting on Saturday, the day after the vote for the next president, to decide on the allocation for the 2018 and 2022 World Cups even though qualifying for Russia is underway in Asia and in CONCACAF.

During their election campaigns Luis Figo and Michael van Praag, who have since withdrawn their bids to be president, advocated expanding the World Cup to possibly as many as 48 teams.

Prince Ali Bin Al Hussein of Jordan, the only candidate left to challenge incumbent Sepp Blatter, said he would be in favour of discussing the issue if he won.

At last year’s World Cup in Brazil, CONCACAF had four teams at the finals: the United States, Mexico, Honduras and Costa Rica with the latter reaching the quarter-finals for the first time.

Mexico qualified for the finals after beating New Zealand in a continental playoff.

Asked if he would welcome four teams qualifying directly without one having to go through a playoff, Webb said: “I’d love it, I’d welcome it a lot.” —Reuters

Second sea lion rescued from California oil spill dies at SeaWorld

LOS ANGELES, 27 May—A second sea lion rescued from along California’s oil-fouled coastline near Santa Barbara has died at SeaWorld San Diego, where veterinarians are still caring for 15 surviving marine mammals brought in for treatment, a spokesman said on Tuesday.

The petroleum-stained pinnipeds are among the earliest apparent wildlife casualties documented from a pipeline rupture that dumped as much as 2,400 barrels (101,000 gallons or 382,327 liters) of crude oil onto the shoreline and into the ocean west of Santa Barbara one week ago.

The spill left an oil slick stretching for more than 9 miles (14.5 km) along the coast and forced the indefinite closure of two popular beaches. The area also has been placed off-limits to fishing and shellfish harvesting.

“The stricken region lies at the edge of a national marine sanctuary and underwater preserve that is home to whales, dolphins, sea lions and other marine mammals, along with some 60 species of sea birds and over 500 species of fish.”

As of Tuesday, 15 oil-contaminated California sea lions and two elephant seals had been brought to SeaWorld to be cleaned and nursed back to health.

The first arrival, a young sea lion streaked with oil over a third of its body, died late on Friday or early on Saturday after being cleaned, SeaWorld spokesman David Koontz said. A second sea lion died there on Monday, leaving 13 sea lions and two elephant seals still to be rehabilitated and hopefully released.

“Our team is working very, very hard, doing everything they can to give these animals a second chance at life,” Koontz said.

Meanwhile, the carcasses of four sea lions and two dolphins have turned up with no visible signs of oil, including a dead dolphin found on Friday in Santa Barbara Harbor, according to officials overseeing the spill response.

Post-mortem exams must still be conducted on all dead animals recovered from the disaster zone, and those that die under care, to determine whether they were spill victims. The latest official tally of oil-soaked birds indicated that nine pelicans and one western grebe had been discovered alive and five pelicans found dead.—Reuters

FIFA President Joseph “Sepp” Blatter (R) gestures next to CONCACAF President Jeffrey Webb during a news conference at the CONCACAF congress in Panama City on 19 April, 2013. —Reuters

Napoli to hold news conference amid Benitez speculation

MILAN, 27 May — Napoli coach Rafael Benitez will hold a news conference on Thursday amid speculation that the Spaniard is set to take over at Real Madrid, the Italian club announced on Tuesday. Napoli said the news conference would be held jointly with club president Aurelio De Laurentiis.

Spanish media have made former Liverpool, Inter Milan and Chelsea coach Benitez the favourite to replace Carlo Ancelotti, who was fired by Real Madrid on Monday. Benitez, whose contract runs to the end of the season, has had mixed fortunes during his two seasons with Napoli.

Benitez smiles during a press conference after his team’s 2-1 victory over Napoli to seal their place in the Champions League semi-finals, at the San Paolo stadium in Naples, on 13 May, 2015. —Reuters

(28-5-2015 07:00 am— 29-5-2015 07:00 am) MST

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* Han Taw Drums (Part-I) “Osi”
* Oboist and His Life
* Crocodile Keeper
* Myanna Pottery
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* Products of Myanmar — Strong And Stylish Pajakitta Slippers
* Amazing: Magician Sak Kaw Ma
* Scented Buddha Images
* News
* Shwe Bo Township
* Bearing Five Names
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* The Precious Lands of Myanmar (Mandalay Region)
* News
* Products of Myanmar — Power Ring
* Entrepreneur “U Nyan

Napoli’s coach Rafael Benitez smiles during a news conference at the Olympic stadium in Kiev, Ukraine, on 13 May, 2015. — Reuters

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MVT News Channel in Brief

(28-5-2015, Thursday)

6:00 am
• Paritta by Venerable Mingun Sayawdaw
6:30 am
• Physical Exercise
7:35 am
• Weekly Entertainment
8:00 am
• News
8:30 am
• Head Line News
8:35 am
• Documentary
9:35 am
• Beautiful ASEAN
10:35 am
• Teleplay
11:35 am
• Science and Technology Programme
12:00 noon
• News / International News / Weather Report
12:35 pm
• Hluttaw Image
1:35 pm
• Teleplay

(28-5-2015, Thursday)

6:00 am
• Mono Classical Songs
6:30 am
• Myanmar Series
6:40 am
• Fashion Show
7:05 am
• TV Drama Series
7:50 am
• TV Drama Series
8:25 am
• Musical Programme

MVT News Channel

(28-5-2015, Thursday)

6:00 am
• Pyi Thu Ni Ti
9:10 am
• Colour of ASEAN
9:25 am
• Myanmar Viedo
10:10 am
• Musical Programme
10:30 noon
• Myanmar Viedo

Wednesday, 28 May, 2015

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Bale pledges to come back stronger for Real next season

PARIS, 27 May — Real Madrid forward Gareth Bale has promised to “come back stronger” next season and quashed media reports he might leave the club he joined in 2013 for a world record fee.

The Welsh international had a disappointing second year in Spain as his team failed to win a major trophy, prompting the sacking of coach Carlo Ancelotti on Monday.

Whistled by some fans at Real’s Bernabeu stadium, Bale’s agent raised eyebrows this month when he complained the 25-year-old’s team mates were not passing the ball to him enough and he has also been criticised for what some perceive as selfishness in front of goal.

Reports in England have suggested he might leave, with Manchester United apparently interested in signing the former Tottenham Hotspur man.

However, Bale took to Twitter on Tuesday to say he would be voting for titles again with the world’s richest club by income in 2014-15.

“Not the end of the season we had hoped for, but we also won 11 titles,” Bale wrote.

“The statistics are similar but according to a survey of 725 Real members looking forward to coming back next season stronger with @realmadrid.”

Bale’s woes have marked a startling turn around for a player who scored in the finals of the Champions League and the King’s Cup last term.

He has scored 17 goals in 48 outings in all competitions this season, compared with 22 in 44 appearances in 2013-14.

Bale has also produced slightly fewer assists, setting up 11 goals for team mates after 12 the previous season.

“For the people, for the fans, for the ground staff and for the club,” Bale wrote.

Thais target soccer gold, Indos just want to play

SINGAPORE, 27 May — At the Southeast Asian Games, the men’s soccer gold medal carries more weight than any of the other 400 offer on a region where football bragging rights are the most priceless of commodities.

The importance of winning the 11-nation tournament led Thailand and Vietnam to move their World Cup qualifying fixture after a request to FIFA, while domestic action in other countries has also been put on hold.

The Thais want a 10th under-23 gold in 12 editions and are heavy favourites to achieve their goal with a third of their 20-man squad part of the Suzuki Cup title successful senior side enjoyed over their Southeast Asian rivals in December.

Influential midfielder Charyl Chappuis maybe missing but their rivals remain wary. In any regional tournament, Thailand are always going to be the favourites. But we proved in the SEA Games semi-final in 2013 that we can match them,” Singapore striker Sahil Shahami told The New Paper last month.

“The pressure is there and not many Singaporeans think that we can go all the way. It’s up to us to prove them wrong.”

Singapore’s scepticism stems from frustration at the stagnation of the senior national side in the two years since Guoan coach Bernd Stange took over.

The under-23’s have fared little better with prepa ration not going to plan. Last month, head coach Aide Iskandar contracted dengue while a tour of Japan resulted in a defeat to local fourth division team.

Singapore have never won the men’s gold but they will have taken heart from local club side Lions XII up setting the odds to win a first Malaysian FA Cup title last weekend.

That surprise win over Kelantan in the final led to the Crown Prince of Johor lambasting the state of Malaysian soccer.

The Malaysians won gold in 2009 and 2011 but hopes of a third success are low with many fans sharing the Prince’s view.

Concerns about a lack of adequate preparation have not been helped by the timing of Wednesday’s money-spinning friendly between a local select and English side Tottenham Hotspur in Kuala Lumpur.

Those frustrations, though, are minor compared to the ones being endured by supporters of back-to-back runners-up Indonesia.

Whether the country even takes part in the tournament remains up for debate with FIFA threatening suspension if a row between the government and local football association (PSSI) is not resolved by Friday, the start of the football tournament.

“We are closing our eyes and our ears to FIFA’s letter (threatening sanctions),” PSSI secretary general Azwar Kamir told Reuters earlier this month.

“Hopefully, if things go well they will play on June 2 (against Malaysia). Otherwise they will have to return, which is quite sad.”