YANGON, 20 June—A low-pressure zone over the West Central Bay of Bengal has intensified into a storm, the Meteorology and Hydrology Department said Saturday.

The storm was about 400 miles southwest of Sittway in Rakhine State at 3 p.m. on Saturday, the MHD said.

The storm may cause squalls with rough seas off and along Myanmar coasts, with surface wind speeds reaching 40 miles per hour, the announcement said.

The weather bureau has warned fishing boats and vessels to be alert to rough seas due to the strengthening of the monsoon.—GNLM

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President U Thein Sein praises athletes for SEA Games performance

NAY PYI TAW, 20 June—President U Thein Sein hosted a dinner here Saturday to honour victorious athletes for their outstanding achievements at the 28th Southeast Asia Games in Singapore.

Myanmar competed in 31 events, winning 69 gold, silver and bronze medals from 15 events.

The president praised the U-23 football team, the women’s football team and other athletes for their display of unyielding spirit in their respective competitions. He also congratulated the men’s U-20 football team for its performance at the recent U-20 World Cup in New Zealand.

The president said plans are under way to establish a sports university in the near future, adding to the country’s four schools of sports and physical science.

(See page 3)

Textile and garment show touts Myanmar’s investment potential

By Ye Myint

YANGON, 20 June—The fourth Myanmar International Textile and Garment Industry Exhibition will take place 26-29 June at Myanmar Event Park in Yangon.

Hong Kong-based Yorkers Trade & Marketing Services Co., Ltd will organize the international fair with the support of the Myanmar Garment Manufacturers Association and the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry.

The event will showcase products and technology from 98 exhibitors and 16 countries and promote information exchange between manufacturers, buyers, traders and distributors in the country’s garment sector, the organizer said in its press release.

As one of the world’s fastest growing markets, while situated between the world’s most populous states—China and India—Myanmar has tremendous potential for investors, it said.

The country tripled its foreign direct investment between 2010 and 2014, and has lower workforce costs than neighbouring manufacturing powerhouse Thailand, indicating Myanmar is an attractive business spot for regional and global manufacturers, it said.

According to FDI statistics, the Myanmar Investment Commission this month granted five foreign companies permits to establish clothing manufacturing businesses in the country.

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Regarding the exhibition, a press conference is scheduled for Wednesday afternoon on the 4th floor of the UMFFCCI Building in Yangon, Daw Myo Kyi Phyu Tun, an information officer of the event, told The Global New Light of Myanmar.

(See page 3)

Storm over West Central Bay of Bengal unlikely to hit Myanmar: weather bureau

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The weather bureau has warned fishing boats and vessels to be alert to rough seas due to the strengthening of the monsoon.—GNLM

Fair-goers observe garment machinery at the third Myanmar Textile & Garment Industry Exhibition held in last year’s November in Yangon.

PHOTO CREDIT TO MTG 2015

-President U Thein Sein honours athletes for their outstanding performance at the 28th Southeast Asia Games in Singapore.—MNA
Local residents welcome back outstanding teachers, students

KYANGIN, 20 June—Chief Minister of Ayeyawady Region U Them Aung, Region Development Affairs Minister U Kyaw Win Naing and officials honoured outstanding teachers and students for their efforts in the 2015 matriculation examination at Ayeyawady Region recently. Local people from Myaukchawgon Village heartily welcomed back eight teachers from the Basic Education High School in the village and nine distinction-winning students.—Aye Ya U Thar

Students take part in extempore speaking contest

MANDALAY, 20 June—Mandalay’s University of Nursing organized an extempore speaking contest at its hall on 18 June. Retired Lecturer U Aung Myint of the Myanmar Nursing organized an extempore speaking contest at its hall on 18 June.

Event aims to promote socio-economy of Taninthayi Region

DAWEI, 20 June—Cooperative Department in Taninthayi Region on Thursday organized an event to promote socio economic and regional development at the town hall here, with Region Chief Minister U Myat Ko, the Taungtha, 20 June—Myingyan District’s deputy commissioner U Myint Thin Aung and party inspected progress in widening the pavements along both sides of Yangon-Pyay-Mandalay Road between Taungtha and Kyaukpadung townships, Mandalay Region, recently.

Road section widened with walkways

Po Shwe Thun (Dawei)

Workshop outlines effective use of cash assistance

YINMABIN, 20 June—A workshop on cash assistance for schools by the Ministry of Education took place at the hall of Basic Education High School in Yinmabin, Sagaing Region, on 19 June.

Pobbathiri Tsp recognizes outstanding matric students

NAY PYI TAW, 20 June—A prize presentation ceremony for outstanding students who passed the recent matriculation examination with flying colours was taken place in Pobbathiri Township on Thursday, with a speech by U Than Htay, a member of Nay Pyi Taw Council.

Vocational course creates job opportunities for local women

DAWEI, 20 June—Dawei District Department of Rural Development recently conducted a tailoring course with the aim of creating job opportunities for local women.

Road section widened with walkways

Robert Smith (IPRD)
President U Thein Sein praises...

(from page 1)

Myanmar’s hosting of the 27th SEA Games in 2013 marked a new era of sporting competition for the country, encouraging athletes to reach an international standard, the president said. The Myanmar U-20 football team was the first ever from the country to qualify for a FIFA World Cup.

President U Thein Sein praised the athletes for earning a reputation for fair play and good sportsmanship throughout the Games. The U-23 football team secured silver medals, but won the adulation of the country. “They are champions of our people,” the president noted.

He presented certificates of honour and cash awards to outstanding sportspersons. Gold medalists were awarded a total of K 165 million, silver medalists K 130.5 million and bronze medalists K 83.9 million.

In addition, 26 well-wishers donated K 314 million to the Myanmar Football Federation, and 13 well-wishers K 126 million to Myanmar athletes who took part in the 28th SEA Games.

MNA

KIA bombs bridge in northern Shan State

The KIA bombed a bridge in a township of northern Shan State on 17 June.

Officials said the explosion damaged the 110-foot Bailey bridge in Monkeo, making transport difficult.

The local public works department is trying to repair the bridge quickly. A temporary bypass is now under construction.

Myanmar

Text-to-speech software helps visually impaired computer users

Yangon, 20 June —

The Myanmar National Association of the Blind has developed its own text-to-speech software to help visually impaired people with computer-based learning.

The software, named Myanmar Text to Speech (MTTS), reads text in Myanmar language when selected via a mouse. There is a slogan among blind Internet users that “there are no blind people on internet,” but this no longer the case, MNAB President U Aung Ko Myint said.

In 2013, Solve Circle Development Team started creating MTTS with funding from the Nippon Foundation. The program has now passed testing with Microsoft word, Note Pad, and web page in its first stage.

A blind person said English text-to-speech programs were previously the only option, “but now we can read text in Myanmar language.”

Existing software to support visually impaired computer users supported a number of languages, but Myanmar was not among them.

The MNAB was founded in 1996 with the aim of giving blind people the same education and lifestyle opportunities as those with sight.

MNA

Text-to-speech software introduced to visually impaired computer users.
Japan, China, South Korea consider autumn summit — Nikkei

TOKYO. 20 June — China, Japan and South Korea are considering holding their first trilateral summit in three years, offering a potential stage for the first one-on-one meeting between Tokyo and Seoul’s leaders, the Nikkei business daily reported on Saturday.

The talks would resume cooperation among East Asia’s three biggest economies that had been on hold since 2012 because of territorial disputes and what Seoul and Beijing see as Japan’s reluctance to confront its wartime past.

South Korean Foreign Minister Yun Byung-se and his Japanese counterpart Fumio Kishida are expected to confirm this weekend the leaders’ intentions to hold the summit, the Nikkei said. Yun is visiting Tokyo for the first time in four years on Sunday.

The summit could take place between September and November in South Korea, the Nikkei said, and offer a stage for a first bilateral meeting between Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and South Korean President Park Geun-hye since taking office in 2012 and 2013 respectively.

Seoul-Tokyo relations have been long-strained by a feud over “comfort women” forced to work in Japan’s wartime military brothels. The dispute has complicated efforts to boost security cooperation between the two, both staunch US allies, as the region copes with an unpredictable North Korea and an assertive China.

As Japan and South Korea neared their 50th anniversary of diplomatic ties, the two are sending conflicting signals over whether they can resolve the comfort women dispute.

For their part, Singaporean ties remain frayed but have seen a thaw since Abe met Chinese President Xi Jinping for the first time last November and again in April.

Relations have been long strained by China’s bitter memories of World War Two, and a dispute over a chain of uninhabited islets in the East China Sea.

Japan has adopted a more muscular security stance since Abe took power in 2012, leading to concerns among regional neighbours that the country is returning to its militarist past.

But Japan’s Kishida reaffirmed the country’s pacifism in a speech in Tokyo on Saturday.

“We have walked the path of a peace-loving nation, with feelings of remorse, and resolved to keep the peace and never to wage a war again,” he said.

Reuters

Nearly one million people face food insecurity risk in Nepal

UNITED NATIONS. 20 June — The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) has called for urgent help for farmers in earthquake-hit Nepal, where one million people face the risk of prolonged food insecurity, said a UN spokesperson here on Friday. FAO has appealed for 20 million US dollars since it found that in Nepal’s six hardest-hit districts, half of all farming households lost nearly all of their stored crops of rice, maize, wheat and millet, UN Spokesperson Stephane Dujarric told a daily briefing. Two separate earthquakes and a series of aftershocks struck Nepal in April and May, killing more than 8,000 people and devastating large parts of the country. The earthquakes also destroyed farming tools, kitchen gardens and supplies of fertilizer, and caused significant damage to small-scale irrigation, according to an FAO-led Agricultural Livelihood Impact Appraisal. It also found that some 16 percent of cattle and 36 percent of poultry were lost in the earthquakes, adversely affecting rural household consumption and income.

According to FAO, two-thirds of Nepal’s population depend on farming for their livelihoods, making agriculture a priority. The most urgent needs for the current cropping season are seeds and fertilizers, followed by irrigation, tools and technical support. To date, FAO has received around 3 million dollars for emergency relief so far, only 13 percent of the 23 million dollars it has asked for.—Xinhua

Thailand says 175 exposed to MERS patient; South Korea reports no new case

BANGKOK, 20 June — A total of 175 people were exposed to Thailand’s only case of Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) and the patient’s condition has improved, the health ministry said on Saturday.

In a statement, the ministry said it had been in touch with all 175 and were in touch with all 175 and had instructed them to stay away from public spaces and for medical personnel to monitor their health.

In South Korea, the health ministry said that no new cases of the disease had been recorded in the country for the first time in 16 days. Health authorities said on Friday the outbreak first reported on 20 May seemed to have levelled off.

South Korea’s health ministry said later on Saturday that a 63-year-old male MERS patient with an existing heart ailment and diabetes had died, becoming the 25th fatality in an outbreak that had spread through hospitals and infected 166 people.

On Friday, Thai health minister Rajata Rajatanavin told reporters the chances of a MERS outbreak in Thailand like the one in South Korea were low as the authorities had isolated the patient quickly.

The virus was first detected in Thailand in a 75-year-old man from Oman who travelled to Bangkok for treatment of a heart condition.

On Thursday, the man was moved from Bumrungrad International Hospital (BH.BK) to an infectious diseases facility. Three relatives of the man are also being kept in isolation rooms at the institute and had tested negative for the virus, Surachet Satriramai, acting permanent secretary at the health ministry, said on Saturday.

“ The condition of the MERS patient is better overall,” he said. “The chest x-rays show improvement and he can eat soft food.”

Thai authorities have said it had taken nearly four days to confirm the illness.

Doctors at Bumrungrad Hospital said on Friday that it quarantined 58 staff members but that there had been no panic, with no patients at the hospital asking for transfer to other facilities.

MERS was first identified in humans in Saudi Arabia in 2012 and the majority of cases have been in the Middle East. Scientists are not sure of the origin of the virus, but several studies have linked it to camels.

Isolated cases have cropped up in Asia before South Korea’s outbreak.

Vietnam’s health ministry denies rumour on MERS case

HANOI, 20 June — Vietnam’s Ministry of Health on Friday denied a rumour that the country may be hit by a case of Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) in Hanoi.

According to a press release, a rumour spreading in a social network stated that the MERS patient, a South Korean who entered Vietnam on 10 June, is being isolated for medical treatment in capital Hanoi.

The rumour advised people living in the neighbourhood to keep cautious and take up preventive measures.

Learning the case, the authorities instructed Hanoi Preventive Medicine Centre to send a working group to the suspected area to verify the information.

The probe result showed that there is no South Korean citizen who is suspected of infecting MERS living in the area.

Xinhua

A woman wearing a mask walks past an information banner on Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) at the entrance of Bamrasnaradura Infectious Diseases Institute in Nonthaburi province, on the outskirts of Bangkok, Thailand, on 19 June, 2015.—Reuters

Food insecurity

Nearly one million people face food insecurity risk in Nepal

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The probe result showed that there is no South Korean citizen who is suspected of infecting MERS living in the area.

Xinhua
Putin says necessary to hold meeting with Abe

ST PETERSBURG, 20 June — Russian President Vladimir Putin said on Saturday it is necessary to hold a meeting with Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe to discuss a decades-old territorial dispute.

The Russian leader said in a meeting with the media in St Petersburg that he believes that it is possible to resolve the issue, though he did not elaborate.

It was Putin’s first comment on the territorial row since the Japanese premier vowed earlier this week to take the leadership in addressing the dispute “as soon as possible.”

Abe also said he will seek to move the issue forward during an envisaged visit to Japan by Putin this year that the two leaders have already agreed on.

The disputed islands —Etorofu, Kunashiri, Shikotan and the Habomai islet group — were seized by the Soviet Union following World War II on 15 August, 1945. The territorial row remains a serious issue that has prevented the two countries from signing a peace treaty.

Putin also said that it is Japan’s responsibility that the two countries’ relations have remained chilled.

Japan’s sanctions imposed on Russia over its actions in Ukraine have kept the two countries from promoting bilateral relations and signing a peace treaty, he said.

The president suggested a new proposal is needed from Japan, saying Russia can do little to improve strained relations on its own.

Japan and other Group of Seven countries agreed at a summit this month that the duration of sanctions should be clearly linked to Russia’s complete implementation of a cease-fire agreement in February, referring to the recent upsurge of violence between Russian-backed separatists and Ukraine government forces in eastern Ukraine.

Economic ties with Japan will play a large part in promoting the development of natural resources, Putin said.

The Russian government will support an expansion of liquefied natural gas projects in waters off Sakhalin Island that major Japanese companies are involved in, he added.

Kyodo News

Families of South Carolina church massacre victims offer forgiveness

CHARLESTON, 20 June As the young white man charged with murdering nine people inside an historic black church in South Carolina stood silently and expressionless at a court hearing on Friday, relatives of the slain worshippers faced him one by one, offering tearful words of grief and forgiveness.

Dylann Roof, 21, who authorities say spent an hour in Bible study with parishioners at the nearly 200-year-old Emanuel African Methodist Church in Charleston before opening fire on them, appeared via video feed before a magistrate judge who ordered him held without bond.

Dressed in a black-and-white prison uniform and flanked by two guards in body armour, Roof exhibited no visible emotion during the proceedings, even as he was addressed by loved ones of the victims.

He was formally charged with nine counts of murder and a weapons offence.

“May God have mercy on your soul,” said Felicia Sanders, whose 26-year-old son, Tywanza Sanders, was the youngest person to die in Wednesday’s rampage.

“You have killed some of the most beautiful people that I know. Every fibre in my body hurts.”

Felicia Sanders was said by a family friend, according to an interview with CNN, to have survived the shooting rampage by lying on the floor and playing dead as she cradled another survivor, her 5-year-old granddaughter, while her son’s blood soaked her clothes.

According to friends and family, Tywanza Sanders pleaded with the gunman as he paused to reload his weapon, saying, “You don’t have to do this,” to which the suspect replied: “No, you’ve raped our women and taken our country. I’ve got to do what I’ve got to do.” Roof stared blankly, and glanced downward occasionally, as Sanders and four other family members of the gun-shot victims spoke of how he had been welcomed into the church by the nine people he has been charged with slaying.

The attack at the church nicknamed “Mother Emanuel” for its key role in African-American history followed a wave of protests across the United States in recent months over police killings and excessive force against unarmed black men, focusing attention on race relations and bias in the criminal justice system.

The bloodshed in Charleston, where residents packed an arena for a prayer vigil late Friday, marked the latest in a series of fatal US mass shootings.

The violence has renewed a national debate between advocates of tighter controls on gun possession and supporters of unfettered access to firearms they assert is constitutionally protected under the Second Amendment.

“The elephant in the room is guns. South Carolina and the country have gone gun-crazy,” said state Representative Wendell Gilliard, a Democrat who represents Charleston.

“How many times do we talk about this, how many times do we have to talk about it? How many times do we need to unite?”

President Barack Obama, addressing the US Conference of Mayors in San Francisco, said the latest shooting exposed the “blind” of racism still present in America, and he railed against critics who have accused him of politicizing a tragedy to talk about tougher gun laws.

“You don’t see murder on this kind of scale, with this kind of frequency, in any other advanced nation on Earth,” he said.

Reuters

ECB boosts emergency funding as Greek banks bleed, Tsipras calm

ATHENS/LUXEMBOURG, 20 June — The European Central Bank expanded emergency funding to keep Greece’s struggling banks on their feet as a steady flow of withdrawals continued on Friday ahead of a summit next week that could decide whether the country can stay in the euro.

With pressure on Greece’s fragile banking system growing daily, the ECB held a teleconference and raised the cap on so-called emergency liquidity assistance, which the banks rely on to keep operating, by 1.8 billion euros, Greek officials said.

That should be enough to keep the system running until euro zone leaders meet on Monday night in a last-ditch effort to reach an aid-for-reforms deal with Athens.

As the country edged closer to a possible default at the end of next week, some EU officials have raised the cap on emergency funding to 1.2 billion euros pulled out on Friday alone as dire headlines accelerated the run, bankers said.

“Today was a more difficult day compared to yesterday,” one banker said. “Monday will likely be tough as well.”

Officials said the ECB would review the ELA emergency liquidity limit again on Monday night after the emergency summit in Brussels, with the prospect looming of capital controls being imposed on Greek banks if the situation continues to worsen.

Greece is on course to default on a 1.6 billion euro debt repayment it must make to the International Monetary Fund on 30 June unless the creditors resume funding.

Tsipras nevertheless exuded confidence and calm, going ahead with a planned meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin on the sidelines of an economic conference in St Petersburg.

There will be a solution based on respecting EU rules and democracy which would allow Greece to return to growth in the euro zone, Tsipras said in a statement issued by his office.

Russia played down any possibility of additional financial aid for Greece.

Asked if Putin and Tsipras had discussed the issue, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said: “No, no, no.”

Germany, the biggest contributor to the European bailout, has held out hope on the chance of a deal at Monday’s summit.

“It’s not too late for this and of course we hope that a breakthrough is possible,” government spokesman Steffen Seibert said in Berlin.

Finance Minister Wolfgang Schauble, who has taken a hard line with Athens, was less optimistic: “I’m not sure I’ll be able to announce anything sensational or new on Monday,” he told reporters.

Reuters

Protesters hold an EU flag and a Greek flag (L) as people gather at the entrance of the Greek parliament, during a rally calling on the government to clinch a deal with its international creditors and secure Greece’s future in the Eurozone, in Athens on 18 June, 2015. —Reuters

Dylann Storm Roof appears by closed-circuit television at his bond hearing in Charleston, South Carolina on 19 June, 2015 in a still image from video. —Reuters

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There will be a solution...
**Chinese paper stresses economic ties with US ahead of dialogue**

SHANGHAI, 20 June — China’s leading state newspaper on Saturday hailed the common interests between China and the United States, striking a positive tone days ahead of a key annual bilateral meeting.

The commentary published in the People’s Daily, the flagship newspaper of the Communist Party, praised the “new model of major country relations” between the world’s two largest economies and stressed that differences could be overcome.

The article comes at a time of increased tension in US-China ties. In recent months, Beijing and Washington have clashed over China’s island building in the South China Sea, which has accelerated since last year and alarmed some of China’s neighbours.

The People’s Daily noted the two countries’ shared responsibility for world peace and development. It hailed the achievements of the bilateral relationship, including close cooperation on issues involving in hacking US databases.

EU urges Britain to meet deficit target in two years

LUXEMBOURG, 20 June — Britain was asked to meet the deficit target set by the European Union (EU) in two years, the EU’s finance ministers said on Friday.

Due to its insufficient measures, Britain had missed a deadline set for reducing its deficit below 3 percent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2014-15, EU’s reference value for government deficits, according to a monthly meeting of EU’s finance ministers held here.

The nominal budget deficit of Britain marked a declining trend recent years. After peaking in 2009-10, the figure fell to 7.7 percent of GDP in 2011-12, then to 7.6 percent in 2012-13, 5.9 percent in 2013-14 and 5.2 percent in 2014-15.

Britain’s general government gross debt has remained continuously above 60 percent of GDP, the EU’s reference value for government debt.

The EU extended the deadline for two years, recommending deficit targets of 4.1 percent of GDP in 2015-16 and 2.7 percent of GDP in 2016-17.

This should be consistent with an improvement in the structural balance of 0.5 percent of GDP in 2015-16 and 1.1 percent in 2016-17, according to the statement released after the EU finance ministers’ monthly meeting in Luxembourg.

The deadlock for Britain to meet its deficit targets has been extended several times. As Britain is not a member of the euro area, it cannot face sanctions under the excessive deficit procedure, added the EU.

Japan, Niger agree to promote economic ties, call for UN reform

Japan’s Prime Minister Shinzo Abe (R) shakes hands with Niger President Issoufou Mahamadou prior to their talks at the prime minister’s office in Tokyo on 19 June, 2015. Issoufou’s four-day trip to Japan is the first visit by a member of the West African country relations” between the world’s two largest economies and stressed that differences could be overcome.

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Hun Sen elected president of Cambodia’s ruling party

PHNOM PENH, 20 June — Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen was on Saturday elected as president of the ruling Cambodian People’s Party, repeating a colleague who passed away early this month.

A statement released by the CPP said that the 38th congress of the party’s central committee, held on Saturday, Hun Sen was elected as president.

Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sar Kheng and Say Chhum, president of the Senate and former secretary general of the party, were elected as the party’s vice presidents.

The election was held 12 days after Chea Sim, former president of the CPP and the Senate, passed away on 8 June because of illness and old age.

Prior to the election, Hun Sen was vice president of the party.

A vote of 506 out of 508 members who were present at the congress voted for the three leaders. The CPP’s central committee has 545 members.

Putin says Russia weathering sanctions, lectures West

ST PETERSBURG, (RUSIA), 20 June — President Vladimir Putin boasted on Friday that Russia had forced the West “to tighten its belt” to prevent sanctions causing a deep economic crisis, and told the West to stop using “the language of ultimatums.”

Investment in Russia has slowed to a trickle, capital flight has risen and the economy has been sliding into recession since oil prices tumbled last year and the West imposed economic sanctions on Moscow over the Ukraine crisis.

But in a 29-minute speech to a business forum and a question-and-answer session that lasted more than an hour, Putin ignored calls by many investors to unveil new plans to end the downturn.

Instead, he warned the West not to meddle in Moscow’s affairs and shifted blame for the conflict in Ukraine onto the West, primarily the United States.

“I would like to point out that at the end of last year we were warned — and you know this well — that there would be a deep crisis,” Putin said in the speech in the former imperial capital of St Petersburg.

“I have not happened. We have stabilised the situation … mainly because the Russian economy paled up a sufficient supply of inner strength,” he told an audience including rows of foreign and Russian business leaders from much of the Russian government.

Russia’s central bank reduced its main interest rate by a percentage point to 11.5 percent on Monday, inflation has slowed from 16.9 percent in April to 15.8 percent in May, and the rouble has risen to around 54 to the dollar, he said.

Despite Putin’s optimism, relations with the West are at their lowest ebb since the Cold War and former finance minister Alexei Kudrin said Thursday Russia was still in “the eye of the storm.” He recommended bringing forward the 2015 presidential election to give Putin a stronger mandate to reform the economy.

The chief executives of many Western companies which would usually have attended Russia’s annual showcase economic forum stayed away for the second successive year, though the heads of some major oil companies were present.

Reuters
San'a, 20 June — Saudi-led air strikes struck military and civilian airports in Yemen's capital San'a on Saturday, destroying the runways, after five-day peace talks in Geneva collapsed, officials and residents said.

An airport official told Xinhua that the air strikes destroyed the runways of the civilian San'a international airport and its adjacent al-Dalaimy air force base in northern San'a at midnight.

"It seems it would be difficult for Houthis representatives to go back home next Monday and land here after failing to strike a truce in Geneva talks," the official said on condition of anonymity.

Residents near the airports said they heard fighter jets hovering above before six powerful explosions rocked the whole area.

The airports were under control of Shiite Houthi militia since September when they seized the capital by force. They advanced to the south in March and forced Yemeni President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi and his government ministers to seek refuge in the neighboring oil-rich Saudi Arabia capital of Riyadh.

The air raids also killed at least 10 Houthis in their stronghold in northern province of Saada bordering Saudi Arabia. Houthi media also reported air strikes on Saturday morning on the village of the group leader Abdulmalik al-Houthi, but did not elaborate on casualties.

The warplanes pounded elite military camps controlled by the forces loyal to former President Ali Abdullah Saleh in San'a, according to witnesses.

The Saudi-led Arab collation has been waging a daily air campaign against Houthi group and Saleh forces since late March at the request of the exiled Yemeni government to restore its authority.

Meanwhile, ground battles between the Houthis and pro-Hadi fighters raged in the southern cities of Aden and Taiz.

In the country's second largest city of Aden, residents said at least two air strikes hit a Houthi gathering on Saturday morning.

Local officials and witnesses said Houthi fighters fired Katyusha rockets on Saturday morning against their opponents in Aden's districts of al-Mansoura, Dar Saad and al-Tikania. Civilians were killed in the fighting.

In Taiz, conflicts left a woman and a child killed, according to medics and residents.

Ground battles intensified in the provinces of al-Bayda, Ibb, al-Jouf and Marib, as well as the Red Sea port city of al-Hudaydah, as the five-day Geneva talks concluded without reaching a ceasefire. Representatives of Hadi and Houthi group traded accusations, saying the other rejected to reach a truce. The exiled government has demanded Houthi to implement the UN resolution to withdraw from the cities and hand over weapons they took from the army in return for permanent truce, while Houthis said they will pull out from Aden and Taiz when the coalition agree to halt air strikes for 15 days.

The outcome of the primary talks disappointed millions of Yemeni who were expecting for an end to the war.

"This is disappointing news. We will continue suffering from their stupid war and sinking until those corrupted politicians reach a truce," said a San'a resident, a taxi driver.

"Those war leaders seek to seize power and money, while 25 million Yemenis are in dire need for peace, food, water, medicine, fuel and electricity," he added.

The capital San'a and all other major cities have been cut from electricity, water and fuel supplies for months.

Following the talks, the United Nations appealed for 1.6 billion US dollars to help millions of Yemenis in need of aid, warning of a "looming catastrophe" in the war-torn country.

"The money is needed to address the constantly increasing humanitarian needs in Yemen until the end of 2015," Jens Laerke, spokesman for the UN's humanitarian agency, said in Geneva.

"More than 21 million people, or 80 percent of the population, are now estimated to be in need of some form of humanitarian aid," he added. —Xinhua

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San'a, 20 June — An Israeli killed and another injured on Friday afternoon in a suspected Palestinian shooting attack in the West Bank, Israeli officials said.

A spokesperson with Magen David Adom, Israel's Red Cross, said one of the two injured was in critical condition and later succumbed to his wounds at a hospital outside Tel Aviv. The other man was lightly-to-moderately wounded after being shot at his legs.

An initial statement by a military spokesperson said that several shots were fired at an Israeli civilian vehicle near the Jewish settlement of Dolev, six km north-west of Ramallah.

Israel's Channel 2 TV news reported that a passing car opened fire at a vehicle of Israelis, who were apparently on a tour at the Ein Bavin spring.

Scores of security forces were at the scene, canvassing the area for suspects, the military spokesperson said.

Violent incidents between Israelis and Palestinians have been on the rise since the US-brokered peace talks collapsed last April.

There have been dozens of militant attacks by Palestinians against Israelis, mainly in Jerusalem, claiming Israeli victims, along Palestinian casualties from the frequent clashes between the Palestinians and the Israeli security forces. —Xinhua

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Benghazi, (Libya), 20 June — At least five Libyan troops were killed late on Friday when a mortar landed in the eastern city of Benghazi.

Five Libyan troops killed by mortar in Benghazi

Benghazi, the capital of Libya's internationally recognized government, is one front in a complex conflict involving Libya's internationally recognized government, the government of eastern Libya and several Islamist groups.

Benghazi is the headquarters of the military forces, which have been fighting against a mix of Islamist militant brigades, medical sources said.

Benghazi is just one front in a complex conflict involving Libya's two rival governments, and loose alliances of armed factions as well as Islamist militant forces taking advantage of the chaos to gain ground.

"Five members of the Libyan National Army were killed when a mortar shell landed among them late Friday evening," the medical source at Benghazi's Al-Jala hospital told Reuters.

The source said at least 20 troops had been killed in fighting in June. LNA Mohamed Hejazi said their forces had been fighting in and around six districts in the city.

"These militant groups have become individuals who are taking high building as posts. The militants have also booby-trapped all houses and streets," Hejazi said.

Army forces loyal to Libya's internationally recognized government are now battling several Islamist groups in Libya's second-largest city as part of a wider struggle since the overthrow of Muammar Gaddafi in 2011.

Fighters claiming allegiance to the Islamist State group hold- ing parts of Iraq and Syria have also claimed attacks in Benghazi as that group looks to expand its foothold in Libya.

Pro-government forces in Benghazi have regained some territory lost last year. But progress has stalled as militants hole up in several districts and the port area despite claims by army commander Khalifa Haftar that his forces control most of the city.

Libya's recognized government operates out of the east since an armed faction known as Libya Dawn took over the capital Tripoli last summer and declared its own government.

Ongoing United Nations negotiations to end the conflict and bring the two main factions into a unity government and broker a broad ceasefire have struggled as both sides seek more concessions over their rivals. —Reuters
The last old Myanmar capital city
“Ratanapon” [Mandalay] Part VI

Maha Saddhamma Jotika dhaja
Sithu Dr. Khin Maung Nyunt

Religious edifices and sacred images already located in Mandalay areas, long before King Mindon founded his new capital city and built his new palace there, are as many as they date far back to the Bagun period of Myanmar history. To begin with, we have four ordination halls [Simas] founded and consecrated by Primate Shin Arahan of Bagun period. An ardent Mon-Sri Lankan missionary monk and rajah guru of King Anawratha and his successors, Shin Arahan founded and consecrated ordination halls not only in and around Bagan but also beyond it. These ordination halls still exist in Thaton in Mon State, and Meiktila, Mandalay in central Myanmar. In Mandalay, there are four ordination halls namely (1) Sun-rise ordination Hall at Bo Tet Kone [Htun tone Put et] near Aung Pin Lei Bo Tet Kone [Htun tone Putet] and look- back to the Bagan period of Myanmar. The following pagodas are the last old pagodas located in the north-west of the palace city was built by Prince Min Shin Saw. The Prince was founding a town at Htun tone Putet and looking for an auspicious site to build a pagoda. He saw a community of crows cawing on a mound. So he built a temple and pagoda and named it Shwe Kyi Myin [golden crows saw the site]. In the temple sits a thickly gilt sitting Buddha image of Bagan style studied with precious stones on its crown. In 1899, all sacred images from the Mandalay palace shrine rooms were brought and kept in the temple. Vows were made to the statue and lie before it. In Myanmar, near Thu-yee-Zay there are two pagodas. Ayvik made a moistened phaya and Baung taw kya phaya. Local people say these two pagodas were built by King Kyan zittha of Bagan period. The former, it is said, cast no shadow until King Kyan zittha was rehurn human, and the latter marked the site where his headgear fell down. Prince Min Shin Saw built a cave like monument called Gu-Gyi kone in Nyaung Gwe ward near the Ayeyawaddy River. At Minte E-kin quadrilateral, there lies a well-known pagoda Yadana Myit Zu built by Pyi sone Min, Maha Thihia Thura. A cluster of minor pagodas, images and inscribed stone pillars of the past and present tell the past and present history of Mandalay. In Anaukpyin, there are religious edifices of antiquity. By the side of Than-gaza stream lies a prominent temple pagoda and Buddha image most well-known as “Chan Tha Ya” phaya built by son and Crown Prince of King Bodawpaya. On the summit of Mandalay Hill, sits “Hsu Taung Pyi Zedi” built by King Anawratha of Bagan, on his return from his pilgrimage to Gadala[y] [China]. The son and Crown Prince of King Bodawpaya repaired and renovated it. Later King Bagyidaw again

Darling, I don’t have the heart to ask you to do housework on this holiday. Instead, just go to the market, won’t you?

Bahan Aye Min
The last old Myanmar capital city “Ratanapon” [Mandalay] Part VI

(from page 5)

First, we begin with Eindawya Zedi [officially named Maha Loka Yanthi] built by King Bagan to mark the site of his residence before he became king. It was built in 1847 A.D. At the south west corner was a pavilion in which a middle size black stone (chalcedony) Buddha image is housed. Originally it was sheltered at Zaung Ka Law Pagoda [Maha Muni Cula] situated to the south east of Mandalay. There used to be a natural lake called Zaung Ka Law Lake. Now it was land filled and many public houses were built on it.

Next, a very prominent Buddha image in Mandalay is Maha Muni. The son and crown prince Thiri Maha Dhamma bhiyeya Sihasura, was sent by his father King Bodawpaya to the Kingdom of Rakhine to bring to his capital the ally Buddha image in 1785 A.D. It was enshrined in a very spacious temple built near his capital Amarapura. When Mandalay was founded this temple with the great image were included with in the boundaries of Mindon’s capital city. In 1883 A.D. a great fire broke out destroying all buildings. Although all gold ornaments on the image were melted down by the fire, the original alloy image remained intact. Melted gold weighted 5450 viss. The image is 12 feet 7 inches high. The pedestal throne is 7 feet high. Today the image has collected nearly 3 tons of gold gilt and gold ornaments on its body and the crown and several diamonds and precious stones. Its regalia, the bowl, umbrella, stand, water goblet, flower stands, candles, etc. are made of gold studded with rubies. There are religious and historic objects – statues, bells, inscribed pillars on display in the surrounding museums and halls. There is a shed in which stone inscriptions of all historic period are stored for scholars and re-searchers to study. In a separate brick house are displayed four bronze statues of elephant, lion and two human males. They were brought from Rakhine when Maha Muni image was moved to Amarapura. Originally these statues were from Cambodia. When Ayuthia [Siamese] invaded Cambodia, Khmer images were taken to Ayuthia. When King Bayint Naung conquered Ayuthia, he brought bronze statues to his capital Hanthawady (Hamsa-vadi). When Rakhine King invaded Hanthawaddy he took many war booties to Rakhine including Khmer bronze statues. When King Bodawpaya’s son and crown prince took Maha Muni image, these bronze statues came with Maha Muni image. So, the only remaining four statues are seen today in the precinct of Maha Muni Image.

Regarding the Iron Buddha Image “Sanda Muni” cast by King Bodawpaya and brought to Mandalay by King Mindon, we have described its background history in Part V of this article.

We shall now deal with the third category of monuments and images at and around Mandalay built and made by King Mindon.

The first group of seven known as Thata Thana or seven sites with seven buildings were chosen and on which structures were built on the same date and at the same astrologically auspicious time. They were (1) the capital city (2) the moat (3) Maha Loka Marazein Zedi (4) Ordination Hall (5) Maha Atula Marazein (6) Ordination Hall (7) Maha Atula Golden Ordination Hall.

To the north of the capital city, at the foot of Mandalay hill was located “Ordination Hall” built by King Mindon’s queen “Maha Ratana Mingala Devi” of North Palace. It was destroyed by four elements. Today wellwishers of Mandalay are reconstructing it on its site. It was known as Pathan Golden Ordination Hall.

In Ayuthia, in a spacious precinct, lies the great brick monastery of extraordinary size and design known as Maha Atula Vizaya Yama Taik Taw, loosely rendered into English it is “In-comparable Brick Monastery”. It took 18 years to complete it. The roof has five tiers of gilt and decorative designs of stucco [plaster] art. These are 246 teak posts, of which the tallest measures 63 cubit feet. A Buddha image made of King Mindon’s clothing and Bodhi tree ashes gift with a big diamond of 100 carats on its forehead was one of the extra-ordinary religious objects kept in the monastery. Minister of Yaw, Oo P Hlaing supervised its construction.

The following is a firsthand account of this monastery by an Englishman who visited it in 1885:

“In Mandalay, King Mindon erected a monastery the like of which there is not, the Great Incomparable in Myanmar Atumashi which possesses a beautiful hall, unquestionably the finest in all Mandalay. It would be no great stretch of truth to say that it is the finest in the world. The building is composed of a series of bold terraces, seven in number, rising one above another, the central one being the highest. The golden hall is carried on thirty-six pillars some of which are seventy feet high, the ceiling reaching its greatest elevation in the high central terrace. And there, a colossal figure of Goutama Buddha sits, meditating beside a golden throne intended for the king. The boldness of the general design, the noble proportions of the immense hall, and the great height of the golden roof soaring over the throne and the statue, fill the mind with rapturous pleasure. Pillars, walls and roof are richly gilt, glass-inlaying heightening the brilliancy—”

Unfortunately the Great Incomparable suffered vandalism, during the turbulence following the British annexation of Mindon’s kingdom in 1885. The large diamond mysteriously disappeared. The art treasures were looted and finally in 1892, the whole building was burnt to the ground.

For decades it remained in that state of ruin. But with the fund allotted by the government and cash and kind donated by well-wishers the Great Incomparable had been reconstructed on its original model based on historical documents and copies of the original designs. The only alteration made is that the pillars inside have been replaced by flying buttress beams concealed behind the ceiling to provide more space for assembly.

Today the reconstructed Atu Mashi or the Great Incomparable is a splendid building. Massive and gigantic, yet artistic and visually pleasant, its interior gives the visitor the illusion of the Hall of Mirrors of the Versailles Palace of the French King Louis XIV. Though there are no mirrors there, the gilt décor, the glass mosaics work, the grand chandeliers on the gilt ceiling and the snow white sago mat on the floor, combined, create such illusion. The spacious hall which can comfortably accommodate an assembly of thousands excludes and air of majesty, permeated by religious solemnity. The reconstructed Atu Mashi, the Great Incomparable is one of the marvels of Mandalay or can even be said to be the “finest in the world” as remarked by the English visitor in 1885.

(To be continued)
Helicopter makers upbeat on market despite oil-led slump

Paris, 20 June — Top US and European helicopter executives said this week that the oil price-led commercial helicopter market slump would be temporary and that they will keep investing in new technologies given the sector’s positive long-term outlook.

The downturn will likely last 18 to 24 months, Sikorsky Aircraft’s new president, Robert Leduc, said at Paris Airshow, adding that he fully expected demand to rebound at some point.

United Technologies Corp’s (UTX.N) head of Textron Inc (TXT.N) had also been reflected in comments by businessmen, saying they would keep investing in new products and technologies to ensure it was well positioned when the market recovered.

Sales to the oil and gas sector accounted for just 12 to 15 percent of company revenue, but lower oil prices had prompted customers to seek more efficient models for future demand. “It’s triggering efforts from customers to reduce their costs,” Faury told journalists.

The oil price LCO1 is down almost 40 percent from a year ago, with Brent crude trading close to $63 a barrel.

Sikorsky’s Leduc said sales to the oil and gas sector accounted for about 80 percent of its commercial sales, but that demand in other sectors remained solid, including VIP transport and emergency medical services.

MERS outbreak now No 1 aviation sector risk

Paris, 20 June — Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) have added to the top of the list of risks facing the aviation industry, the head of a leading aircraft lessor said, outstripping traditional concerns about fuel and currencies.

An outbreak of MERS in South Korea that began last month and is the largest outside Saudi Arabia has infected 166 people, killing 24 of them.

“You see airlines cancelling some flights out of Taiwan, out of China, to Korea, and tour groups beginning to cancel. So we hope we get over this quickly and that the world has learned from SARS, but the jury’s out,” Robert Martin, chief executive of Singapore-based leasing firm BOC Aviation, told Reuters.

Dr Gamatie said all blood donors should always be subjected to proper testing of diseases such as HIV, hepatitis B, hepatitis C and syphilis before transfusion.

Unfortunately, in 25 African countries, all the blood donors are not tested for one or all of these infections. The test results are not reliable in a number of countries due to shortage of personnel, lack of testing kits or absence of basic laboratory services,” he observed. —Xinhua

Africa needs more blood products: WHO official

Cotonou, 20 June — More efforts need to be made to guarantee rapid and effective access to secure and sufficient blood products in Africa, an official of the World Health Organization (WHO) said on Wednesday in Cotonou.

Dr Youssouf Gamatie, WHO representative in Benin, deplored that in 2013, only 3.9 million units of blood were collected from donors in the African region, a volume that could only cover 50 percent of the annual blood requirements in this region.

He was speaking during a preparatory forum for a regional meeting to be organized by the WHO in September in Cotonou to discuss how to develop a regional strategy on securing blood products and establishing national regulatory systems for collecting blood and blood products.

“This regional workshop will enable us to analyze the approaches that need to be taken to effectively respond to a number of challenges facing blood transfusion in the region,” the WHO official indicated.

He said blood transfusion is a priority area for WHO which, in turn, pursued efforts to help African countries develop their blood transfusion services.

Currently, he continued, only 24 African countries have blood banks equipped with blood from voluntary donors, yet this is supposed to be the norm in all the 47 Sub-Saharan African countries.

Af Chapman said that the economic damage.

Chinese investment in Britain creates huge amount of jobs

London, 20 June — Britain has become the number one destination of choice for education for Chinese high net wealth families, and the year 2015 has seen a substantial rise of Chinese investment in Britain, creating huge amount of jobs here, said the Hurun Research Institute here on Friday.

In its report named “The UK Engagement in the Chinese Private Sector 2015,” the institute highlights eight key findings, including Masters courses and boarding schools have been the most important drivers of personal connections with Chinese entrepreneurs; led by Huawei, Britain has seen notable rise in job-creating investments from China’s private sector; Chinese investment in London is the most dynamic and the one with the brightest future. According to a report released by UK Trade & Investment on Tuesday, China made £2.1 billion direct investment (FDI) projects in Britain, becoming the fourth biggest FDI countries for UK in fiscal year 2014/15, which ended March 2015.

The education destination choice also bolsters the residential purchases for Chinese high net worth families in Britain. London was the only European city to make the top 10 preferred cities for Chinese to buy residential property, according to Hurun’s report in June 2014. —Xinhua
Europe’s revived comet lander phones home

**New York, 20 June** — Chipmaker Advanced Micro Devices Inc is at the initial stage of reviewing whether to split itself in two or spin off a business, seeking to reverse its fortunes and take on rival Intel Corp, according to three people familiar with the matter.

The deliberations are preliminary and no decision has been made, the people said. The review highlights Chief Executive Lisa Su’s determination to consider every possible option to turn the company around.

AMD, based in Sunnyvale, California, has asked a consulting firm to help it review its options and draw up scenarios on how a break-up or spin-off would work, the people said this week, asking not to be identified because the deliberations are confidential.

One option under consideration is separating AMD’s graphics and licensing business from its server business, which sells processors that power data centers, one of the people said.

AMD had explored such a move in the past and decided against it, the people said. Su, however, who took over as CEO last October, judged that there is merit for the company to at least consider such a possibility again, the people added. There is no certainty that a split or spin-off will occur, the people cautioned.

An AMD spokeswoman said no such project was in the works at this time and reiterated the company’s commitment to the long-term strategy it laid out in May at its analyst meeting.

AMD, which has a market capitalization of around $2 billion, has competed with much larger Intel since the 1980s, and at times has made last-minute testing and adjustments at UNAM’s Engineering Faculty.

The team says Justina is ready to show off her domestic skills in one of the event’s four competitive divisions, which include RoboCupSoccer, RoboCupRescue, RoboCupJunior and RoboCup Home.

The competition will be tough, with entries from 46 countries having to undergo basic trials, including “going from one point to another and if there is an unexpected obstacle in the way, having the ability to sidestep it,” project coordinator Dr Jesus Savage Carmona told Xinhua.

Marco Antonio Negrete Villanueva, who is working on a doctorate in computing, designed Justina’s navigation system.

“She’ll do a good job,” he said, even in the “types of complex settings you see in the RoboCup.”

In addition to mobility, robots need artificial intelligence, said Savage, adding Justina “also has to be able to understand what she’s instructed to do.”

Measuring a meter and a half in height, with restless eyes and the golden insignia of the university football team Pumas, Justina can do more than simply navigate her way around home furniture: she can clean, make a bed, clear away the dishes and even pour a glass of milk.

She can also speak and follow spoken instructions or gestures, said Savage, who has been promoting the field of robotics in Mexico for more than 10 years. This won’t be the first time Justina has entered into competition, having debated at a 2006 robotics contest in Bremen, Germany, and competed every year since: Atlanta, US (2007), Suzhou, China (2008), Graz, Austria (2009), Singapore (2010), Istanbul, Turkey (2011), Mexico (2012), Eindhoven, Holland (2013), and Brazil and Toulouse, France (2014).

But Justina has been upgraded, with better vision and smoother actions, such as approaching a table and picking up the dishes.

In general, the three components that make her tick — mechanical, electrical/ and artificial intelligence — have been gradually improved for this year’s challenge.

First held in 1997, RoboCup organizers and participants hope to drive enough progress in the field by 2050 to assemble a team of robot football players to pit against the winners of the FIFA World Cup.

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France, central European states oppose quotas in EU migrant debate

BRATISLAVA, 20 June — French President Francois Hol-

lands said on Friday that commitments by individual EU

member states offered a better way of resettling African and

Middle Eastern migrants rather than the imposition of national

quotas by Brussels.

Debate has grown over how to deal with a growing influx of migrants
to be facing the worst strife and

deeded by the EU to be known

have died.

Mediterranean in which hundreds

reached Italy and Greece, many

in the Slovak capital Bratislava.

with the central European leaders

reasons that have led to and that

quotas.

Czech Republic, Hungary and

the Visegrad group of countries

in the Slovak capital Bratislava.

“I do not think (quotas) make any

sense for migration. I do not think

it is the right method.”

The European Commission wants EU governments to agree to

resettle over the next two years

40,000 asylum-seekers who

reached Italy and Greece, many

after perilous boat trips across the

Mediterranean in which hundreds

have died.

Only refugees from states
deemed by the EU to be known to

be facing the worst strife and

conflict will be taken in.

The plan will be discussed at

an EU summit on 25-26 June.

Italy and Greece, bearing the
brunt of the migrant wave, have repeatedly called for fellow EU

states to share the burden.

Slovak Prime Minister Rob-

ert Fico, hosting a meeting of the

Visegrad countries of countries

in the Slovak capital Bratislava, said he still ex-

pected a tough debate on the issue

among EU leaders next week.

Countries in the EU’s emerg-

ing east have faced varying pres-

sure from the sharp increase in

asylum seekers, especially coun-

tries like Hungary that border on

the Balkans, a major transit route

for migrants from the Middle

East and Africa.

Hungary announced a plan

this week to build a four-metre-

(13-foot)-high fence along its

border with non-EU member Ser-

bia, a move that triggered a swift

rebuke from the United Nations

Refugee Agency.

Prime Minister Viktor Or-

ban defended the move on Friday,
saying Hungary needed to protect

its border on the outer edge of the

EU’s Schengen zone in which free

movement is allowed.—REUTERS

Japan, China agree on early setup of maritime communication system

BEIJING, 20 June — Japan and China agreed on Friday to

speed up the process of setting up a maritime communication

mechanism as part of efforts to avert accidental clashes in

nearby waters, at a time when their once-frosty relations

have been thawing, despite a

continuing dispute over the

Senkaku Islands.

Without providing details,

the Japanese and Chinese de-

fence ministries respectively said

in a statement they have also

reached some common under-

standing on technical matters of

the planned mechanism during

working-level talks in Beijing.

According to an official with

knowledge of the one-day meet-

ing, among other major issues,

Japan and China agreed to com-

municate in English in the event

of an emergency and set up hot-

lines between the chiefs of their

naval and air forces.

The two countries have yet to
decide whether their territo-

rial waters and airspace will

fall within the scope of the new

mechanism, the source said, add-

ing that the next round of talks
could take place next month in

Tokyo.

Following Japanese Prime

Minister Shinzo Abe’s first

meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping in November, the two
countries resumed working-level

talks in January, the first time

since 2012.

Abe and Xi have agreed to
ease maritime tensions stemming

from a standoff over sovereign-

ty of the Japan-controlled, Chi-

na-claimed uninhabited islands.

The talks had been suspend-

ed since Japan put most of the

islands, called Diaoyu by China,
der under control in September

2012. Differences over the

islands in the East China Sea and

war-time legacy issues persist

between Tokyo and Beijing. But

high-level political contacts, as

well as exchanges in the private

sector, have been on the rise be-
two the countries recent-

ly.—KYODO NEWS

Eight suspected pirates nabbed after Malaysia recaptures hijacked tanker

KUALA LUMPUR, 20 June — Eight suspected pirates

have been arrested in Vietnamese waters after trying to flee after

Malaysia captured a hijacked oil tanker and all crew onboard were safe, officials said on

Friday.

All eight hijackers fled in rescue boats on Thursday evening, but the captain of the

hijacked tanker only informed the authorities after mid-night, some five hours later as he

was threatened by the pirates not to reveal their escape plan, ac-

cording to Malaysian Navy chief Abdul Aziz Jaafar.

Earlier, the pirates request-
ed a following Malaysian Navy

ship to keep a five nautical miles
distance, threatening that the

crew would be hurt if the ship
gets close. Pirates said they were

heading toward Natuna Islands of

Indonesia.

Malaysian maritime officials

later said eight Indonesians who

believed to be the hijackers were

arrested by Vietnamese border

guards near Tho Chu Island.

“The pirates that fled the

ship was arrested by Vietnamese

authorities when trying to escape

from our control,” said Ahmad

Puzi bin Ab Kahar, Deputy chief

of Malaysian Maritime Enforce-

ment Agency. “They have been

questioned by this time,” he said.

Malaysia’s Star newspaper
described the hijackers as “part-

time pirates” as they attempted
to disguise the tanker with paint,

changing its name from the origi-

nal “Orkim Harmony” to “Kim

Harmon.”

Meanwhile, All 22 crew

members, including 16 Malay-

sians, five Indonesians and a

Myanmar citizen were all safe,

Abdul Aziz said. One crew mem-

ber was shot in the thigh when the

pirates hijacked ship. He had been

airlifted to hospital and was

reported to be in stable condition.

The Orkim Harmony went

missing off the east coast of

Malaysia’s southern Johor state

since 11 June. It was carrying

6,000 metric tons of petrol worth

some 21 million ringgit (5.6 mil-

lion US dollars).

Abdul Aziz said the petrol

remained on the ship.

The tanker was on its way from

Malacca to the port city of Kuantan when hijacked. It was

spotted on Thursday off Cam-

bodge, Australia.

The tanker was travelling along

the Malacca Strait, one of the

busiest waterways in the world. Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia have joint effort in

fighting piracy in the Malac-

ca Strait. Malaysia maritime

officials said this was the fifth

hijacking case this year in the

southern part of the strait along

the southern coast.—XINHUA

Violence against women worldwide

remains an issue: Chinese

ambassador

GENEVA, 20 June — China’s

ambassador to the UN in Geneva

Wu Hailong on Friday said “vi-

olence against women and girls

remains one of the most pervasive

human rights abuses around the

world.”

The ambassador was speaking

in the context of the 20th anniver-
sary of the Beijing Declaration and

Platform for Action, which builds

on the Nairobi Forward-looking

Strategies for the Advancement of

Women, and seeks to provide

equal participation for women in

economic, social, cultural and po-

litical decision-making.

Wu said that “despite efforts

undertaken by the international

community to eliminate all forms

of violence against women includ-

ing domestic violence, which have

resulted in the strengthening of

legislation and the criminal justice

system, challenges and gaps are

still remaining.” In light of this, he

advocated a “transformative agen-
da,” where particular emphasis

is placed on the empowerment of

women in socio-economic spheres,

while also calling for the eradica-

tion of gender stereotypes.

“States should consider im-
plementing legislation which en-
ables the active involvement of

women in the formal sector and

in decision-making processes and

actively promote gender equality

and increase the role of women in

development, socialization and

political participation,” he add-

ed.—XINHUA
At least two people injured in Lithuanian capital fire

VILNIUS, 20 June — At least two people were injured and three warehouses completely destroyed during a sudden fire in Lithuanian capital Vilnius on Friday evening.

According to the Fire and Rescue Department of Lithuania, the fire broke out in three warehouses situated not far away from inhabited city zones. The fire soon completely destroyed the assets of a furniture company at one of the warehouses and used car parts and other goods kept in another warehouse.

According to local media reports, one spectator was injured and a firefighter suffered minor injuries during an explosion at the site.

The smoke was seen dozens of kilometres away, with spectators reporting explosions. No fatalities have been reported, confirmed Saulius Skvernelis, the Interior Minister of Lithuania, who arrived at the site.

“This is an unusual case. In terms of firefighting forces dispatched, this is one of the largest fires in Vilnius recently,” Skvernelis told news website Lrytas.

Around 10 firefighting vehicles have been working at the site for at least three hours. “Everything we had been burning down, the losses will amount to millions,” general manager of the company owning one of the hangars told news website 15min.lt.

The authorities continued investigating the causes of the accident.

Kenya eyes more investment in upcoming economic summit

NAIROBI, 20 June — Kenya said on Friday that next month’s 6th Global Entrepreneurship Summit (GES) will help strengthen the country’s trade ties with US, Africa and global markets.

State House Spokesperson Manoh Esipisu said in a statement that the summit offered the country opportunities to exchange high-level views and ideas between government, global business leaders, entrepreneurs and innovators.

“The privilege of hosting this summit endorses our professionalised economic outlook. We are eager to use this forum to deepen our regional integration and improve our global competitiveness,” he said.

Launched by US President Obama in 2009, GES brings together entrepreneurs and investors from around Africa and around the world annually to showcase innovative projects, exchange new ideas, and help spur economic opportunity.

The 2015 GES agenda will focus on generating new investments for entrepreneurs, with a particular focus on women and youth.

The selection of Nairobi as host city for the 2015 GES underscores how Africa, notably Kenya, has become a center for innovation and entrepreneurship. Esipisu said the summit, which will coincide with Obama’s visit in July, is likely to stimulate economic exchanges between Washington D C and Nairobi.

“As a country, we are acclaimed as an innovation leader in sub-Saharan Africa and we have evidence to support that acclaim, in our financial services and technology sectors,” Esipisu said.

“The government is keen on forging and strengthening its bilateral relations with the US to promote foreign investment and entrepreneur- al innovations in the country, and the broader eastern African region, and will also seek much needed global support in the war against terror,” Esipisu said that Kenya has evidence-based learning to offer in entrepreneurship and business leadership, and is also poised to benefit and learn from the entrepreneur- nal principles that are shared across international boundaries. This will foster its opportunities on inclusiveness, global competitiveness, the international supply chain and spread the exchange of ideas.

The spokesman said that the government would continue to integrate entre- preneurship into its transfor- mation and economic development efforts by deploying necessary measures to sup- port fledging entrepreneurs and initiatives that unnecessarily constrain them to stifl innovation.

He added that the gov- ernment would promote pri- vate–public partnerships (PPP), pivotal infrastructure projects, manufacturing and others, to augment the small & medium enterprises (SME) sector and promotion of entrepreneurship culture in the country. This, he said, will increase wealth creation, employability and provide a basis upon which a new paradigm shall be created.

Entrepreneurial innova- tion plays an important role in creating wealth and employment for the youth, enabling giant strides in efforts to eliminate poverty. Ken- ya’s growth is attributable to a robust SME sector and the emergence of entrepre- neurial innovations.

A vendor sells fermented sticky rice at a market in Hanoi, Vietnam, on 19 June, 2015. Duauwa festival, celebrated on the fifth day of the fifth lunar month, is widely known in Vietnam as the festival to kill inner insects, Vietnamese people believe that eating fermented sticky rice during Duanwu festival can help clean the digestive system.

Singapore to open airlines training centre marking 50th birthday

SINGAPORE, 20 June — Singapore Airlines’ (SIA) training centre will open to the public for the first time on 25 July as part of SIA’s programme to celebrate the country’s 50th birthday, said the national carrier in a press release on Friday. SIA said its Open House would give visitors access to behind-the-scenes of its pilot and cabin crew training. The airlines will organize walking tours of the Flight Simulator, Safety Training and Cabin Crew training facilities, as well as an all-day carnival. Besides, the SIA Heritage Gallery will showcase the airline’s development over the years.

Children may participate in a 60-minute “exclusive Junior Cabin Crew Experience”, which provides opportunities to dress up in the iconic SIA cabin crew uniform as well as role-play in a replica of SIA’s A380 Business Class cabin.

Christopher Cheng, chairman of SIA’s Open House and Art Competi- tion Committee, said it’s been an exciting year for the airline as the country celebrates its Golden Jubilee while giving back to the community.

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Taylor Swift’s ‘1989’ will not be offered on Apple Music

Taylor Swift

LOS ANGELES, 20 June — Pop star Taylor Swift will not be making her hit album “1989” available on Apple Inc’s upcoming streaming service, the singer’s label said on Friday.

Apple Music, which will launch at the end of June, will offer subscribers a large catalog of songs for a subscription fee of $10 a month, but Swift’s “1989” — her fifth studio album, will not be offered on any streaming service, her label Big Machine Group said.

Representatives for Apple did not respond to requests for comment.

Swift pulled her entire catalog of music from online streaming platform Spotify last November and refused to offer her latest record “1989” on streaming services, saying the business had “shrunk the numbers of paid album sales drastically.”

The move, while risky, paid off for the 25-year-old singer as “1989” became the biggest debut of 2014. It has sold more than 4.9 million albums in the US since its October release. It has sold more than 4.9 million albums in the US since its October release. It has sold more than 4.9 million albums in the US since its October release.

Swift’s back catalog remains available on streaming services that require a paid subscription, her label said.

Apple Music, unveiled earlier this month, will not offer a free, ad-supported on-demand streaming service like Spotify or Pandora.

The music industry has supported Apple bringing its vast music library to paid streaming, and the company said it will pay 70 percent of the music subscription revenue to music owners.

Songwriters Hall of Fame honors Van Morrison, Lady Gaga

LONDON, 20 June — Veteran soul and bluesman Van Morrison and pop star Lady Gaga have added fresh accolades to their list of honors, winning awards from the Songwriters Hall of Fame.

Northern Irish singer-songwriter Morrison took the prestigious “Johnny Mercer Award” reserved for Hall inductees — just a week after he was knighted for services to music in the Birthday Honours list of Britain’s Queen Elizabeth.

Lady Gaga was hand-ed the first “Contemporary Icon Award” to honor “a songwriter-artist who has attained iconic status in pop culture”.

Both received their gongs at the organization’s 46th annual gala in New York on Thursday night, when new inductees included country music writer Bobby Braddock, singer-songwriter Linda Perry and “Girls Just Want to Have Fun” singer Cyndi Lauper.

Grateful Dead guitarist and songwriter Jerry Garcia was honored posthumously alongside the band’s lyricist Robert Hunter. “Hoochie Coochie Man” songwriter Willie Dixon, who died in 1992, was also on the roster.

I don’t like to talk about my personal life: Emma Stone

LOS ANGELES, 20 June — Actress Emma Stone says she prefers to keep her personal life private. The “Amazing Spider-Man” star, who has been dating co-star Andrew Garfield for three years, apparently had a brief split this past March, reported Entertainment Weekly magazine.

“See, I never talk about this stuff for this exact reason — because it’s all so speculative and baseless. Once you start responding — once you’re like, ‘No, that’s not true’ — then they’re like, ‘Well, if we push enough, we’ll get a comment, so let’s see what else we can make up,’” she said.

“I understand the interest in it completely, because I’ve had it, too. But it’s so special to me that it never feels good to talk about, so I just continue- don’t talk about it,” she added.

Shortly after splitting from Garfield this spring, Stone, 26, was photographed in Beverly Hills carrying a shopping bag with her then-ex’s name on it.

The pictures sparked countless headlines and a flurry of speculation. (AP Photo/Isaac Brekken, File)

One-take thriller ‘Victoria’ sweeps German film awards

BERLIN, 20 June — German heist film “Victoria”, shot in one single take in more than 20 locations in central Berlin, won top honors at the German Film Prize on Friday, taking best picture and five categories in one of the world’s most lucrative film awards.

The movie tells the tragic story of Victoria — a talented, but jobless pianist from Spain stranded in Berlin — who as she leaves a nightclub gets acquainted with a wild bunch of young men and becomes embroiled in an armed robbery.

“I’m proud to say that every single night during filming I would go home and have to dig out mud because it just had to live in Sabine,” she said. —PTI

Movie role inspires Kate Winslet to take up gardening

LONDON, 20 June — Actress Kate Winslet says she has destroyed her hands and fingers perfecting her gardening skills after portraying French landscape artist Sabine De Barra in her latest movie “A Little Chaos”.

The 39-year-old “Titanic” star had always dreamed of becoming a gardener before taking on the role in Alan Rickman’s directorial debut, reported Contactmusic.

“I’m proud to say that every single night during filming I would go home and have to dig out mud because it just had to live in Sabine,” she said. —PTI
Blatter backs German proposal for FIFA integrity checks

LONDON, 20 June — FIFA president Sepp Blatter has endorsed a German proposal for stronger integrity checks to vet top soccer officials as the sport’s global governing body grapples with the fallout of a massive corruption scandal.

Blatter also took a swipe at European soccer federation UEFA, who he said had blocked the proposal by German FA president Wolfgang Niersbach.

“Wolfgang Niersbach from Germany, has put forward a motion I support,” the Swiss wrote in his column in FIFA Weekly Magazine.

“Germany” has proposed an independent integrity check for all members of the most important FIFA Committees.

“In doing so, Niersbach has broached a subject that has so far been blocked by UEFA of all associations. Better late than never.

“The message he has thereby sent out must apply to everyone: only together can we continue to drive the process of reform forward.

“That is something I will stand for until my final day in office.”

Following the arrests of high-ranking FIFA officials in Zurich last month, Blatter was re-elected as president for a fifth term on 29 May but days later announced he would step down and an extraordinary congress would find his successor.

FIFA’s Executive Committee will meet in Zurich on 20 July to decide on a date to find Blatter’s successor. In his column, Blatter did not address reports he might change his mind about stepping down and stand for re-election.

He said Niersbach’s proposal would be discussed at the 20 July meeting but sidestepped the German’s call to end the one-country, one-vote system used to elect the president.

Currently, each of FIFA’s 209 member associations has one vote in the presidential election, meaning that countries such as Germany and Brazil have the same voting power as tiny nations such as Liechtenstein and Antigua.

Conversely, Blatter said more power over the governance of global soccer should be concentrated in Asia and Africa — blocs where he has traditionally relied on strong support — in the form of more representation on an expanded Executive Committee.

“‘The key is to strengthen democracy within the ‘FIFA government’,’ he said. ‘The fact that CAF, the African confederation boasting 54 members and the AFC, the Asian confederation with 46 members, only have five and four delegates respectively in the 25-person FIFA Executive is contradictory to this notion of democracy.’

“However, I am reluctant to take places away from anyone; there should not be a redistribution of seats on the Executive Committee but a commensurate expansion of this body.’

Blatter also repeated he has offered more women on the ExCo, saying FIFA was not a ‘men-only’ club.

Burundi’s Lydia Nseka sits alone as a female full member of the ExCo — the only woman in the 111-year history of the organization to attain that post.—Reuters

Firefighters battle massive blazes from Alaska to drought-hit California

JUNEAU, (Alaska)/Phoenix, 20 June — Firefighters were working on Friday to contain several massive wildfires raging from Alaska to drought-hit California that have forced hundreds of people to evacuate from their homes and damaged dozens of structures.

The so-called Lake Fire in a mountainous national forest outside Los Angeles had swelled to 11,000 acres (4,500 hectares) on Friday from 7,500 acres (3,000 hectares) the day before as it scorched old-growth timber on steep slopes and threatened some 150 structures, the San Bernardino County Fire Department said.

Firecrews backed by bulldozers and water-dumping aircraft are battling to keep the blaze from crossing Highway 38 near the small city of Big Bear, the department said.

Highway 38 and other roads remained closed in the area and officials ordered people away from vacation cabins and camp sites.

In Alaska, about 900 firefighters were battling two major blazes in a state that has many active wildfires ranging from a few acres to 10,000 acres (4,000 hectares), officials said.

A fire in Willow, about 40 miles (65 kms) north of Anchorage, has charred slightly more than 7,000 acres (2,800 hectares).

The second major fire, in Sterling, about 140 miles (225 kms) south of Anchorage on the Kenai Peninsula, has blackened more than 7,500 acres (3,000 hectares).

The fires have destroyed about 40 structures, forced nearly 1,000 people from their homes and restricted traffic on a major highway this week.

“We are surrounded by fire right now,” said National Weather Service meteorologist Matthew Clay in Anchorage, adding that smoke from both fires could bear down on the city amid shifting winds. “If we get a stable air mass, we are looking at getting smoked-in potentially.”

In Arizona, fire officials said they have gained control of a 1,400-acre (600-hectare) brush fire that once threatened the 2,000-person community of Kearny, about 90 miles (145 kms) southeast of Phoenix, and forced hundreds of evacuations.

The blaze was 40 percent contained as of midday Friday and all evacuees have been allowed to return to their homes.

But crews on Friday continued to work the fire’s perimeter to extinguish any hot spots, with full containment expected in a few days, officials said.

The so-called Kearny River Fire broke out on Wednesday and burned through a dry riverbed heavy with volatile salt cedar trees.—Reuters
Ecstasy in Auckland as Serbia make history

AKLANTUCK, 20 June—In the end, the tournament full of surprises and late, late drama had a fitting conclusion. Serbia, playing in the FIFA U-20 World Cup for the first time as an independent nation, will leave as its champions. That is the remarkable outcome after a dramatic and enthralling final day of action that thrilled a sell-out, 25,000-plus crowd at Auckland’s North Harbour Stadium.

Nemanja Maksimovic’s decisive, 118th-minute goal settled the final 2-1 in favour of the delicious Serbians, and left five-time champions Brazil to settle for silver.

Mali will also return home with metal after edging an all-African third-place play-off with Senegal. That game’s final tallies of four goals and two saved penalties give an indication, but only that, of the excitement, drama and attacking football that both sides provided. Each head for home having provided fresh reminders of why they have been such fan favourites here in New Zealand. Mali’s hero, Adama Traore, also headed the list of award-winners, picking up the adidas Golden Ball award as the tournament’s best player. The Golden Glove and Golden Boot, recognising the leading keeper and top scorer, went to Serbia’s Predrag Rajkovic and Viktor Kovalenko of Ukraine respectively.

Results

Match for Third Place
Senegal 1-3 Mali
Final
Brazil 1-2 Serbia

Goals of the day
Senegal-Mali, 1-2, Adama Traore (83)

When Adama Traore found the top corner with an inch-perfect, 25-yard free-kick, the thought

Adama Traore of Mali wins the adidas Golden Ball, Danilo of Brazil wins the Silver ball and Sergej Milinkovic of Serbia wins the Bronze ball after the FIFA U-20 World Cup Final match between Brazil and Serbia at North Harbour Stadium on 20 June, 2015 in Auckland, New Zealand.—FIFA

that he would go on to top it — with just 16 minutes left to play — would have seemed dubious. But Mali and their richly talented No19 have made a habit of surprising us all, and today was no different. The three Senegal defenders who were surmounting Traore, ushering him down a blind alley, were more stunned than anyone when he suddenly turned 180 degrees to wriggle clear of them all. Then, they could only look on aghast as, somehow, with his weaker foot, he struck the perfect shot — flat, powerful and bound for the far corner from the minute it left his boot.

Brazil-Serbia, 1-1, Andreas Pereira (74)

Reclaiming Brazil’s lost reputation for fantasy football has been a stated aim of Rogerio Micale’s side, and goals like this will go a long way towards achieving that. Like Traore, Andreas Pereira seemed to be going nowhere but, similar to his Malian counterpart, he made light work of three pursuers. Milan Gajic, Andrija Zivkovic and match-winner Maksimovic were all left in his wake as the substitute capped a mazy, jinking dart in from the left with a clever change of direction and a delicious curling finish.

Memorable moments
Dedication amid the deluge

They may be outnumbered by their rugby and cricket counterparts, but there is no doubting the passion of New Zealand’s football enthusiasts. That devotion was definitely put to the test today, as Auckland’s saved its worst weather for the day when everyone had hoped the sun would shine. In a stadium with three uncovered stands and most of the fans open to the elements, the heavy, incessant rain that fell throughout the third-place play-off and returned late in the final was the most unwelcome of visitors. It was impressive, though, that Auckland’s sudden supporters remained undeterred, sitting hardly through the downpour to enjoy their favourite sport. Fortunately, they were rewarded for that stoicism, with some thrilling on-field fare helping to make up for the conditions overhead.

Diarr, Traore help a friend in need

Falye Sacko will return to Mali tomorrow as a hero, part of the side that broke new ground and brought home the bronze. But the midfielder will be as relieved as he is overjoyed at that status — for he could so easily have become a national villain.

Missing one penalty was bad enough; conceding another at the other end just ten minutes later was positively calamitous. Fortunately for Sacko, he was bailed out by two inspired colleagues, with his errors all but forgotten due to Adama Traore’s brilliant goals and Djigjig Dijau Diarra’s outstanding penalty save.

Coach knows best

Though Boschilia’s U-20 World Cup has contained much to be proud of, his reaction to being substituted against Serbia — a bad-tempered booing of Brazil’s dug-out — was his finest moment. And if the midfielder felt his coach had erred in replacing him, he was soon proved wrong. It took just eight minutes, after all, for his replacement to provide the magic that Brazil had been lacking for so long. Boschilia’s embrace with his coach after Pereira’s strike told a story of a valuable lesson learned.

A fantastic final

In the red corner, we had horns, waving flags and bunting, chanting supporters. In the yellow, whistles, drums, balloons, dancers and the unmistakable sounds of Samba. If New Zealanders wanted a taste of the atmosphere that only a football World Cup can deliver, this was it. The colour was dazzling, the noise near-incessant, and Kiwi neutrals were clearly — and rightly — en-raptured. And while the Europeans were let down, the South Americans disconsolate, both groups of supporters contributed to a wonderful occasion.

The stat

118 — Nemanja Maksimovic’s late, late drama had a fitting conclusion.

The words

“I’m very happy to have sent a message in this tournament — a message of unity, of passion and playing with heart. And I hope we can help unite our people to live a peaceful kind of life after 20 years of struggle.” Veljko Paunovic, Serbia

coach.—FIFA

Chile crush Bolivia 5-0, finish top of Copa Group A

SANTIAGO, 20 June—Hosts Chile brushed aside Bolivia 5-0 at the Copa America on Friday to finish top of Group A and ensure they remain in the capital Santiago for their quarter-final. Midfielder Charles Aranguiz scored twice and Arsenal striker Alexis Sanchez grabbed his first goal of the tournament as Chile cruised to victory in a one-sided encounter at the national stadium.

Full back Gary Medel added a fourth, Bolivian captain Ronald Raldes scored an own-goal and Sanchez hit the woodwork twice against a Bolivia side that offered little in the way of resistance. Despite their defeat, Bolivia finished second in the group and also progress to the last eight.

Ecuador, who beat Mexico 2-1 earlier, will have to wait for other results to see if they go through, while Mexico, who came to the Copa with an understrength side, are eliminated.

“It’s been a fantastic final, a fantastic tournament. It was a fantastic performance,” said manager Jorge Valdivia.

“It’s bittersweet to lose, but we go home disappointed.” Bolivia’s coach Gerardo Pelusso.

The Chileans continued their domination after the break, Aranguiz scoring his second from close range in the 66th minute.

Medel, a hard-tackling defender, capped a fine night for the hosts with a goal worthy of a striker, chesting down a pass from Valdivia before chipping a delicate lob over the oncoming goalkeeper.

Raldes then deflected a right cross into his own goal to complete a miserable night for the Bolivians.

Chile’s victory comes at the end of a difficult week dominated by news of their midfielder Arturo Vidal, who was charged with drink-driving after spending an afternoon off from the Copa drinking at a casino.—Reuters