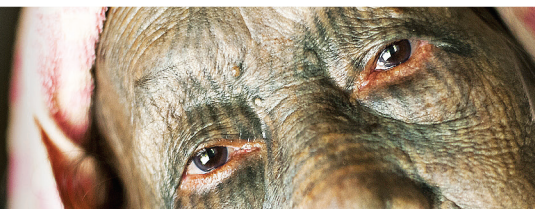


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NEWS 4

New batch of political prisoners released

The government last week freed 69 political prisoners, but activists say 60 remain in jail and have requested a stop to further arrests of protesters.

FEATURE 6

Women soldiers of the KIA speak out

Thousands of women have enlisted in the Kachin Independence Army to support the struggle for ethnic rights in Kachin State.

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Sino-Myanmar pipeline nearly done

The pipeline is 96 percent complete, but delays in building a refinery in China mean oil is unlikely to flow by the target date of December 31.

PROPERTY 26

Foreign condo ownership considered

Foreign ownership of condominiums could help spur higher standards of construction and property development, industry experts say.



Monks participate in demonstrations against the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) near Yangon City Hall on November 12.

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PHOTO: BOOTHEE

Monks greet Organisation of Islamic Cooperation with protests

The OIC's visit to Myanmar last week prompted an angry response from some Buddhists, who accusing the Islamic organisation of being biased in favour of Muslims in their assessment of inter-communal strife in Myanmar. The OIC has expressed concern as 240 people were killed and 240,000 were left homeless by the violence between Buddhists and Muslims in Rakhine State last year.

Flow of wine slows to a trickle

As authorities crack down on wine imports, sources in Myanmar's food and beverage industry are complaining that outdated trade regulations only encourage illegal import practices. **BUSINESS 20-21**

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online editor **Kayleigh Long** |
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THE INSIDER: The local lowdown & best of the web

OH, I SEE
Opposition to the visit from the Organisation of Islamic Councils was spread online last week, with many supporters of controversial monk U Wirathu taking to his Facebook fan page to post some fairly virulent anti-Islam memes. While U Wirathu himself was not directly responsible for any of the images posted, it would seem his fanbase has misunderstood his message of peace. U Wirathu's author bio on the Amazon Kindle store, which hosts his book of collected articles and musings on "injustices done by senior monks

backed by Burmese regime towards monks and people", describes him as a former political prisoner who is active in promoting "freedom of religion", "human rights" and "freedom of expression".

STOP TONY
Former UK Prime Minister Tony Blair, ex-US President Bill Clinton and the EU's Lady Ashton enjoyed a power meal at Monsoon restaurant in downtown Yangon on November 14. Sources say Clinton lived up to his jovial reputation, happily posing for photographs. However, in the

words of one fellow diner, Tony Blair "skulked off".

While it's entirely possible he was simply tired, or camera-shy, what diners may not realise is they missed out on a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to carry out a citizen's arrest – and collect a handsome bounty in the process.

According to *arrestblair.org*, four people have made serious attempts to do just this since 2010. The website accepts donations, which allows a bounty to be paid out for each successful arrest. At last count, the prize kitty stood at some £8,500, but the website hasn't been updated since March, throwing the whole movement's credibility into question. Prior to that time, they had been more active in providing information on his whereabouts for would-be citizen crimefighters.

The "Arrest Blair" push intends to draw attention to what some perceive as his role in "crimes against peace". The site administrators concede that attempts to arrest Blair are "at this stage, largely symbolic", but insist they will carry "great political resonance". Specific instructions for how one might carry out a citizens' arrest on a world leader can be found on the website.

GOOGLE WINS ITS DAY IN COURT
In a win for advocates of democratising information on the web, Google has emerged victorious from a court battle against major publishers over its mind-boggling Google Books project. Currently, the site provides some 20 million books for free – edging closer to the company's stated goal of digitising *every book ever printed*. The verdict, which deems Google's scanning a case of "fair use", ensures the ongoing viability of the project that costs some \$40 million to run annually. If Google had lost the case, it could have faced as much as \$3 billion in damages.

The judge presiding over the case described Google's project as an invaluable research tool that "advances the progress of the arts and sciences, while maintaining respectful consideration for the rights of authors and other creative individuals, and without adversely impacting the rights of copyright holders".

When Myanmar was Burma...

Archival material provided by Pansodan Gallery



A Burmese astrological chart. Date unknown.



Khine Thazin Yu Wah
for *NOW!* magazine.
Photo: Htet Aung Kyaw (StudioHak)

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Islamic organisation’s visit to Rakhine spurs demonstrations

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BUDDHIST monks were among thousands of demonstrators who thronged downtown Yangon on November 12 in protest against a visit from the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) in connection with the communal violence in Rakhine State.

Protestors said the visit of representatives of the world’s largest Islamic bloc could complicate the inter-communal strife here.

During the one-hour protest, demonstrators walked from Shwedagon Pagoda’s east gate to Sule Pagoda, chanting slogans, holding placards reading “Get Out” and “We don’t want conditional assistance”, and demanding compliance with the 1982 immigration laws.

Ashin Parmaukka of Magway Pariyatti, a Buddhist publishing house, said the OIC delegation would use their visit to arouse international opinion against Myanmar, and predicted that its members would speak only with Muslim victims of alleged Buddhist attacks.

Several protestors told *The Myanmar Times* they objected not to the visit but to the proposal to set up an OIC office in Myanmar. “The OIC never helps people of other religions wherever they have an office,” said Ashin Parmaukka.

U Hla Saw, secretary of the Rakhine Nationalities Development Party, said the OIC seemed to focus more on Myanmar than it ought to. “I don’t think this is an honest move. It hinders Myanmar’s transition,” he said.

However, he added that he welcomed the visit of the team so that they could see the real situation in Myanmar. “They will see that we have religious freedom here, including the right to pray and to celebrate religious festivals.”

Minister for Rakhine Affairs of Yangon Region U Zaw Aye took part in the protest and said, “I’m here as a Rakhine man, not as a minister.”

The OIC group, which includes the organisation’s chief Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu, met one of Myanmar’s



Protesters in Sittwe, Rakhine State, demonstrate against the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation on November 15. Photo: AFP

vice presidents in the Nay Pyi Taw on November 14, accompanied by ambassadors from Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Bangladesh and Malaysia.

They discussed the “peace and stability of Rakhine State and rehabilitation” in the region, according to the state-run *New Light of Myanmar*.

The OIC has expressed concerns as 240 people were killed and 240,000 were left homeless by the violence between Buddhists and Muslims in Rakhine State last year.

Reports said the delegation would travel to violence-struck Rakhine State on November 15.

“We want to find a way to help build communication,” Ark Hananto, an Indonesian member of the OIC delegation, told AP news agency.

Buddhist monks also led rallies against the OIC on November 15 as delegates from the Muslim body toured Rakhine State, where reli-

gious violence has torn communities asunder.

The group is treated with deep suspicion by Buddhists in Rakhine State, where communities are now almost completely segregated on religious grounds after last year’s unrest, with Muslims making up the vast majority of the 140,000 people displaced.

“No OIC in Rakhine land, respect our sovereignty,” one protesting monk told AFP as hundreds of demonstrators converged on the airport in the state capital Sittwe on November 15.

The delegation met local officials inside the airport before visiting remote areas by helicopter, an official told AFP.

The OIC visit came soon after a US, Swiss and British delegation visited Rakhine State and concluded that the humanitarian situation there “remains dire”, over a year after the first outbreak of unrest.

In a statement released on No-

vember 14, the group said that health services and access to education and livelihoods in some Muslim camps visited “were deeply inadequate to address even the most basic needs”.

Humanitarian workers have faced threats and harassment for trying to help Muslim camps.

The statement said inequality between Muslim and Buddhist Rakhine camps was “clearly evident”.

“The international community will never accept any interference with the delivery of life-saving humanitarian assistance in any context, or violence against an entire people in the name of national identity or any other circumstance,” it said.

“Fear and insecurity are not a licence for abuse, aggression or injustice toward others.”

A recent eruption of violence in Thandwe in Rakhine State left six Muslims dead, including a 94-year-old woman. – *with AFP*

Sectarian violence sickens world: Clinton

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THE world is tired of ethnic killing, a former US president told a Myanmar audience last week. Bill Clinton, the 42nd president of the United States, was speaking at the Myanmar Peace Center on November 14.

Relating his experiences during his 1993-2001 term with the genocides in Rwanda and the Balkans, Mr Clinton said people could be taught to consider diversity a source of pride in their country. “It’s not particularly easy but very important,” he said.

The former president also stressed the importance of having confidence in government and the difficulties of decision-making in conflict resolution.

“No one makes the right decision all the time. We all have different knowledge and imperfect capacity,” he said.

On his first trip to Myanmar, Mr Clinton said, “I’ve been in situations where people wouldn’t listen to each other, because they were so sure they were right. They were afraid they would somehow be smaller if they agreed with someone they had been disagreeing with.”

Mr Clinton, who founded the NGO the Clinton Foundation with his wife Hillary, said he would do his best to speed Myanmar’s transition to a democratic, inclusive, economically successful and politically unified country.

Speaking of sectarian violence, he said, “The world is sickened whenever they hear of sectarian violence. They are tired of people killing each other over such differences.”

Though Myanmar was a highly diverse country, he said, all humans on earth were genetically 99.5 percent identical.

During his stay, Mr Clinton met with President U Thein Sein, hluttaw speakers and Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. He did not take questions after the 40-minute speech.

Ko Ko Gyi, one of the leaders of the 1988 student uprising who was in the audience, said Mr Clinton’s speech left him with “a lot to think about” for Myanmar’s future.

State-run newspaper *New Light of Myanmar* reported on November 15 that the Clinton Foundation and the Myanmar government would work closely together on the internal peace process, the agriculture sector, economics, preventable diseases and child mortality, and would also cooperate on boosting agriculture-based business in conflict areas.

Civil society leaders say registration too restrictive

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CIVIL society groups are calling for more breathing space. In line with President U Thein Sein’s pledge to work more closely with the civil sector, organisations are calling for restrictions on their membership and activities to be loosened.

Local NGOs started lobbying MPs to relax restrictive rules last year, saying registration under the current 1998 law was time-consuming

and expensive, and excluded the clergy, members of political parties or former political prisoners from membership in such groups.

On November 5, the new draft law was submitted to the parliament by the Pyithu Hluttaw’s Public Affairs Management Committee.

In a press release issued last week, civil society leaders called for further amendments to simplify the law and to make it easier for their organisations to operate, including registration with the Ministry of

Social Welfare instead of the Ministry of Home Affairs. They also want more cooperation from township officials.

“Under the new law, registered organisations would have the right to file a lawsuit, raise funds, open a bank account, own property or assets, and protect their own logo, trademark and uniform,” said Ko Hlaing Myat, a program manager at the Local Resource Centre, a Yangon-based body that works to improve operating conditions for civil

society groups.

“We prefer the latest version of the registration bill. But we don’t want to register with the Ministry of Home Affairs,” Daw Nwe Zin Win, chair of 3M Network, told reporters in Yangon on November 13. She added that Mandalay-based organisations would also be consulted on the new law.

“We are going to meet the Public Affairs Management Committee and hluttaw representatives before the law is approved,” she said.

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EU-Myanmar Task Force holds first meet

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CREDIBLE, transparent and inclusive elections in 2015 and a review of the 2008 constitution will be key milestones in Myanmar's transition to democracy, said a joint statement released at the conclusion of the first plenary session of the European Union-Myanmar Task Force in Nay Pyi Taw on November 15.

The statement also stressed that the release of all political prisoners by the end of this year will be an important landmark toward achieving democracy.

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, who participated in the two-day session, said the current constitution must be amended to create a comfortable business environment that will facilitate sustainable and responsible investment in Myanmar.

"If you want to attract responsible investment to Burma, you must be aware of the political situation here, as well as the peace situation, social situation and human rights situation," she said.

"I am not here to discourage investment. I'm here to encourage investment in the right way, in a truly responsible way that will take into consideration the political and legal dimensions of investment ... and that will benefit the people of this country as much as investors will benefit from our country."

During the meetings, hluttaw representatives and members of the EU parliament discussed the role of parliamentary politics in supporting the transition to democracy, promoting reconciliation, and ensuring effective representation and accountability.

The two sides signed a partnership agreement to foster inter-parliamentary cooperation in sharing best practices and enhancing technical assistance to Myanmar.

Isabelle Durant, vice president of the European parliament, said the discussions showed that Myanmar had a "broad and clear commitment to the democratisation process".

"I leave Myanmar with good hopes. The encouraging signals lead us to have even higher expectations on the way to the 2015 elections," she said, adding that the democratic transition in Myanmar cannot be solely centred around economic opportunities and business interests.

The task force statement underlined the importance of countering money laundering and financing of terrorists, and of creating a non-discriminatory investment climate and a strong system of investment protection.

The Myanmar and EU representatives also agreed on the importance of improving access to financing, protecting property rights, increasing skills and training capacities, ensuring corporate social responsibility, stabilising electricity supplies and supporting development of small and medium enterprises (SMEs).

Several agreements were signed concerning SMEs, tourism, mining, financing and development projects.

The European Investment Bank (EIB) and the Central Bank of Myanmar also signed an agreement on EU financing for Myanmar. The EIB will focus on infrastructure projects such transport and energy, as well as on environmental projects and credit loans to selected local banks for lending to SMEs.

The lending volumes are expected to fluctuate between 30-100 million euro (US\$40.5-135m) a year after final legislative approval.

"We will sign the framework agreement in February 2014," said U Set Aung, vice president of Myanmar Central Bank.

According to other agreements, Myanmar will become one of the leading beneficiaries of EU development cooperation in Asia from 2014 to 2020. During that period, EU funding for Myanmar will increase by about 20 percent to 90 million euro a year.

The EU has provided development assistance and humanitarian aid to Myanmar since 1996. In the past two years, the EU has pumped nearly 153 million euro into various development projects throughout the country.

Club helps fellow students

STUDENTS at Horizon International School in Mandalay have started a club - not to exclude others, but to offer them a helping hand.

The Horizon Terrific Helpers Club raises funds for orphanage schools. Over the past two years, the club has made about 20 separate contributions to orphanage schools in the area.

"We donated some supplies they needed, such as clothes, slippers, stationery and blankets," teacher Suade Ozsariglu said on November 9, during a donation of stationery to students at No 27 Basic Education Middle School.

"We also held some fun activities with kids. We have had picnics, zoo and amusement park trips."

Some brave 10th graders last year

even stepped up to the head of the class, teaching English lessons to their younger peers at the Phaung Daw Oo orphanage.

Ms Ozsariglu said the students are "very enthusiastic" about the visits. "They have great fundraising ideas and are always willing to help out whenever they are asked. I am really proud of them."

"Our students are also happy when these activities take place," said Daw Kay Thi Mya, headmaster of No 27 BEMS. "When we told our students that the donors would come, they were enthusiastic to come to school that day. There should be more of these kinds of activities." - *Phyo Wai Kyaw and Hlaing Kyaw Soe*



Prisoners are released in Mandalay on November 15. Photo: AFP

Prisoners freed, but 60 remain behind bars

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PRESIDENT U Thein Sein last week released 69 political prisoners, but 60 more are still languishing in jail, said U Ye Aung, a member of the Committee for Scrutinising Remaining Prisoners of Conscience.

"The government released the prisoners according to our proposed list, but 60 are still in prison," said U Ye Aung, who is also a member of the Former Political Prisoners (FPP) advocacy group.

Among the prisoners set free on November 15 were two grandchildren of former General Ne Win, who were released from Insein Prison in Yangon.

"Zwe Ne Win [one of General Ne Win's grandsons] sent the names of [arrested grandsons] U Aye Ne Win and U Kyaw Ne Win to the committee. We agreed to put their names on the list after discussing whether they should be freed or not," said U Ye Aung.

U Aye Ne Win and U Kyaw Ne Win were arrested in 2002 under the military regime of Senior General Than Shwe and sentenced to life in prison for allegedly attempting to stage a coup against the government.

Also released last week was Daw Naw Ohn, who had been arrested earlier this year during protests marking the nine-month anniversary of the brutal police crackdown against activists at Letpadaung copper mine in Sagaing Region.

On August 29 she was sentenced by a court in Monywa to two years in prison. While in jail she staged a hunger strike.

"I was surprised when I learned that I would be set free from prison," she said. "I always stand up for the rights of people, and I'll continue to stand like this."

Aside from Insein and Monywa jails, prisoners were also released last week from Myingan, Tharyawady, Taungoo, Shwebo, Patheingyi, Thant, Ingapu, Bhamo, Myitkyi-

'The government has gradually granted amnesties, but at the same time they have been charging activists involved in peaceful protests.'

U Thet Oo

Former Political Prisoners (FPP)

na, Thibaw, Kengtung, Kyaukpyu, Thandwe and Boothidaung.

Most of the prisoners had been convicted for high treason or offences under the Unlawful Association Act, which bars contact with illegal organisations; section 18 of the Peaceful Assembly and Peaceful Protest Law; or section 505(b) of the Penal Code.

Meanwhile, activists have urged the government to release the remaining prisoners and to make no new arrests.

President U Thein Sein pledged on July 15 to release all political prisoners by the end of this year. He ordered the current amnesty the day before he left for Brunei to attend the 23rd ASEAN Summit.

"There are still 60 political prisoners who are entitled to release according to our criteria for 'political prisoners of conscience'," U Ye Aung said. "There are also additional names we have received, and [the Committee for Scrutinising Remaining Prisoners of Conscience] needs to discuss whether to add more of these names to the list."

Although the FPP welcomed the fresh amnesty, the group's spokesperson, U Thet Oo, called on the government to refrain from arresting anyone else taking part in peaceful protest campaigns.

"The government has gradually granted amnesties, but at the same time they have been charging activists involved in peaceful protests, usually under section 18 of the Peaceful Assembly and Peaceful Protest Law," he said.

"Authorities should not take action against those who are showing their desires and who are calling for their rights in line with democratic ways."

According to the FPP's list, more than 200 activists around the country have been charged under section 18 and are facing trial.

"It's crucial to ensure that new prisoners of conscience do not take the place of old ones," U Thet Oo said.

The government has granted amnesty for 29,820 prisoners since U Thein Sein took office on March 30, 2011.



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UN celebrates children’s rights



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TWENTY civil society organisations will come together in Yangon this week to mark the UN’s Universal Children’s Day, celebrated annually worldwide on November 20 but being marked for only the second time in Myanmar.

The National Races Village in Thaketa township will play host to celebrations from 9am to 4pm on November 20. Events will include a play put on by United Against Child Trafficking that will address children’s rights, abuse, domestic violence, human trafficking and homelessness – and involves child actors.

U Aung Myo Min, executive director of Equality Myanmar and a member of the event’s organising team, said the celebration aims to promote the objectives outlined in the UN’s Convention on the Rights of the

‘Children should know their rights and practise them in correct ways.’

U Aung Myo Min
Executive director of Equality Myanmar



Children walk in Laiza, Kachin State.
Photo: Boothee

Child (CRC), which was introduced in 1989.

“There are laws to protect children [in Myanmar], but they’re weak in practice. The country ratified the convention [on July 16, 1991] but still needs to do more to address current issues including child abuse and trafficking,” U Aung Myo Min said.

Although the country is transitioning to democracy, rights activists still face challenges in certain areas of the country, he said.

“When you work to feed children, it is no problem. But when your program is titled ‘rights’, there are challenges dealing with local authorities,” U Aung Myo Min said.

He said the participation of children is essential for implementing the convention but most do not know about it – or the fact that they are accorded certain rights by international law.

“We need to train children to raise their voices. Children should know their rights and practise them in correct ways,” U Aung Myo Min said.

Daw Wah Wah Lin Htun, another Children’s Day organiser, said government officials, NGOs and civil society organisations need to increase

their cooperation and coordination on children’s issues – a message organisers say they will raise at the ASEAN People’s Forum, to be held in Nay Pyi Taw in March 2014.

But Daw Wah Wah Lin Htun said this week’s event won’t only be about policy. A number of child-friendly activities are planned to ensure the message doesn’t go over children’s heads.

“The day is a special chance for children to raise their voices and express their challenges, feelings and dreams,” she said. “We hope the event will make children happy.”

Police designate tow-away zones

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THE Yangon City Development Committee and traffic police have established no-stopping zones on 37 streets in Yangon, with the aim of reducing congestion in high-traffic areas.

Police Lieutenant Zaw Myo Tun from No 2 Deputy Traffic Police Force (Yangon) said the no-stopping zones were established on November 11 on 16 north-south roads and 21 east-west roads in the city.

“We picked roads where drivers face heavy traffic jams. We will levy fines and tow away vehicles that break the new rules,” he said.

He said the regulations were intended to prevent multi-lane roads from being reduced to a single lane because of parked cars. “We will return these roads to their original width and reduce traffic jams.”

Pol Lt Zaw Myo Tun said that before the cars are cleared, police will make three warning announcements over a loudspeaker. “If the car owners do not move their vehicles during this time, a tow truck will take the cars to a police parking lot.”

U Myo Lwin, deputy head of YCDC’s Road and Bridges Department, said drivers whose cars have been towed must go to court to pay a fine ranging from K10,000 to K400,000, plus tow-truck fees, before they can reclaim their vehicles.

Education policy in planning stages

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THE improvement of the education sector is a high priority for Myanmar, with the government-backed Educational Promotion Work Committee now cooperating with a parliamentary working group on education reform to draft a National Education Policy, an official from the Department of Higher Education (Lower Myanmar) said last week.

“Although there have been a lot of activities for the improvement of education in the past, we are now more focused on the implementation of education reform because we now have more opportunities to improve the sector,” said U Zaw Htay, director general of the department.

He was speaking at a meeting on education reform held at Yangon University’s Diamond Jubilee Hall on November 10. Members of the Educational Promotion Work Committee, the parliamentary task force and an advisory committee took part.

The meeting was also attended by Vice President Sai Mauk Kham, who

said the first workshop on education under the new government was held in May 2011, while a comprehensive education sector review (CESR) was conducted in October 2012 to strengthen reforms.

A series of discussions since then has resulted in efforts to develop a five-year plan with 19 priorities, as well as a 20-year plan (2011-2012 to 2030-2031) with 13 priorities.

U Myo Thein Gyi, director general of the Department of Myanmar Education Research Bureau, said the government was dedicated to “effective implementation of practical education reform”.

“[President U Thein Sein] has pointed to education as a sector that needs to achieve international standards to fulfill the needs of the people,” he said.

“We are studying the advantages and disadvantages of our current education system, and we’re studying the best ways to implement reforms. The education workshops are very useful in helping us make these plans.”

U Than Oo, retired director-general of the Basic Education Department,

said November 10 marked the first time the Educational Promotion Work Committee and the parliamentary working group on education reform had held free discussions with one another.

“We must make plans for immediate and long-term action on education reform, and we need to determine how to implement these plans,” he said.

He added that he appreciated the government’s commitment to increasing the national education budget.

Sai Mauk Kham said at the November 10 meeting that U Thein Sein had allocated 5.24 percent of the total spending for all ministries to the Ministry of Education, the fifth-highest amount among the 30 ministries.

U Ohmn Thwin, a geology professor at Yangon University, said that presenting a National Education Policy to parliament would take many steps.

“I think it will take a long time, but I can’t say exactly how long. But I think the results will be good, and the education sector will be well regulated,” he said.

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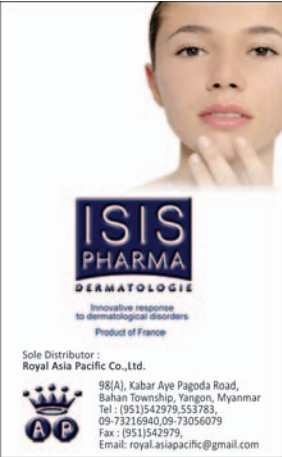
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Views

Let's talk about sex

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THIS country needs to have a conversation about child sex tourism – and sooner rather than later. Myanmar's nascent tourism sector presents great opportunities as well as significant challenges and risks. While most of these issues are well recognised and often discussed, the same cannot be said for this emerging problem. Child sex exploiters are looking toward Myanmar as their activities are increasingly being restricted by authorities elsewhere. We need to recognise this emerging problem and understand we are at a critical juncture in time in which there is potential to curtail the development of this dark side of tourism.

The sexual exploitation of children occurs in most societies – too often within our most trusted social institutions. Generally communities are aware it occurs and develop strategies to either address or ignore it. However, child sex tourism is a different beast. This is a commercially facilitated industry enabled by distorted power relationships between rich foreigners and poor locals. It involves a small but significant number of paedophiles, predominantly Western men, who travel to poor countries and use their status and economic power to gain access to vulnerable children for sexual exploitation. Offenders exploit the vulnerabilities of poor families and communities. They target places where awareness is limited and there are few institutional responses in place to restrict their activities. Myanmar lacks the public awareness and institutional responses required to manage this problem so child sex tourism presents a new and significant danger for vulnerable children in this country.

A recent experience brought to my attention the potential for this industry to develop in Myanmar. The incident took place in a busy and vibrant area of downtown Yangon where locals, expats and tourists mix around tables that line the street. Even late at night the beer and barbeque is in abundance, as are beggars. Seeking some kkyat, a young mother had allowed a tourist to hold her baby boy. Earlier I had seen the man harassing a street kid as he sat in a group of older and intoxicated male



A billboard for a child protection hotline in Cambodia. Photo: Supplied/M'Lop Tapang

friends. The way he handled the child was increasingly inappropriate, as were the gestures his friends were making to an increasingly uncomfortable mother. Sitting at the adjacent restaurant I became concerned about the behaviour of this group. Through exposure to television and public awareness campaigns in the West, I have been conditioned to recognise the behaviour of potential sex offenders. When I saw the situation

respond to this scenario unfolding on a busy Yangon street. A concern for personal safety is legitimate. In the case of foreigners, perhaps the strangeness of being in a different country can distort understandings of appropriate behaviour and responsibilities. Restaurant staff would likely consider that challenging customers could potentially lead to losing their job. As for passers-by, perhaps the concept of “*an-nar*”

As Myanmar opens up, a tiny but significant fraction of tourists will seek opportunities to engage in child prostitution.

taking a turn for the worse, I approached the mother to confirm she wanted her child returned and then forcefully and directly instructed the man to do so. Clutching her child, the woman slipped into the night. With four heavysset and angry men turning in my direction, I did the same.

This incident may illustrate how ill-equipped Myanmar is to deal with this particular type of tourist. One can speculate as to why others did not

explains why people did not intervene. Or it could just be that people just did not care for the well-being of the child and his mother. All these considerations are likely true to varying degrees. Yet Myanmar has been long insulated from foreigners, and the associated development of child sex tourism, so people may not yet confidently differentiate appropriate behaviours from an intent to sexually abuse children.

We should heed the Cambodian

experience as a warning. As Cambodia opened up following decades of conflict and repression, increasing numbers of child sex exploiters entered with the intention of taking advantage of vulnerable children. The country in transition presented an alternative to Thailand and the Philippines where authorities were increasingly clamping down on their activities. The growth of an exploitative industry was enabled by inadequate laws and regulations, and inept and corrupt authorities, as well as limited awareness and understanding of the problem. Authorities, civil society and the public were slow in recognising and responding to this emerging problem. Efforts have since been made to protect vulnerable children in Cambodia, including public awareness campaigns and strengthening protection mechanisms. Tourists and Cambodians working with them are encouraged to report suspicious behaviour to a child protection phone hotline. Western governments have reformed laws to prosecute perpetrators in their home country. Yet child sex tourism persists. The limited success of interventions in Cambodia highlights the difficulties of policing an industry once it has been established.

As Myanmar opens up, a tiny but significant fraction of tourists will seek opportunities to engage in child prostitution. Paedophiles will discuss Myanmar on internet forums. They will see opportunities to exploit this lack of awareness and insufficient responses to their activities. Criminals operating for profit will support them to access vulnerable children. Communities will find it difficult to respond to crimes committed by outsiders who are economically powerful with high freedom of movement. As Myanmar embraces the benefits of tourism and negotiates its challenges, it is critical that the public, tourism industry and policymakers recognise and respond to the real threat of commercially facilitated child sex tourism. The Cambodian experience indicates that child sex exploiters will come here and their activities will become increasingly hard to police. Now is the moment to discuss how to address the issue – before it is too late.

Sean Bain works with an NGO based in Yangon.

Questioning Myanmar's North Korea connection

CURTIS S CHIN

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AS the countdown continues toward the creation of an ASEAN economic community in 2015, the Myanmar government can take understandable pride in the progress made on a range of economic and political fronts this past year since the lifting or suspension of a range of US and European Union sanctions.

With ASEAN leaders loathe to “interfere” in any fellow Southeast Asian nation’s “internal” affairs, however, there has been little talk out of the secretariat in Jakarta about violence across the states of Myanmar’s troubled union, whether Buddhist-Muslim unrest in Rakhine State or military actions displacing thousands of villagers in southern Kachin State.

Little attention also has been given to the issue of Myanmar’s past and present relationship with North Korea.

That’s unfortunate and perhaps shortsighted given North Korea’s continued wild-card role in the Asia and Pacific region’s economic growth.

With Myanmar having taken over the rotating leadership of ASEAN, there will no doubt be growing expectations for the nation to become a responsible stakeholder in, and contributor to, a more peaceful and prosperous region. That should mean continued economic reforms and political progress, as well as concrete steps toward building better lives for all people in Myanmar, regardless of ethnicity or religion.

But, it will also mean asking – and getting answers to – questions about how much has really changed since the days of military rule when it comes to the state of Myanmar’s relationship with North Korea.

While expressing support for military engagement between the US and Myanmar, Keith Luse, a respected former US Senate Foreign Relations Committee staff member, raised 10 questions about Myanmar’s dealings with North Korea during a recent forum at the Heritage Foundation in Washington.

Policy makers interested in a peaceful and prosperous Asia-Pacific region, as well as those who, as I do, support greater engagement with Myanmar,

should join Luse in seeking answers to this list of important questions.

What is the complete list of the multiple military and other projects where North Korean technicians and officials have been present or working inside Myanmar during the last 13 years?

Which of the projects or facilities where North Koreans have been or are present have or had a role in the development of Myanmar’s missile program, nuclear program or both?

What has been the role of North Korean trading companies in the development of Myanmar’s nuclear and missile programs?

To what degree has China’s complicity with the expansion of the North Korea-Myanmar military relationship been raised with the Chinese by the US, EU and others in the international community?

What has been or is China’s direct role, officially and unofficially, in the development of Myanmar’s nuclear and missile programs?

What is the total list of countries that have, knowingly or unknowingly, assisted Myanmar with the development of

its nuclear or missile programs?

To what degree has North Korea’s aiding and expanding of Myanmar’s military capabilities been raised with North Korea by the US, the EU and others in the international community?

What is the full inventory of military equipment and weapons, whether submarines or defense radar systems, provided or to be provided by North Korea to Myanmar?

Has the presence of multiple North Korean trading companies within Myanmar established another front and route for North Korea’s global proliferation capabilities?

And critically, amid growing engagement with much of the world, why are Myanmar’s leaders waffling on terminating, and making transparent and clear such termination of, the military relationship with North Korea?

Perhaps, Luse states, Myanmar’s leaders now believe that “time is on their side” – that the international community, whether the US or the EU, will swallow concerns and put aside any

MORE ON NEWS 9

CONTINUED FROM NEWS 8

questions about the North Korea military connection given their eagerness to offset China's business and development influence within Myanmar.

Recent history has shown that the US and indeed the United Nations have failed in stopping North Korea's nuclear ambitions and missile capabilities. Let us hope that nascent political and economic reforms, as well as near-term opportunities, in Myanmar do not blind the international community to the need to bring accountability and transparency to any North Korean military dealings in and with Myanmar.

Understandably, businesses, development bankers and aid agencies, whether Japanese, European or American, are eager to join what may well be a mad rush into Myanmar in their efforts to gain competitive advantage.

But looking the other way on human rights violations or sweeping under the carpet any North Korea-Myanmar dealings is neither in the interest of the international community, the people of Myanmar or ASEAN in the long term. There are many things to applaud in Myanmar's steps forward after years of isolation. The veil of secrecy that remains over the nation's dealings with North Korea, however, is not one of them.

Curtis S Chin served as the US ambassador to the Asian Development Bank under Presidents Barack Obama and George W Bush (2007-2010) and is managing director of advisory firm RiverPeak Group, LLC.

Daw Suu takes a battering

Criticism might be unfair but her response to anti-Muslim violence highlights political realities



MYANMAR'S pro-democracy icon Daw Aung San Suu Kyi has been under attack around the world for her acquiescence in the persecution of Muslims in her country.

It is a little unfair. For, if not official state policy, the practice has been tacitly sanctioned for years and foreign governments and the world's media have long ignored it.

The belated outrage over recent pogroms, the latest in Thandwe last month, have centred less on the inaction of President U Thein Sein's government and more on the lack of condemnation by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.

Last week, Maung Zarni, a Myanmar academic at the London School of Economics, said, "It is Suu Kyi, not the ethnic cleansing itself, that the media finds worthy of a headline."

Certainly, there have been lots of headlines that have battered her reputation by exposing her as a

hard-headed politician focused on only one thing: the presidency of her country.

It is a goal that will be almost impossible for her to realise; but she will give it her best shot, even if that means pandering to the ultra-nationalist Buddhist majority.

For sure, the Lady's not for turning on this, as she coldly demonstrated in her October 24 interview with the BBC's Mishal Husain.

Repeatedly asked to condemn anti-Islamic sentiment and the wave of mob-led massacres of Muslims in Myanmar, she declined to do so.

It was not unexpected. As anyone who has visited Myanmar over the past 20 years knows, much of the country's huge Buddhist majority dislikes its small Muslim community with a passion.

So Daw Aung San Suu Kyi is not going to alienate her biggest vote bank by sympathising with a few Muslims no matter what atrocity befalls them. The Lady is not stupid.

She is going to do what her fellow Buddhist compatriots do: stay quiet or dissemble, and in private cheer.

As Thomas Fuller wrote in the

New York Times on November 9, "Hatred for Muslims and the fear of appearing sympathetic to them run so deeply in Myanmar that officials seem afraid even to console the victims' families."

Fuller's report about the latest butchery includes an account of the hacking and burning to death of crippled and elderly Muslims.

Yet local officials and policemen, as well as politicians like Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, decline to condemn the murderous perpetrators for fear of suggesting they are pro-Muslim.

In his story, headlined "Horrendous killings, without an uproar", Fuller noted, "In Myanmar today, deploring the fatal stabbing of a 94-year-old woman is considered taking sides."

His report does lend credence to Maung Zarni's point by focusing on the lack of outrage rather than the institutionalised ethnic genocide itself.

Most Western press do the same, especially after Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's evasive answers to Mishal Husain, which, said David Blair, in the UK's *Daily Telegraph*, "sent a shiver down my spine".

Blair was particularly shocked

when Suu Kyi claimed that Buddhists suffer as much from the fear of violence as Muslims. She was lying. They don't.

Recent anti-Muslim pogroms have occurred in numerous towns across Myanmar, leaving more than 100 dead, displacing tens of thousands, and resulting in many Muslim homes and mosques being destroyed.

Nothing remotely comparable has happened to the Buddhist community.

When Mishal Husain asked her, "Do you condemn the anti-Muslim violence?" Daw Aung San Suu Kyi replied, "I condemn any movement that is based on hatred and extremism."

As Blair aptly said, "How could a winner of the Nobel Peace Prize fail to answer that question with a simple 'Yes'?"

Well, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi could and she will continue to do so because she wants to be president.

But others, especially in this region, can act by not visiting Myanmar till this carnage ends.

Or if a visit must be made, take a big black marker pen and daub a swastika over those foul 969 stickers. But it'll take courage.

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Kachin groups to boycott Daw Suu's Oz visit

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KACHIN organisations in Australia say they will not attend any events related to Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's visit to the country later this month in protest over her "silence" over the conflict in Kachin State.

The National League for Democracy leader and Pyithu Hluttaw MP is due to make her first visit to Australia from November 27 to December 2.

Four Australia-based Kachin groups released a joint statement on November 11 saying they would neither attend events nor show support for the visit. They accused Daw Aung San Suu Kyi of "not only remain[ing] silent but actively whitewashing ... grave human rights violations" taking place in Kachin State.

"Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's continued silence and failure to condemn the actions of the Burmese army and government disregards the suffering of the Kachin people," the groups said in the statement.

"At the hands of the Burmese army countless Kachin lives have been lost, Kachin girls and women raped and gang-raped with impunity, many civilians tortured ruthlessly, ordinary citizens arbitrarily arrested and imprisoned as well as numerous Kachin villages burned to the ground.

During her visit, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi is scheduled to speak at the Opera House in Sydney and receive an honorary degree from University of Technology, Sydney.

She is also expected to attend an HIV/AIDS conference organised by the United Nations and meet members of the Myanmar community.

Lawyers fight for justice amid conflict and oppressive laws

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ON June 12, 2012, four Kachin men were arrested in the forest outside of Myitkyina. Saw Hkaung, 28, Baung Peng, 25, Zaw Baw, 23, and Law Hpar, 42, were all residents of Masay IDP camp. According to their families, on the day of their arrest they were helping move cattle from a farm outside the Kachin State capital.

It was the first work any of the men had had in weeks. They, like many of the IDPs around Myitkyina, are farmers by trade and don't have the technical or trade skills that are in demand in the city.

A group of Tatmadaw soldiers came upon the men and immediately arrested them, their families say. Since that time, they have been held in prison waiting to face court on charges under the Unlawful Association Act. They were due to make their first appearance in court on November 15.

A legacy of the British colonial government, the Unlawful Association Act has been used to target those suspected of having links to or supporting armed ethnic groups. Its use in Kachin State has increased dramatically since fighting between the government and Kachin Independence Army reignited in 2011.

Lawyers in Kachin State say the Unlawful Association Act is one example of government and Tatmadaw using the law as a weapon against

the Kachin people. U Nwang Mung Sen Tu, president of a Kachin lawyer's group in Myitkyina, said that each time he has defended someone against the charge the case has always been completely without merit.

"It's meant to discourage people from dealing with the KIA in any way," he said. The effect, he added, is to scare people from even leaving their home villages.

'I always explain to my clients that the law is not transparent, that it does not always work the way it is supposed to.'

U Mar Lihar
Kachin State lawyer

Baung Peng's 71-year-old grandfather, Baung Dut, said the family lived in northern Shan State before coming to Tar Law Gyi village in 2009. "We've never met a [KIA soldier] in our lives."

Other residents of Masay camp, who, like the four arrested men, have few potential income sources, said the arrests have made everyone fearful of leaving the camp.

U Nwang Mung Sen Tu said this case is far from unique. He is aware of about 90 similar cases of citizens being charged under the act in Kachin

State and northern Shan State but concedes the actual number may be much higher. All of those charged that he knows have been ethnic Kachin. Of the cases he has acted in, two have been thrown out. The rest have resulted in the defendant being found guilty and sentenced to up to two years' jail.

In response to the regular arbitrary detentions and land grabs targeting Kachin villagers, Myitkyina lawyers have stepped in to provide pro bono assistance to defendants and their families. U Nwang Mung Sen Tu's group is assisting in 15 unlawful association cases, as well as a variety of land disputes.

U Mar Lihar, another lawyer based in Kachin, is representing the four men from Masay camp. Speaking to *The Myanmar Times*, he admitted that efforts to fight the Unlawful Association Act charges are often more symbolic than substantive. "I always explain to my clients that the law is not transparent, that it does not always work the way it is supposed to, but I will try my best."

Short of freeing those falsely accused, he said the goal is to have a concrete record of legal abuses in Kachin State for "when real reform happens".

"We will have our records, and others can learn from them" and make sure the same thing never happens again, he said.

Both lawyers said they did not think the law could change meaningfully until the constitution is overhauled. While neither sees this happening any time soon, both say they are committed to working within the system - "even," U Mar Lihar said, "if it's a bad system."

Farmers seek return of land taken for military facility

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FARMERS in Mandalay Region are campaigning parliament to restore lands seized by the military more than 12 years ago that they say are yet to be used for their original purpose.

In 2001, the Department of Military Science and Technology Research seized more than 10,000 acres of farmlands from eight villages in Pyin Oo Lwin township to develop a science research workshop.

That project never materialised, however, and now farmers are asking for the land back, as well as for comprehensive land surveys to be carried out in the area.

Residents are unhappy that despite a military pledge to return confiscated land that is not being used there has been any movement to give back their fields. On November 1 they sent letters to the president and the parliament's land dispute investigation commission to highlight the thousands of acres of farmlands seized by the military.

"Mine Lone village had more than 1000 acres of farmland seized in 2001 without any compensation being paid," said U Phoe Ngwe, a farmer and member of Mine Lone village's farm labour organisation. "So we want back our lands that are not being used for the military project."

The villages affected are Nyaung-pin Tharyar, Kyat Tat, Mine Lone, Par-eal, Pintee, Kone Thar, Kyoe Taung and Myin Zaung.

10,000

Number of acres confiscated in Pyin Oo Lwin for the military research facility

"We worked here from generation to generation ... We paid tax regularly to the government," said Daw Htwe Htwe Yi of Par-eal village. "Though the commander-in-chief of the defence services instructed every military regiment to officially give back military-seized lands to their original owners, we still haven't seen any sign of our lands being returned to our hands. It looks like they are neglecting the farmers."

Residents say land seizures have continued even after the commander-in-chief instructed regiments to return seized lands to farmers earlier this year.

"Even now farmland is being seized by military regiments. These are fields where production is underway but farmers haven't received compensation," said civil society activist Ko Nyi Nyi.

Mandalay Region Chief Minister U Ye Myint said the region government is looking into the issues.

"The government has received investigation reports on military-seized lands. Our administrative body will address the land problems after negotiating with the military," he said. "We also have other reports on land disputes that are not related to the military. I hope these problems can be resolved soon."

— Translation by Zar Zar Soe



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Marketing Executive **F (5)**
လမ်းညွှန်စာအုပ်ထုတ်ဝေရေး ဘဏ္ဍာရေးအဖွဲ့အစည်း
ရုပ်ရှင် အသံအတင်ရိုက် စကားပြော ပြုပြင်သူ၊ တက္ကသိုလ်တစ်ခုမှ သွေးရိုးထားသူ၊ ကြော်ငြာအရောင်း အတွေ့အကြုံ (၂)နှစ် (သို့) လမ်းညွှန်စာအုပ်ထုတ်ဝေရေးလုပ်ငန်း အတွေ့အကြုံရှိသူဖြစ်ရမည်။ * နယ်စပ်သွားနိုင်သူ ဦးစားပေးမည်။

Marketing Assistant **M/F (10)**
ရုပ်ရှင် အသံအတင်ရိုက် စကားပြော ပြုပြင်သူ၊ တက္ကသိုလ်တစ်ခုမှ သွေးရိုးထားသူ၊ ကြော်ငြာအရောင်း အတွေ့အကြုံရှိသူ (သို့) လမ်းညွှန်စာအုပ်ထုတ်ဝေရေးလုပ်ငန်း အတွေ့အကြုံရှိသူ ဖြစ်ရမည်။ * နယ်စပ်သွားနိုင်သူ ဦးစားပေးမည်။

Marketing Executive **F (2)**
မဂ္ဂဇင်း Magazine ဦးစီးဌာန အဖွဲ့အစည်း
ရုပ်ရှင် အသံအတင်ရိုက် စကားပြော ပြုပြင်သူ၊ တက္ကသိုလ်တစ်ခုမှ သွေးရိုးထားသူ၊ ကြော်ငြာအရောင်း အတွေ့အကြုံ (၂)နှစ် (သို့) Magazine စာအုပ်ထုတ်ဝေရေး လုပ်ငန်း အတွေ့အကြုံရှိသူ ဖြစ်ရမည်။ English ဘာသာ အသံအတင်ခံရ / ဖတ် / ပြောဆိုနိုင်သူ ဖြစ်ရမည်။ * ဟိုတယ်နှင့် ဓနိသွားလုပ်ငန်းနယ်ပယ်ရှိ အတွေ့အကြုံရှိသူ အား ဦးစားပေးမည်။

DTP Assistant **M (2)**
Adobe InDesign, Pagemaker, Photoshop ကျွမ်းကျင်စွာ အသုံးပြုနိုင်ရမည်။
လုပ်ငန်းအတွေ့အကြုံ (၁)နှစ်အထက်ရှိသူ ဖြစ်ရမည်။ * ပုံနှိပ်နှင့် စာအုပ်ထုတ်ဝေရေးလုပ်ငန်းတွင် အတွေ့အကြုံရှိပြီး Adobe InDesign ကျွမ်းကျင်သူကို ဦးစားပေးမည်။

Computer Operator **F (2)**
English/မြန်မာလက်တွက်ကျွမ်းကျင်စွာ ရိုက်တတ်ရမည်။ Microsoft Office, PageMaker ကျွမ်းကျင်စွာ အသုံးပြုနိုင်ရမည်။ တက္ကသိုလ်တစ်ခုမှ သွေးရိုးထားသူ ဖြစ်ရမည်။

လျှောက်ထားသူများသည် CV နှင့်အတူ (ခါတ်ပုံနှင့်) ရုပ်ရှင်ထောက်ခံစာ၊ ခုံစာ၊ ထောက်ခံစာ၊ မှတ်ပုံတင်မိတ္တူ၊ ပညာ အရည်အချင်းဆိုင်ရာ မိတ္တူများနှင့် တကွ ဖော်ပြပါပုံစံတို့ လာရောက် လျှောက်ထားနိုင်ပါသည်။

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Migrant rights group slams policy failings

Advertising coming to city circle trains

Peace process must hear voices of women, says Nobel winner



CHERRY THEN

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PEACE in Myanmar is needed now after a half-century of civil war and political unrest among ethnic groups, 2011 Nobel Peace Prize winner Leymah Gbowee of Liberia has told a Yangon forum.

Ms Gbowee's comments came as part of a presentation to the National Women's Dialogue forum, held from November 9 to 11 at Sky Star Hotel in Yangon's Tarmwe township.

The event attracted almost 300 participants, including senior government officials, parliamentarians, and representatives of local and international NGOs and civil society organisations. The opening day concluded with a film, *Pray the Devil Back to Hell*, about the peace movement in Liberia.

Ms Gbowee said it was essential that the peace process addresses all issues related to women, as they are often the hardest-hit by conflict and suffer disproportionately from sexual and human rights abuses.

She said women must take on

more active roles in society not just for their own benefit but for that of other citizens as well. She encouraged women struggling non-violently to ensure the safety of others and for women's rights to participate in peace-building work.

"Women's participation in peace-building work should be more critical and strategic," she said, adding that all involved in the peace movement need to recognise that increased gender equality will help lead to peace.

Attendees heard from six international and 13 Myanmar experts, who presented on topics including implementation of the National Strategic Plan for the Advance-

'Women's participation in peace-building work should be more critical and strategic.'

Leymah Gbowee
Nobel Peace Prize winner

ment of Women; the need for more meaningful participation of women in development and social sectors and peace-building work; and the development and implementation of a National Action Plan on United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325, which calls for respect for the needs of women and girls in post-conflict contexts, as well as related resolutions 1820 and 1888, which relate to sexual violence during conflict.

Participants also asked donors to contribute to projects supporting women's development, especially in ethnic areas.

One of the forum's organisers, Daw May Sabe Phyu, told *The Myanmar Times* that events like the forum help to encourage women at all levels to participate in development. She expressed particular gratitude for Ms Gbowee's involvement.

"It is a special chance for us to meet and share experiences from a woman and peace activist from Liberia. We can learn from the experience of other countries," Daw May Sabe Phyu said.

"Women in Myanmar and all over the world are struggling to achieve [equal] participation. It is a long process but I am optimistic that we are on the way to success."



A man waits for free eye treatment in Meiktila on November 11. Photo: Si Thu Lwin

Companies combine for free eye treatment

SI THU LWIN

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A LOCAL and Singaporean company have combined forces to deliver free eye care to more than 500 patients from the Meiktila area.

Great Wall International and Singapore-based Wilmar Group sponsored the operations from November 11 to 16 at Meiktila Hospital in Mandalay Region.

"I appreciate the two sponsors for giving free aid to patients. It's a very useful contribution for those who normally can't afford to undergo eye

surgery," said Mandalay Region Minister for Social Welfare U Win Hlaing.

Patients received free transfer to the hospital and will also receive free post-operative care.

"I'm very pleased to be able to provide free medical treatment for those who really need it," said Great Wall director U Tin Maung.

U Phoe Pyar, 70, from Thazi township, was among those who received treatment.

"I've had eye surgery before but now I can't see clearly," he said. "I can't afford to get surgery again so I'm very grateful for this free program."

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Warm December to bring rain, fog

He said MPs are also planning to



- Translation by Zar Zar Soe

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FEATURE

A trickle of foreigners follow the road to Mandalay

The city's few dozen expats keep in touch through a Facebook group and regular events at a handful of Western-style bars



JEREMY MULLINS

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IF the flow of Western expatriates filling Yangon's bars, bakeries and beer stations can be described as a flood, then Mandalay is seeing just a trickle of the same.

Long a magnet for Chinese businesspeople, the city is home to just a few dozen Western expatriates – barely a fraction of the thousands of Western teachers, businesspeople and NGO workers clustered in Myanmar's largest city.

Mandalay's Western community has a decidedly different flavour than Yangon's. And since the advent of direct flights to Mandalay, many expats here say they have never bothered to visit Yangon.

The small expatriate community is spread throughout the city, with foreigners often living near the schools at which they teach. They keep in touch through a Facebook group, on which events and meetings at several Western-style bars that have sprung up in the last year are posted.

Natashia Curtis, a Canadian teacher who arrived in Mandalay in early 2012, said the city is a comfortable place to live despite lacking some modern conveniences and having few entertainment options.

With few foreigners in town, the community tends to be quite close-knit, she said. "It's an easy place to live in, even though it's a bit off the beaten track, a bit rustic," she said.

"It's easy to fall into life here."

Ms Curtis and fellow teacher Vila Thach are the administrators of the "In the MandaLoop" Facebook page, which simplifies organising meet-ups and assists expats with answering questions and making local connections.

The group started with barely a dozen members last year as a way to keep in touch, as many foreigners taught at different schools and communication was difficult without mobile phones.

MandaLoop has since grown to 70 members, though far below similar



A group of Westerners take part in water festival celebrations in Mandalay earlier this year. Photo: Phyo Wai Kyaw

expat groups such as the 1130 members for Yangon Connection Facebook group, and 2549 for the Yangon Expat Connection Google group.

It was difficult coordinating expat meet-ups before the Facebook group started and several recent expatriate-oriented restaurants opened their doors, Ms Curtis said. Until recently it had been "entirely possible" to live in Mandalay as an expat without meeting any other foreigners, particularly if not working at a school, she said. While the use of motorbikes means expats in Mandalay are relatively mobile, this also leads to them being spread throughout the city.

Lieutenant Colonel Thaung Zaw, director of Mandalay Region's im-

migration and registration department, said the majority of Western expats in the city are employed as teachers.

Some 500 foreigners on business visas are registered with the city's immigration department and allowed to work locally. Most are Chinese citizens.

As of last month, 25 Americans were registered, along with eight from the United Kingdom, and a handful of Australians, Europeans and Canadians, Lt Col Thaung Zaw said.

"The number is now growing as a result of the government's reform strategy. More foreigners want to come to invest or work in a business," he said.

Mr Thach said that about six Mandalay schools presently hire Westerners as teachers, though many are located far from the traditional tourist haunts. This has meant expatriate life was just as likely to take place in the restaurants and beer stations of 35th Street as the tourist enclaves near the palace and the Indian quarter.

However, this is beginning to change, particularly as several Western-style establishments have opened their doors in recent months and become havens for thirsty foreigners.

Thomas Linton, manager at Hunter's Cafe and Bar on 27th Street, said his establishment initially aimed to cater to the expat and tourist markets.

"I don't want to deter people from having a Myanmar experience. Go and sit in the tea shops and the beer stations. But I'm here for when you need a break and [to] have your beef burger and glass of red wine," he said.

Mr Linton has been living on and off in Myanmar since 1997 and the laid-back Mandalay lifestyle clearly appeals to him.

"I had a high-stress job and lifestyle

in Darwin [Australia], earning a lot more money. But here you can chill out a little more, don't have to worry about things so much," he said. "Expats in Mandalay realise [they're living in] one of the final frontiers."

While Mr Linton initially figured business would come primarily from Westerners, he said he has been surprised the majority of his customers are Myanmar eager for a Western experience.

At Central Park restaurant, further down 27th Street, Wilbur Hong, a Myanmar national who has spent much of his life abroad, said he had not expected to draw so many expat customers when he opened his restaurant earlier this year.

However, a menu heavy on Western fare, a network of expat friends and listing on TripAdvisor all drive foreign business to his restaurant, he said. He estimates about 20 to 30 percent of his customers are foreigners, and almost two-thirds of these are Mandalay-based teachers.

Although attracted to the city's slow pace and lack of traffic jams, Mr Hong conceded that Mandalay might not suit everyone.

"If expats are looking for a city lifestyle, than Mandalay might not be the right place for them. But if the expat is looking to enjoy local Burmese culture, Mandalay is the priority place," he said.

The immigration department's Lt Col Thaung Zaw said the city is keen to receive economic benefits from abroad, with the number of Western businesspeople slowly increasing.

"Westerners [who live in Mandalay] spend so much money," he said.

The major headache for the department has come from foreigners who do not abide by visa regulations. A common example is attempting to work on a tourist visa. Unintentionally

breaking this rule results in a polite request to cease working but a deliberate violation can result in deportation and the individual being placed on a blacklist and refused entry to Myanmar, he said.

Lt Col Thaung Zaw said that foreigners are sometimes heavy drinkers and misunderstandings do occasionally arise between Westerners and locals but the expat community generally receives a warm welcome from Mandalay residents. The city has introduced "Foreigner Care Teams" at the township and ward levels to assist in addressing issues.

'It's an easy place to live in, even though it's a bit off the beaten track, a bit rustic.'

Natashia Curtis

Canadian teacher in Mandalay



Manager Thomas Linton pours a drink at Hunter's Cafe and Bar on Mandalay's 27th Street during a Halloween night in October. Photo: Jeremy Mullins

While Lt Col Thaung Zaw said he believed the growth in expats the city has seen in recent years is likely to continue, there are questions over whether this is positive for Mandalay.

Some say that the city stands to benefit from the influx of expatriates, and the expertise and investment dollars they bring, while others say Mandalay could risk losing a bit of what makes it special.

"If everywhere looked the same, if Mandalay and Yangon looked the same, it'd be like everyone wearing the same t-shirt on a street," said Mr Hong. "How would you feel?"

Classroom comes to teashop kids

FIONA MACGREGOR
newsroom@mmtimes.com

CHILD teashop workers who don't have the opportunity to go school are to have teachers brought to them on a "classroom" bus.

Thousands of school-age youngsters who work long hours in teashops across Myanmar are missing out on even the most basic education. Now the Myanmar Mobile Education Project (myME) is to start offering some of them the chance to undertake regular lessons on the specially converted vehicle.

The brainchild of former 88 Generation student and human rights activist Tim Aye Hardy, the six-month pilot project will begin in Yangon in January. It then expects to expand its stock of mobile classrooms and teaching staff to cover more of the city and, eventually, other parts of Myanmar.

The aim is to provide the teashop children with the opportunity to learn basic literacy, maths, and computer skills in a safe environment where they can also gain self-confidence and critical thinking skills.

Mr Hardy, who left Myanmar for the US in 1989, is being supported in the project by Myanmar academy award-winning actress and campaigner for human rights and democracy, Grace Swe Zin Htaik.

Mr Hardy said he was moved to



The interior of a bus that is being converted into a classroom. Photo: Supplied

help teashop children after returning to Myanmar in December 2011 and hearing their harrowing stories of being forced into indentured servitude. Many children told him they worked 16 hours a day to send money back to relatives in other parts of the country.

"This project is about education and encouraging a change of attitude," he said. "We need to have the teashop owners' and the whole community's support for this as a

movement, as well as giving the children an incentive to learn. True reform can only happen through education."

"We want the children to understand the importance of education and demonstrate to the teashop owners the value in having workers who are educated. By teaching the children basic literacy and math, as well as critical thinking and a little English, it will not only help them have a brighter future, but also be good

for the teashop owners as Myanmar develops and the demand for quality staff grows."

During the pilot period, the mobile classroom will offer lessons in three locations. In each location, two-hour lesson blocks will be run six days a week, with children having the opportunity to attend either beginner or intermediate classes every second day.

The bus is able to accommodate up to 20 pupils at a time, meaning around 120 children will be given access to lessons during the pilot period. The first hour of each session will be spent providing basic literacy and numeracy lessons and the second hour in encouraging critical thinking and confidence-building.

Mr Hardy and the myME support team in the US have been working closely with international education providers to create a curriculum aimed at the specific needs of children working in teashops.

As well as seeking advice from mobile education projects in India and South Africa, the myME team have been collaborating with the New School in New York on the curriculum.

"This project will be a door-opener for access to education and a role model," Grace Swe Zin Htaik said. "It will perform as an entrepreneurship to share teaching know-how that all [stake]holders can use."

No Myanmar dead, missing from typhoon in Philippines

NO Myanmar nationals have been reported missing or killed by Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines, five days after it made landfall, a spokesperson for the consular section of the Myanmar embassy in Manila has told *The Myanmar Times*.

"We have not received any reports from here [the Philippines] or from the government in Myanmar" of missing Myanmar nationals, the official said.

The embassy official said about 400 Myanmar nationals live in the Philippines. The majority are students studying at universities in the capital Manila, which was largely spared the worst effects of the storm, with only minor damage around the city.

However, in the town of Tacloban, the provincial capital of Leyte province, more than 4400 have been confirmed dead as a result of the typhoon, which made landfall in the Philippines on November 7. About 12 million people - roughly 10 percent of the country's population - have been affected.

On November 12 President U Thein Sein and Minister for Foreign Affairs U Wunna Maung Lwin expressed their sympathy to the Philippines for the "extensive loss of lives and property" caused by the typhoon. - *Tim McLaughlin*

Indonesians on trial over embassy bomb plot

TWO suspected Indonesian extremists went on trial last week accused of an "evil conspiracy" to bomb the Myanmar embassy in Jakarta to avenge the killing of Rohingya Muslims.

Rokhadi, 28, and Achmad Taufiq, 22, could face the death penalty over the plan to attack the mission in May, amid anger in Muslim-majority Indonesia at persecution of the Rohingya in mainly Buddhist Myanmar, where they are officially known as Bengalis.

Mr Rokhadi, who like many Indonesians goes by one name, allegedly raised funds for the attack while Mr Taufiq is accused of helping assemble bombs.

Police say they foiled the plot when they arrested Mr Taufiq, who was carrying a backpack full of pipe bombs, along with another man riding a motorbike in south Jakarta the night before the planned attack.

"The accused carried out an evil conspiracy," prosecutor Okto Ricardo told the South Jakarta District Court on November 11.

The men "wanted to bomb the Myanmar embassy in Jakarta so that there would be casualties, injuries and damage" to put pressure on the government in Myanmar, whom they blamed for the attacks on the Rohingya, Mr Ricardo said.

There have been a string of attacks on minority Muslims in Myanmar since last year, mostly in Rakhine State. Hundreds have been killed and tens of thousands made homeless.

Buddhist mobs are seen as the main perpetrators behind the attacks although rights groups have also accused Myanmar security forces of complicity in the violence - an allegation denied by the authorities.

Mr Rokhadi and Mr Taufiq are just two of several men who have been apprehended over the attacks. The trials of the accused got under way the previous week with the case of Separiano, who goes by one name. - *AFP*

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Workers build the Paunglaung dam in Shan State's Pinlaung township. Photo: Supplied/Kayan Youth Group

Complaints emerge over Paunglaung Dam compensation

WA LONE
walone14@gmail.com

SOME residents forced to relocate for the Upper Paunglaung hydropower project in Shan State have accused the government of shifting them to villages with no electricity supply, few water resources, no transportation and no land on which to grow crops.

Five residents travelled to Yangon to explain their difficulties to the media. They said they have already complained to President U Thein Sein's office but no action has been taken.

A major concern, they said, is the government's failure to provide the promised 6 acres of cultivable land to each household.

"Next year our lands will be flooded for the dam and we still haven't got any new land from them," said Khun Thu Rain from Tha Hlay village in Pinlaung township.

Daw Amar Sein from Leih Li village said there was also confusion about the way officials had measured out plots of land given as compensation. "The standard measurement is 80 by 100 feet (24 by 30 metres), but they [au-

thorities] gave us 50 by 60," she said.

Launched in 2004, electricity from the 140-megawatt dam will be used to power Nay Pyi Taw. The dam is about 80 percent complete, according to officials.

But it is unclear what proportion of the 15,000 from 23 villages who have moved or will move for the project are unhappy with the compensation terms. A number have previously told *The Myanmar Times* they were satisfied with the support given by the government, both financial and otherwise.

U Maw Thar Htwe, director general of the Department of Hydropower Implementation, insisted that the majority are happy with the amount of compensation paid, which ranged from K930,000 to K6.2 million depending on the size of the house to be relocated. According to the Shan State government, K12.3 billion in compensation has already been distributed.

The Ministry of Electric Power also helped transport residents and their belongings to the new villages.

"We helped them with the ministry's vehicles and hired motor boats. They dismantled their houses together according to their custom because

they know their properties better than we do," U Maw Thar Htwe.

Village-tract administrator U Nyont Win said he believed most residents are satisfied, as the compensation paid was above the market rate.

He confirmed that the authorities have promised to give each household 6 acres of cultivatable land in December 2012 before the villages were relocated.

"Land administration is complicated and can't be done by one ministry alone. For example, it will also need permission from the Ministry of Forestry and the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation. Because of this there might be some delays in giving land to the residents," he said. "But I can say for sure that each family will get the land they have been promised."

But U Han Tin from Kan Hla village said no amount of compensation could make up for the loss of his 3 acres. "I think most people aren't happy with their compensation. It's not enough to rebuild our lives," he said. "I wouldn't have sold my land if you had offered me K30 million for 1 acre." - *Additional reporting by Pyae Thet Phyto*

Farmers hit with trespass charges – twice

SITHU LWIN
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EARLIER this year, a group of farmers in Pyin Oo Lwin township cleared brush from their former farmlands. Now about 30 of them are facing charges of trespassing – one from the Department of Forestry and another from a third party who claims the land is his.

U Zaw Win, a Pyin Oo Lwin-based lawyer with the Facilitators Network with ILO, a local group that works with the International Labor Organization, said the man submitted the complaint on the grounds that the land is part of his coffee plantation.

But the lawyer said it was illogical for both the government and the coffee plantation owner to assert a claim against the farmers.

"If the plot is privately owned, the Department of Forestry does not have the right to sue the farmers. Similarly, if the land was still kept by the department, the alleged private owner shall not have the right to file a lawsuit against farmers," U Zaw Win said.

The forestry department has charged the farmers under section 40(a) of the forestry law for trespassing on a forest reserve, while the alleged coffee plantation owner is charging the farmers under sections 447 and 427, for trespassing and destruction of plants and fences.

The lawsuit filed by the Department of Forestry will be heard by a judge at Pyin Oo Lwin township court, while the charge put forward by the alleged owner

of the coffee plantation is being examined separately by a deputy judge, he said.

Both sets of charges stem from the clearing of shrubs from fields near northern Pwe Kauk village, during early monsoon season. Resident Ko Zaw Htike said the confusion is due to a series of land seizures that have left the exact ownership details unclear.

"In 2001, 100 acres of land in our village was seized for the purposes of a coffee plant project, but we weren't paid any compensation. The coffee plantation was moderately successful. Then in

'If the plot is privately owned, the Department of Forestry does not have the right to sue the farmers.'

U Zaw Win
Lawyer and activist

2005 a further 100 acres was taken from our village. But no coffee plants were grown there so we [cleared] the land," he said.

U Zaw Win said the problems faced by those in Pwe Kauk are representative of a larger problem in Myanmar. "Officials allocate lands to private owners on a map without conducting any survey in advance. The map shows many vacant plots but in reality they are fields with crop fields and this causes many farmland disputes across the country."

- *Translation by Zar Zar Soe*



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Mandalay govt plans palace restoration

Share of income from Mandalay zone tickets sold to tourists for US\$10 will fund \$150,000 restoration of palace museum, says regional government minister



SITHU LWIN

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THE Mandalay Region government plans to start renovation of Mandalay's palace in its museum, which is home to royal regalia and items used by Myanmar's last royals.

Minister for Finance U Myint Kyu said the renovation is sorely needed to preserve the last vestiges of the royal family.

"Objects on display in the museum will decay soon if they continue to be kept under present conditions," he said. "We plan to preserve them with technical assistance. These historical royal utensils cannot be replicated."

The minister said while the first phase of renovation is expected to cost about K150 million, the regional government earns just K12 million a year from entrance fees from local visitors.

To make up the shortfall, the



A foreign visitor examines photos of Myanmar's royal family at the Mandalay palace museum earlier this month. Photo: Si Thu Lwin

regional government has proposed to share the foreign income earned from Mandalay zone entrance fee tickets sold to foreign visitors.

"Foreigners are supposed to pay US\$10 a person for a ticket, which gives them access to the Mandalay zone for five days. Now we have negotiated with the union government to allocate half of the income from zone entrance fees to the project. We can start our renovation plan when we actually get the budget allotment," U Myint Kyu said.

"We will restore the palace to its

original style to draw more foreign tourists. We might consider contracting private companies to conduct the renovations if we think they can do a better job," he said.

The union government transferred control of Mandalay Palace to the regional government on June 7.

Known as Mya Nan San Kyaw Golden Palace, the building is 1004 feet by 574 feet (301 metres by 172m). Destroyed by fire in World War II, it was rebuilt by the military regime from 1989.

— Translation by Zar Zar Soe

MILLION KYATS

12

The amount earned each year from entrance fees to Mandalay palace collected from local visitors

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Business

IP laws reach final draft

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PIRATES beware: A law protecting intellectual property (IP) could soon be on the books after intensive discussions with local and international experts on copyright, trademarks and industrial design, officials said.

After 11 rounds of discussion and amendments, and with input from the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), the Ministry of Science and Technology has a completed draft law.

The process began in 1998 when Myanmar joined the WIPO, but delays have occurred in ensuring compliance with international and ASEAN norms. It is only now, 15 years later, that the law is back on track.

"We already finished the final draft specifying crimes and penalties, and reported to the Attorney-General's office earlier this month. We are now dealing with enforcement," said Daw Tin Ohmar Tun, chair of the ASEAN Intellectual Property Organisation, who has been participating in the discussions.

"I think we can receive the final amendment from the Attorney-General's office next month and maybe report to Parliament in January," she told *The Myanmar Times*.

The law will cover copyright, trademarks and industrial design, said Daw Moe Moe Thew, deputy director general of the Ministry of Science and Technology.

An effective IP law could help attract foreign direct investment companies and create jobs, said U Thein Aung, an advocate and IP consultant.

"We need laws governing technological innovation and international copyright because most foreign investors are engaged in technology," he said. "Otherwise, investors are afraid their products' names and designs will be copied."

Authorities crack down on



THOMAS KEAN AYE THIDAR KYAW

A LEADING food and beverage supplier to Myanmar's restaurants has been forced to close amid accusations it illegally imported wine valued at K600 million (US\$620,000). The crackdown has sent shockwaves through the sector and prompted calls for reform of import rules, which industry sources say are outdated and only encourage illegal imports.

A Ministry of Commerce team raided Quarto Products in late October because it believed the company was illegally importing food and beverage items, said U Thein Htun Oo, a director in the Ministry of Commerce's Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs. It has since charged the company's managing director, who is facing a three-year jail term, he said.

"We believe that [Quarto] may be the illegal [wine] distributor for the whole local market," he said. "They could not show us the documents of import declarations."

He alleged that Quarto imported the wine through Tharapa and Bay of Bengal resorts. A surprise check by a mobile customs team uncovered "many" bottles of wine in three 1600-square-foot warehouses, he said, and the company could not produce documentation showing the wine had been legally imported.

The company was forced to temporarily close following the raid and said in a letter to customers on October 29 that "due to a government audit we are not able to arrange delivery today. We are very sorry for this short notice and for any trouble this may bring to your operation." The following day Quarto told customers that the audit "will be completed by today and we should be able to resume deliveries by tomorrow". The company is yet to resume operations and declined to



A pedestrian walks past popular wine shop The Warehouse, which closed following accusations that Quarto Products illegally worth of wine. Photo: Thiri Lu

comment for this article.

Quarto's problems were evident at the MyanFood'13 exhibition, held at Yangon's Tatmadaw Hall from November 6 to 8. Although it was a "gold sponsor" of the event, the company's booth sat empty, with a Heineken label hastily covered by a sheet of white paper. A number of customs officials attended the exhibition, checking documentation for stock imported for the event.

A spokesperson for a freight

forwarding company involved in organising the exhibition said Quarto's empty booth and pavilion came as a "surprise".

"They said that they could not display due to authorities confiscating their goods and sealing their product warehouse," she said, adding that no stock had been confiscated from the 22 international exhibitors who took part in the exhibition, as they all were able to provide import documents to the authorities at the time of the spot

checks.

"Now the Myanma Customs and the Ministry of Commerce have a mobile team consisting of police that can check everywhere - surprise checks."

It remains unclear why only Quarto Products has been targeted by customs officials, who say they were acting on media reports and information from their marine investigation team. The threat of audits and possible criminal charges has, however, prompted a number of other wine distributors to

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EU-Myanmar task force tackles trade issues

BUSINESS 22



Condominium law may soon become a reality

PROPERTY 26

Exchange Rates (November 15 close)		
Currency	Buying	Selling
Euro	K1300	K1310
Malaysia Ringitt	K300	K305
Singapore Dollar	K777	K782
Thai Baht	K31	K31.50
US Dollar	K971	K973

illegal wine



Imported hundreds of thousands of dollars'

importation of wine and other types of alcohol. Only hotels and duty-free shops are allowed to bring alcohol and cigarettes into the country. The restrictions, which date back several decades, have been criticised for encouraging illegal imports.

To get around the ban, some businesses have been known to collaborate with hotels to import additional alcohol products that are then sold to restaurants and retailers – as Quarto is accused of doing – while others simply import through illegal channels.

While the practice is no longer thought to occur, embassies were rumoured to have imported significant quantities through diplomatic channels in the 1990s that were then sold through local distributors.

Quarto is one of just a handful of major wine suppliers, along with City Mart's wholesaler subsidiary, Premium Distribution.

U Sonny Aung Khin, the owner of Padonmar restaurant in Yangon and a senior member of the Myanmar Restaurants Association, said the crack-down meant many restaurants were struggling to get fresh supplies of wine.

"There's a shortage now because [many distributors] are closed temporarily. Even some of the small shops that you see all over the city are closed," he said.

In an effort to bring about reform to import rules, the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry met with related associations and stakeholders to discuss the issue on November 12.

"Our affiliated associations, our members, they have the idea [that alcohol] imports should be allowed. Even though [Myanmar] doesn't allow it, there are a lot of products flowing in. This increases the cost [of alcohol] and there are also a lot of fake products," UMFCCI general secretary U Moe Myint Kyaw told *The Myanmar Times*.

"Legalising imports will allow us to control the quality ... We are losing [tax] revenue as well. If we legally allow [imports], that problem can be solved."

temporarily close their doors. While several distributors refused to speak on the record, one told *The Myanmar Times* last week that there was "confusion in the market ... no one knows what is happening".

"We understood there would be some regulation change but this definitely caught everyone by surprise," said the source. "Everyone just wants to see some proper regulations put in place."

While widely available, existing Myanmar laws effectively ban the

IN BRIEF

Prudential life insurance sets up shop in Myanmar

Following the entry of several foreign insurance firms into Myanmar, Prudential has become the first European life insurer to establish a representative office, the company announced on November 14.

The move marks a re-entry into the market for the global insurer that first came to the country in 1923 with an office on Yangon's Strand Road.

"Prudential is committed to the long-term development of the insurance sector and the capital market in the country. We will offer our expertise to support the Myanmar Government's efforts to develop the financial services available to its people," Barry Stowe, chief executive of Prudential Corporation Asia, said in a news release.

Prudential will have to wait in the wings with other international insurance firms, including Hong Kong's AIA, ACE and MetLife until the government passes legislation to open a market to foreign entities that was only recently opened to privately owned local firms. – *Bridget Di Certo*

Korea Companies come to Myanmar to discuss manufacturing

Korean manufacturing companies are to meet with their Myanmar counterparts to develop business links. The companies produce a wide range of products, include plastic and rubber forming machinery, wool fabrics, garments, public address systems, commercial sound systems, concrete forms, vibration- and noise-proof products, confectionery and bakery materials, ambulances, dumper trailers, cold storage wave systems, silicon release polyester film and copper casting sectors.

"The Myanmar-Korea Manufacturing Industries Business Meeting will be held between the HwaSeong Chamber of Commerce and Industry (HCCI) of Korea and its Myanmar counterparts on November 24 to develop manufacturing between Myanmar and Korea," said Ms Yang Seo Kua, director of GunHong International.

Forty representatives from 19 Korean will observe Myanmar manufacturing companies on November 25, said Ms Yang. – *Tin Yadanar Htun*

Banks face long road without the right infrastructure, experts say

AYE THIDAR KYAW
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POOR infrastructure, internet penetration and low mobile phone ownership will continue to hinder the spread of banking in Myanmar, banking officials said last week during a seminar in Yangon.

Speaking at the Inya Lake Hotel on November 12, the deputy managing director of Kanbawza Bank, U Zaw Lin Htut, said challenges still confront an industry which only opened up two years ago.

"This is not just about financial services, but also the telecoms sector," he said. "It's not easy for us to create new banking products. Infrastructure is the main barrier."

According to the McKinsey Global Institute, telecommunications infrastructure is needed to support mobile banking or e-commerce and to avoid the cost of building physical banks and shops as well as extending health and education ser-

vices to even the remotest villages.

Myanmar has the second-lowest level of internet penetration of the countries covered by the World Bank's development indicators, and mobile penetration is the lowest, McKinsey said.

Challenges included the need to upgrade capacity, to build customer satisfaction with their procedures, to create new products, and to provide branches and ATMs in convenient locations, said U Zaw Lin Htut.

Customer satisfaction in banking is currently the lowest in the region, he said. "Most customers complain about waiting times and slow service at ATMs" dependent on satellite and phone connections, he said.

Most state-owned banks and smaller banks had long waiting times for customers, and many had poor infrastructure and sales capability, he said.

U Than Lwin, former deputy governor of the Central Bank, said that though the Bank had become



U Than Lwin. Photo: Supplied

'It's not easy for us to create new banking products. Infrastructure is the main barrier.'

U Zaw Lin Htut
Deputy managing director at Kanbawza Bank

Contested Sino-Myanmar oil pipeline nears completion

Likely to miss 2013 launch target as China has yet to construct essential refinery

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LOCAL construction on the controversial US\$2 billion crude oil pipeline that would flow from China to Myanmar is near completion though operations will be delayed until next year, officials said.

Requesting anonymity, an official from South-East Asia Crude Oil Pipeline Co Ltd, the firm that will operate the pipeline once it comes online, said Myanmar would complete its end of the pipeline this year.

"Construction is now 96 percent complete," he said, adding that an oil refinery has yet to be built in China.

Nevertheless, the Chinese government doubts any oil will be pumped through before the targeted deadline of December 31 as the essential refinery that would process oil has yet to be built.

"It is not known when operations will begin because the construction of an oil refinery has been delayed," Huo Wenjun, third secretary at the Chinese Embassy in Myanmar told *The Myanmar Times* on November 13. "First the refinery was to be built in Kunming, but now it will be elsewhere in Yunnan province."

Once operational, the pipeline will move 200,000 barrels of crude

oil each day, 40,000 of which will go to Myanmar, while the government is working on plans to install a refinery able to process 25,000 barrels a day, said Ken Tun, CEO of the Par-ami Energy Group of Companies.

96%

Completion of the \$2 billion crude oil pipeline that would flow from China to Myanmar

"Still, a refinery producing less than 100,000 barrels each day cannot be commercially profitable. We should consider the long term and wait to see what will happen over the next 10 years."

The China National Petroleum Cooperation (CNPC) began the project in 2008 in order to create an outlet to import oil from the Middle East and Africa. For Myanmar's role as a transit area, it would be paid US\$7 million each year in addition to another \$1 per tonne of crude oil

legally autonomous in July, bylaws and a new financial institution law had yet to be passed to enable domestic banks to integrate in the international banking system.

Economist U Aung Htun Thet, a member of the Myanmar Investment Commission, said that although the banking sector was not the main barrier to foreign investment, lending practices could be loosened up.

"It's obvious we still need infrastructure, but some famous brands such as Coca-Cola and Nissan have entered our market already," he said.

that passes through, the SEAOP has said.

Work on the \$2 billion pipeline, which stretches 771km from Rakhine State to the Chinese border, began in 2011 and was immediately dogged by controversy as protesters claim safety and human rights violations, land-grabs and environmental damage.

"We understand that the project is to provide power for China, while nearly 80 percent of our people are living in darkness," said Wong Aung an advocate at the Shwe Gas Movement.

"In Rakhine State, fishermen were banned from entering some areas and farmers were reportedly forced to surrender their land. Pipeline security has increased the military presence in northern Shan State," he said. "We want the project to be halted until federalism is established and the issue of resource ownership is dealt with in a way acceptable to ethnic nationalities."

The CNPC has 50.9pc ownership of the project, while MOGE (Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise) holds 7.37pc, Daewoo 25.04pc, KOGAS (Korean Gas Corporation) 4.17pc, GAIL (Gas Authority of India Limited) 4.17pc and ONGC (Oil and Natural Gas Corporation from India) 8.35pc.

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Got something to say?
The Myanmar Times



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EU pledges to promote Myanmar garments in historic first meet

AUNG SHIN

koshumgtha@gmail.com

GARMENTS labelled “Made in Myanmar” are likely to be seen much more in European countries soon thanks to an EU initiative to promote the local garment industry. The €2 million (US\$2.7 million) project, called SMART Myanmar, will boost the competitiveness of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in the rag trade.

Its goals are to build capacity and increase skills and knowledge in local partner organisations to help develop marketing and export strategies.

Speaking at a press conference during the first ever meeting of the EU-Myanmar Task Force in Yangon on November 14, EU commissioner for development Andris Piebalgs called Myanmar’s recent development “unprecedented”. The EU will choose 20 out of 100 SME members of the Myanmar Garment Manufacturers’ Association to be brought up to European market standards.

Since the project began earlier this year, 14 young local engineers have already been trained as consultants, and will receive practical field experience in European factories.

“Now we have codes of conduct. Investment and manufacturing have visibly increased since the EU lifted sanctions, and the number of garment factories is increasing,” said Daw Khine Khine Nwe, a member of the Myanmar Garment Manufacturers’ Association.

However, key challenges such as regulation, electricity supply and



Opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi speaks to investors during the EU business forum on November 14. Photo: Boothee

logistics remained, she said.

Participants in the project include Sequa (DE) Sheffield Chamber of Commerce and Industry (UK), the confederation of the German Textile and Fashion Industry (DE) and the Association of Development Financing Institutions in Asia and the Pacific (ADFIAP) located in the Philippines, German International Cooperation (GIZ) and the Netherlands-based Centre for Promotion of Imports from Developing Countries (CBI).

Mr Piebalgs is also taking part in the official launch of the SWITCH-SMART (SMEs for Environmental, Accountability, Responsibility and Transparency) program, which promotes and supports the sustainable production of garments “made in Myanmar”.

The 3-year project (2013-2015) is funded with an EU grant of about \$2.7 million and aims to reduce poverty through trade and private-sector development.



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Pesticides hurting local consumers, experts say

SU PHYO WIN
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RAMPANT use of chemical fertilisers and pesticides for the protection of crops in Myanmar may have a fatal effect on land, experts said during an agribusiness conference last week.

‘Importers have to be sure of their quality and also do the appropriate background checks of the company.’

Wang Zulao
CEO at Wong’s International

Pesticide and fertiliser sacks commonly used by farmers in Myanmar do not show the plethora of dangerous ingredients it contains, while others falsely advertise their contents, said Daw Than Than Sein, a consultant with the Myanmar Fruit, Flower

and Vegetable Producers and Exporters Association.

“The government should take strong action against unapproved chemical pesticides and should restrict both importers and users,” she said during the Asia Crop Protection Forum held November 7 and 8. “We need to aware of quality and healthy habits.”

“An influx of agro-related [chemical] products is good for the market and employment opportunities, but if we don’t also bring educational practices, it can be really dangerous and toxic for the environment and human beings.”

The forum, which was held at Yangon’s Traders Hotel, had government officials and industry professionals from various regional countries to discuss pesticide related issues.

Wang Zulao, CEO of China-based manufacturing firm Wong’s International Holdings Ltd, also warned during the forum that importers who bring pesticides into Myanmar should do so responsibly.

“Importers have to be sure of their quality and also do the appropriate background checks of the company [making pesticides],” he said.

Norway vessel docks to help manage fish stocks

**MYAT NYEIN AYE**
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SCIENTISTS from Norway are to help update research on the volume and type of fish stocks in Myanmar’s home waters as a part of a 38-day project assisting the management of fisheries resources, officials from the Myanmar Fisheries Department said.

The Norwegian research vessel *Dr Fridtjof Nansen* will set off on November 13 from Yangon’s Nan Thidar port to conduct the survey.

“We will compare the findings with previous research data,” said U Mya Than Tun, deputy director of the fisheries development and research department.

“Our vessel will operate in depths of 20 to 500 meters along the Rakhine and Tanintharyi coast, with five Norwegian and 11 Myanmar researchers,” maritime expert Bjorn Krafft told *The Myanmar Times*.

The data will include the number and species of fish and the volume that can be caught per hour. “The fisheries



The Norwegian research vessel *Dr Fridtjof Nansen* docks at Yangon’s Nan Thidar port. Photo: Boothee

department can estimate the amount of fish that they have to catch within a year on the basis of these data, which will help us avoid overfishing,” said U Mya Than Tun. Daw Toe Nandar Tin, owner of Annawa Daewi fish factory, said existing fisheries data was more than 30 years old, and that the new research would help guide operations over the next 10 years.

“This is a good opportunity for us.

With this research, we’ll know the amount of fish and species in Myanmar waters,” she said.

The Norwegian vessel has also worked off the west coast of Africa, and will conduct other research projects off Thailand and Bangladesh. The Norwegian government is contributing US\$593,000 to the fisheries research project.

– Translation by Win Thaw Tar

Thai firm wins paper mill tender

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A THAI company has won a tender to produce paper in Myanmar, with the prospect of more employment for local bamboo farmers who will supply it, the industry ministry has announced. The Double A company has won the tender to run the Thapaung paper mill, Myanmar’s biggest, which employs more than 1800 workers, the ministry announced on November 13.

Farmers in Ayeyarwady Region, where the factory is located, will have more job opportunities due to a plan to grow bamboo under a contract farming system in the 30-year project, said deputy minister U Than Aung.

MILLION

\$300

Total amount Double A will invest in the new factory.

Double A was selected from four international applicants because its bid offered the best employment and environmental aspects. It will pay US\$2 million a year rent, to be raised 5 percent every two years, with a rental exemption term of three months, and will invest \$300 million to build a new factory producing 300,000 tonnes of paper a year.

“The price of paper in Myanmar will fall because it is locally produced and the office stationery market will expand,” said U Zaw Lwin of Double A, adding that production would begin in six months’ time. – Translation by Thiri Min Htun



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JOB WATCH

Unity Sports Company Ltd. is a new founded company in Hlang Tar Yar industrial zone and focus on the international brand sports equipment and accessories manufacturing. We are looking for some qualified candidate as follow:

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4. Office staff (3): aged under 30 years, high school or equivalent, good computer skill.
5. Translator (3): Age under 25 years, High school or equivalent. Be good at Chinese and Burmese.

Please offer your CV to: wjl.steven@gmail.com or wang.steven@yeah.net, we offer the attractive package and accommodation for qualified candidate.



PATH is an international nonprofit organization that transforms global health through innovation. Having just recently opened an office in Myanmar, PATH currently seeks qualified candidates looking for an opportunity to make a positive impact on the health of people in Myanmar. The following available position, Country Manager, will be based in our Yangon office.

The Country Manager (Tracking code: #5750) will be primarily responsible for ensuring high quality programmatic, administrative and financial management of all of PATH's work in Myanmar; facilitating the start-up of country operations in a new office; and, overseeing all project teams. The successful candidate will also be expected to lead strategic interactions with PATH's Headquarters in the United States and Europe, in-country partners, and provide mentoring to staff and teams as they join the organization.

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To apply for the position of Country Manager (#5750), please visit the jobs section of the PATH website (www.path.org) and apply on-line. Applications for this position will not be accepted via email.

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Bring in the lawyers

With investors hungry to know everything about SE Asia's last frontier, foreign law firms make their mark

BRIDGET DI CERTO
bridget.dicerto@gmail.com

SINCE the lifting of US sanctions and the rolling out of a framework for a civilian government in 2010, the speed of legal reform in Myanmar has been blinding.

With the passage of the country's first foreign investment law, a trade union law and accession to the New York arbitration convention, the landscape for business has been rapidly modernising.

To investors on the outside, a lack of

understanding of what's happening inside Myanmar can be cause for hesitation - a pause that could spell losing out. But before the recent influx of business started, savvy lawyers were already on the ground.

The *Myanmar Times* spoke to six international lawyers and tax advisers working with international investors in Yangon to get their take on the shifting sands of foreign investment.

These legal and tax experts all noted that application and approvals processes are becoming increasingly streamlined, and that

there is a strong rule-of-law approach to legislation development.

Nevertheless, some practical challenges for doing business remain.

Foreign advisors cite undeveloped or unreliable infrastructure and a prohibitive property market for land and office or factory space acquisition as being both unwieldy and unduly expensive. But that is only the tip of the iceberg.

It is with such challenges in mind that having a good lawyer can make all the difference between winning and losing in Myanmar.



Kelvin Chia Yangon
Cheah Swee Gim - director

Singaporean lawyer Cheah Swee Gim said that in Myanmar contracts may take a little longer, negotiations may be more protracted, but with the continuing roll-out of legal reforms, "deals are starting to get done a little faster, approvals granted [quicker]."

"Trademarks are under an old registration act from the UK, where trademarks are lodged voluntarily and then published in papers," Ms Cheah said, adding that a new intellectual property registration, protection and relief framework was expected from the government and would provide important security to multinationals seeking to open operations in Myanmar.



DFDL
James Finch - partner

"A lot of the extractive industries, oil, gas and mining, left as a result of the sanctions," said American lawyer James Finch, who has spent a career in emerging markets in Latin America, the Middle East and Asia. "But now the world is ready to do something special in Myanmar."

Mr Finch said the plurality that accompanies increased investment in the country would further accelerate economic development.

"The reforms may have taken [people] by surprise, but I believe the government had a plan truly going on for 20 years," Mr Finch said. "There is a strong tradition of rule of law [in Myanmar] that did not exist in other countries not used to operating under a strict legal environment."

Polastri Wint & Partners
Alessio Polastri - partner

As an indicator of how quickly Myanmar is emerging, Italian lawyer Alessio Polastri said about half of his clients were large local conglomerates doing business with international investors.

"Banking and financial deals are going to be a huge trend," Mr Polastri said. "International banks are showing interest and there's no project without financial back-up - no matter how good or how powerful, you still need cash."

"There's a lot about what foreigners can and cannot do, but this is not a problem of the law - it's a problem of finding the right opportunity at the right time," he said.



Sciaroni & Associates
Samuel Britton - legal advisor

"I don't think companies should wait for the new foreign investment law," American lawyer Samuel Britton said. "Our firm philosophy is to be one of the first to enter the emerging market, to be a risk-taker."

Myanmar is geographically well-located for trade and the country is ripe with opportunities for investors, Mr Britton said.

He highlighted, however, that the country's endemic infrastructure weakness could prove prohibitive for some types of commercial ventures. "Office space is leasing out at Manhattan prices."



VDB Loi
Jean Loi - managing partner

"Here it is not just advice. Law is only part of the big picture. Government relationships and networking are so crucial in this part of the world," New Zealand tax advisor Jean Loi said.

"There are lots of areas where you don't have precedent yet and it will still be sometime to build this up."

This degree of uncertainty should not deter a foreign entity from entering Myanmar, but should be taken as a signal that careful consideration is needed, Ms Loi said. "All the elements of a tax system are there."



Herzfeld Rubin Meyer & Rose
Eric Rose - lead director

"We could not think of another country in recent history with more potential than Myanmar," American lawyer Eric Rose said at the official launch in Yangon of the American-based firm HRMR.

"It's exciting to see the US business community come back to Myanmar after long years of silence," Mr Rose said, noting that 50 American companies came together as the founders of the first American Chamber of Commerce for Myanmar.



IN BRIEF

London

Barclays bank to cut 1700 jobs

Barclays bank plans to cut 1700 jobs as it reduces the number of local branches in Britain, a spokesman said last week.

The source confirmed a claim from the union Unite, saying the way customers accessed their money "is changing rapidly" and fewer branches were required.

The cuts will include cashiers, personal bankers, operational specialists and assistant managers. - AFP



The United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) in Myanmar is inviting qualified candidates to apply for the following positions:

Sr.	Title and level	Duty Station	Position	Deadline
1.	Accountability Programme Officer (IICA2)	Yangon	International	19 November 2013
2.	Finance Officer (Managed Cash Flow) (LICA6)	Yangon	National	19 November 2013
3.	Monitoring and Evaluation Analyst (LICA5)	Yangon	National	19 November 2013
4.	Human Resources Associate (LICA4)	Yangon	National	20 November 2013
5.	Communications Specialist (Food Security and Livelihoods) (IICA-2)	Yangon	International	21 November 2013
6.	Communications Specialist (Health) (IICA2)	Yangon	International	21 November 2013
7.	International Project Support Specialist (IICA3)	Yangon	International	21 November 2013
8.	Communications Analyst (LICA5)	Yangon	National	22 November 2013
9.	Communications Assistant (Support) (LICA3)	Yangon	National	24 November 2013
10.	Communications Assistant (Web) (LICA3)	Yangon	National	24 November 2013
11.	Procurement Specialist (P4 or Equivalent ICA level)	Yangon	International	26 November 2013

The benefit package for the above positions includes an attractive remuneration, 30 days annual leave and 10 holidays per year, medical insurance (for national positions), learning and development opportunities and a challenging working environment with 250 national and international colleagues.

All applications must be made through the UNOPS E-recruitment System (<https://gprs.unops.org>) and click on the post you are interested in applying for.

If you have further queries, please contact 95 1 657 281-7 Ext: 149

NEW DELHI

PepsiCo bets big on India despite slowing growth

US soft drinks giant PepsiCo announced last week it would invest over US\$5 billion with its partners in India to raise production, saying it had only "scratched the surface" of the Asian giant's potential.

PepsiCo, the world's second-largest beverage firm, said the 330-billion rupee investment (\$5.5 billion) by 2020 was aimed at boosting its strengths in manufacturing, infrastructure, agriculture and other areas in India, one of its biggest markets globally.

"India is a country with huge potential and it remains an attractive, high-priority market," said PepsiCo chairman Indra Nooyi.

In further welcome news for India's Congress government as it struggles to woo foreign investment with economic growth at a decade low, British retail giant Marks & Spencer said it aimed to

more than double its stores in India to 80 by 2016.

The investment plans are a shot in the arm for the government, which has seen foreign direct investment slow sharply with an economy growing at 5 percent, a string of corruption scandals and high inflation.

"We've built a highly successful business in India over the course of many years, and we believe we've only scratched the surface of the long-term growth opportunities," Ms Nooyi said.

"This investment is PepsiCo's vote of confidence in India's future," she added in a statement.

She was firing the latest shot in what the local media has dubbed the "cola wars" with rival Coca-Cola Co, the world's largest soft-drink maker, which last year announced plans to spend \$5 billion in India to increase its operations.

PepsiCo and its bottling partners will more than double production capacity in India by 2020. They now have 38 bottling plants and three food plants in the country.

The cola giants are battling for a beverage market in India expected to grow by over two-fold to more than \$18 billion by 2017, according to industry figures. — AFP

38

Operational bottling plants PepsiCo has in India

TOKYO

Japan grills banking officials over mob loans

LAWMAKERS in Japan last week questioned the head of one of the country's biggest banks over a mob loans scandal, as another major lender admitted it may have been involved in dealings with gangsters.

Mizuho Financial Group president Yasuhiro Sato apologised for his firm's role in the widening scandal as lawmakers questioned him about Mizuho's surveillance and his future at the bank, after he earlier refused to step down.

"We deeply regret that the Japanese financial sector's credibility was hurt because of our relations with anti-social forces," Mr Sato said, using a common euphemism for organised crime.

The scandal has gripped Japan's banking sector since Mizuho came under fire in September after revelations that it had processed hundreds of loans worth about US\$2 million for the country's notorious yakuza crime syndicates.

The gangs are involved in activities ranging from prostitution and drugs to extortion and white-collar crime.

Authorities have long battled to keep the gangsters from infiltrating Japan's corporate sector amid fears of mob involvement in stock trading and the real estate sector, among other legitimate activities.

"The amounts involved may be small compared to the past, but it still means



Japan's Mizuho Financial Group chief executive Yasuhiro Sato is summoned to give details at the National Diet in Tokyo on a scandal involving loans to crime syndicates on November 13. Photo: AFP

that funds are going to the mafia," organised crime expert Atsushi Mizoguchi told public broadcaster NHK.

A panel of lawyers hired by Mizuho to probe the transactions found that "many officials and board members were aware of, or were in a position to be aware of, the issue".

That contradicted Mizuho's initial

claims that top management were in the dark about the mob links.

In the wake of the Mizuho report, Japan's financial watchdog said it would probe the country's top three banks — Mizuho, Mitsubishi UFJ and Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corp — in an effort to eradicate the practice. — AFP

OPENS NEXT WEEK

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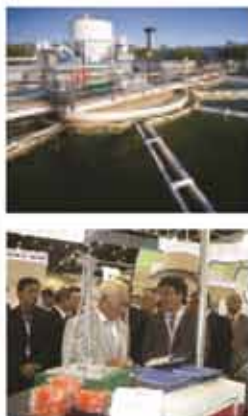
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ATHENS

Athens to build first mosque

WORK is finally set to begin on Athens' first mosque, 13 years after plans were first announced, the Greek government announced last week.

A Greek consortium has been chosen, the infrastructure ministry said, after five previous attempts to find a business group to lead the project failed.

Athens is one of the few European capitals without a mosque.

The building will have a budget of 946,000 euros (US\$1.3 million) and will be 6458 square feet (600 square metres). It is being built on land formerly used by the military and it will not have a minaret.

The project will have to be completed within six months of contracts being signed, said the ministry.

— AFP

STOCKHOLM

Ice hotel to install fire alarms

A FAMOUS hotel rebuilt every winter in northern Sweden using only ice said last week it would install fire alarms this year.

The hotel, located in the small Arctic town of Jukkasjaervi, is following a request by the authorities to guarantee the safety of its guests.

"We were a little surprised at first, but the reason is that there are things that can actually catch fire, like pillows, sleeping bags or reindeer skins," hotel spokeswoman Beatrice Karlsson said.

\$285

Starting price for a room at the Swedish hotel, with the most expensive room nearly quadruple that

"To us the most important concern is the safety of our clients, so we will comply," she added.

The hotel will open from December 6 to April 13, with prices ranging from 1,900 kronor (US\$285) for a single room to 7,500 kronor for the most expensive suite.

Tourists come from all over the world to sleep on an ice bed in temperatures as low as minus eight degrees Celsius (18 degrees Fahrenheit).

The alarms, which were already tested last winter with the local fire department, have made construction of the hotel, conceived as a work of art, even harder than before.

"The environment is humid, and ice and snow ... move, so it had to be taken into account," Ms Karlsson said.

"It's been a challenge for our building team, but it made us one experience richer."

— AFP

Foreign apartment ownership schedule in condominium law



Industry experts hope the new condominium law will raise building standards in Yangon. Photo: Zarni Phyo

BRIDGET DI CERTO

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BY providing for foreign ownership of condominium apartments, the draft condominium law could help steer the market toward a higher standard of construction and property development, industry experts said last week.

Foreigners will be eligible to own apartments on the 6th floor or above of condominiums, according to an official draft of the Condominium Law published on November 10 in *The New Light of Myanmar*.

The full text of the draft law also stipulates that foreigners will be able to buy up to a maximum of 40 percent of apartments above the sixth floor in condominium apartments.

Capital Development general manager U Soe Thiha Hlaing told *The Myanmar Times* that the property market would become more vibrant and would be bolstered by the provision to allow foreign ownership.

"This would in turn encourage more foreign investment in the real estate market in Myanmar," said U Soe Thiha Hlaing. "Evidently, a healthy and competitive industry with quality standards on the rise would eventually benefit the Myanmar home owners and buyers."

"There is already a fair bit of interest in the Myanmar property market from foreigners – particularly from neighbouring Asian countries – and this law to allow foreign ownership would now pave the way to inject much-needed funds into the industry."

Scipio Services managing director Brett Miller likewise said there was already intense interest from foreign investors wanting to buy into the condominium market in Myanmar.

"From today, we have a growing list of 369 interested foreign

parties that will be notified of projects as they're proposed and approved, so they can consider pre-sale units for investment purposes," Mr Miller said, adding that his firm believed that "this modest list is just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to foreign interest."

The provision for non-Myanmar citizen ownership of condominium apartments is the first time the government has scheduled Myanmar property as available for 100pc foreign ownership.

"It's our opinion that foreign ownership will positively impact the real

crazy rent, but the quality and the price [of condo apartments] are not really welcoming," U Robin Saw Naing said. "The quality ones are around a half million USD per unit, which are not ready yet and still under construction. In the long run, [foreign ownership] will affect the rental market, but not yet."

The draft condominium law makes no building code or construction standards mandatory for condominium developers, nor does it specify parking allowances, lift, or public space or service requirements for residents.

'It's our opinion that foreign ownership will positively impact the real estate market because developers will invest in quality construction.'

Brett Miller

Managing director at Scipio Services

estate market because developers will invest in quality construction, facilities and management of their projects to compete for foreign buyers," Mr Miller said.

Pronto Real Estate managing director U Robin Saw Naing agreed that providing for foreign ownership of condominiums would help with increasing the standard of future apartment blocks being constructed, but that it would take time to see real change in available residential housing.

"Some foreigners who represent big companies are interested in buying condos instead of paying this

Without a building code or other regulatory framework in place, the quality of future apartment blocks would be steered largely by market demand.

The Condominium Law bill was first introduced to the Pyithu Hluttaw in November 2012. Property market observers at the time said they hoped the law would help stabilise skyrocketing rental and sales prices for condominium apartments – some of which had more than trebled year on year.

According to the draft law text, condominiums must be constructed on blocks of land zoned for

residential use and not smaller than 1 acre. Smaller plots require the prior express approval of the Ministry of Construction before building work for a condominium can begin.

Scipio Service's Mr Miller said the 1-acre stipulation had the potential to greatly impact the market for construction of new condominiums, but a lot hinged on the nature of the Ministry of Construction approval process for building on smaller blocks.

"If the approval process is complex, ambiguous or lengthy, then foreign developers will try to avoid the additional approval process altogether as they try to announce quickly to capture the market," he said.

"Plots of 1 acre along a main road in a residential zoned area are difficult to find, meaning the qualifying plots will be held by few landowners and will command great value in the market."

The law also schedules the formation and activities of building management committees to oversee the management and maintenance of condominiums. If a completed condominium is more than 50pc occupied, such a management committee will be constituted by a residents' caucus.

In the event that a condominium is less than half occupied, an interim caretaker committee will be assigned to the building from Department of Human Settlement staff.

The draft law does not specify heights or sizes of condominium buildings or individual apartments. *The Myanmar Times* has previously reported that industry experts had warned against introducing too many restrictions in the Condominium Law for fear it would deter investors.

Real estate agents have attributed the rise in property rental prices for condominiums to the huge influx of foreigners.

‘If the approval process is complex ... then foreign developers will try to avoid the additional approval process altogether.’ — Brett Miller, managing director at Scipio Services

Plan to build homes in West Bank cancelled
PROPERTY 28

BRUSSELS
NATO puts its faith in new high-tech HQ

LOOKING to a new role, NATO is pressing ahead with a high-tech, high-security headquarters to replace the supposedly temporary residence it ended up having to use for 50 years.

Halfway through construction, the futuristic building of all-glass facades and interlocking concrete wings on the outskirts of Brussels is fast taking shape.

“We are on track with the calendar and the budget,” said Tony Carruth, head of the NATO HQ project office, during a visit this week.

“We have been here – in the old building – much longer than what had been planned,” Mr Carruth said, describing the drab, low-profile HQ as having been “designed in the time of the type-writer”.

The US-led military alliance was born in the Cold War stand-off with the Soviet Union, but since the September 11, 2001, terror attacks on the United States, it has taken on a wider scope of operations, playing a key role in Afghanistan.

Next year, however, the NATO Afghanistan mission comes to an end, with the focus switching to a future of cyber- and information-warfare.

The new HQ will cost about 750 million euros (US\$1 billion), a big enough budget to raise some eyebrows when militaries around the world are complaining about stiff budget cuts.

“The new headquarter is far from extravagant,” NATO deputy assistant secretary general Matthew Klimow said.

“It is a functional building that will allow us to say that NATO is ready for 21st-century challenges This [old] building has outlived its usefulness,” Mr Klimow said.

Member states approved the headquarters plans in 1999, well before the global economic slump, in what was seen as a vote of confidence in NATO’s future after the collapse of the Soviet Union.

The current HQ, just across a busy highway out to the airport, dates from 1967 and was originally meant to be a stop-gap solution after then-host France withdrew from NATO’s military structures and commitments.

France returned to full membership in the alliance in 2009.

The alliance now counts 28 members, up from 15 in 1967, as it has welcomed into the fold many ex-Soviet countries in eastern Europe. — *AFP*



HOUSE OF THE WEEK

A place to call home

Located in South Dagon, this gem of a house is suitable for the family looking to escape the noisy city center. The compound has 11,000 square feet in a lovely two-storey building complete with a beautiful and modern façade.

The house has two master bedrooms and one single room, and with large windows that capture loads of natural sunlight and with two kitchens and a large dining room there is plenty of space to spread out. For those not looking to buy, this house can be rented for \$4000 per month. — *Ei The The Naing*

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IN BRIEF*New York***New World Trade Center deemed tallest US skyscraper**

Citing its role as a "symbol of resurgence", a panel declared Tuesday that New York's One World Trade Center will be the tallest US skyscraper once it is completed, topping the former Sears Tower in Chicago.

Architects at the Council on Tall Buildings and Urban Habitat agreed that the center's 124.4 meter (408 foot) antenna was a permanent architectural feature of the building and should be counted in determining its height.

"The design of One World Trade Center, as explained to us, reinforces its role as a symbol of resurgence on this important site," said CTBUH executive director Antony Wood.

"In particular, the spire which holds the beacon light, shining out at the symbolic height of 1776 feet, is especially poignant - echoing the similarly symbolic beacon atop the Statue of Liberty across the water."

*Chiomonte***Drilling starts for high-speed Alpine rail line**

A 6-metre-wide drill roared to life last week in Chiomonte in northeast Italy and began boring a reconnaissance tunnel for a controversial fast train from Lyon, France, to Turin, Italy.

The latest phase in a project which has suffered years of delays kicked off with only Italian and French dignitaries as well as media informed about it to avoid potential violent demonstrations.

"We have entered the drilling phase, the project is now more irreversible than ever," Turin's mayor Piero Fassino said.

Europe will stump up 40 percent of the 8.5 billion euros (US\$11.43 billion) needed to build the 35 mile (57 kilometre) long transalpine tunnel, with Italy and France paying the rest.

- AFP

JERUSALEM

Plan to build 20,000 settler homes in West Bank cancelled

ISRAELI Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu last week cancelled plans to build 20,000 new settler homes in the West Bank, hours after their announcement sparked US and Palestinian criticism.

Mr Netanyahu ordered Israeli Housing Minister Uri Ariel "to reconsider all of the steps for evaluating planning potential [for the settler homes] that he distributed without any advance coordination," a statement from Netanyahu's office said.

Mr Netanyahu told Mr Ariel the plan was "meaningless" legally - "and an action that creates an unnecessary confrontation with the international community at a time when we are making an effort to persuade elements in the international community to reach a better deal with Iran, according to the statement.

Mr Ariel was said to "accede" to Mr Netanyahu's "request".

The prime minister's order came after Palestinian president Mahmud Abbas warned the construction plans, announced earlier on November 12 by Mr Ariel's ministry, would prompt him to declare the peace process over if they went ahead.

Washington expressed "deep concern" at the move, which

550,000

Israeli settlers living in the occupied West Bank



A picture shows laborers working at the construction site of a new housing project at the Jewish settlement of Gilo in east Jerusalem in April. Israel cancelled plans to build 20,000 new settler homes in the West Bank. Photo: AFP

threatened to add sharply to the 550,000 Israeli settlers already living in the occupied West Bank, including annexed Arab east Jerusalem.

Mr Netanyahu made it clear the housing ministry's call for tenders for the homes threatened to distract from his efforts to convince world powers to not sign a deal with Iran, over its nuclear program, he considered inadequate.

"At this time, the attention of the international community must

not be diverted from the main effort - preventing Iran from receiving an agreement that will allow it to continue its military nuclear program," Mr Netanyahu said, according to the statement.

Iran and the world powers it is negotiating with over its nuclear program came close last weekend to agreeing to a preliminary accord opening the way to a more comprehensive pact.

But differences prevented a breakthrough, and the two sides

are scheduled to meet again in Geneva on November 20.

Mr Netanyahu has furiously denounced the agreement being worked on as "dangerous" claiming it is entirely in Iran's favour and does nothing to halt a nuclear program that he and the world powers fear is aimed at developing atomic weapons.

He has said Israel will not shy from military action on Iran if necessary to prevent any nuclear threat directed at it. - AFP

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28th Nov, 2013

- ▶ Venue : Myanmar Engineering Society (Function Hall), Hlaing University Campus, Yangon.
- ▶ Date : Thursday, 28 November 2013
- ▶ Time : 9:00 AM - 12:00 AM

29th Nov, 2013

- ▶ Venue : Summit Parkview Hotel (Innwa Hall - II)
50, Ahlone Road, Dagon Township, Yangon.
- ▶ Date : Friday, 29 November 2013
- ▶ Time : 9:00 AM - 12:00 AM

For any further information or advance registration, please contact us at
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SYDNEY

Sydney casino finally wins state backing

GAMBLING mogul James Packer last week said international tourists want to see man-made attractions and not spend their holidays "looking at Ayers Rock" as his plan for a US\$1.5 billion Sydney casino won crucial support.

The New South Wales government on November 11 struck a "binding agreement" for the project aimed at Asian high-rollers to operate from November 2019 in a prime location on Sydney Harbour, under strict conditions that include VIP gaming only and no slot machines.

Legislation will be introduced into parliament this week to officially approve Crown's casino and six-star hotel, although it also needs a green light from the Independent Liquor and Gaming Authority.

"We support this proposal because of its economic benefits to New South Wales," State Premier Barry O'Farrell said, adding that 1300 jobs would be created during construction and 1200 jobs once it was up and running.

"What Crown is guaranteeing is a minimum of a billion dollars [revenue to the government] over the first 15 years in operation. But their business case model suggests that figure will be far higher."

Billionaire Mr Packer runs Crown, a worldwide gambling empire that already operates casinos in Melbourne, Perth and Macau and is planning complexes in Manila and Sri Lanka.

"The Crown Group is hugely proud and happy and thrilled," Mr Packer told commercial radio last week. - AFP

IN BRIEF*Tokyo***Japan condo ditches lawnmowers for grass-munching goats**

A Japanese condominium complex has decided to ditch noisy lawnmowers and their paid pushers for a more natural option: goats.

The suburban Tokyo complex has obtained four grass-munching animals to help beautify the walled property and chomp on weeds in those hard-to-reach areas.

A spokesman for the state-owned site's developer claims the rental goats are cheap and don't need much instruction while their poop pellets pose little risk to residents' health.

"It's more cost-effective and environmentally friendly than paying for lawn-mowing," he said. - AFP

BRIEFS

Legend of the giant platypus

An indigenous Australian legend has it that the first platypus was the odd offspring of a duck named Tharalkoo and a rat. In a nod to the tale, researchers have named a newly identified ancient giant platypus species *Obdurodon tharalkooschild*. All that was found of the creature was a single tooth at a site in Queensland, estimated to be between 5 and 15 million years old. The molar shows wear that indicates that the platypus probably crushed hard-shelled prey such as turtles, also found fossilised at the site.

Modern adult platypuses do not have teeth, but their ancestors did. Based on a comparison of the size of the molar to the teeth of other extinct platypuses, the team reported Monday in the *Journal of Vertebrate Paleontology* that *O. tharalkooschild* was probably about a meter long – bigger than any other platypus and twice the size of the species alive today.

Finding a new species of platypus was a surprise. Previously, researchers thought that the creatures had a single branch on their family tree, with no more than one distinct species alive at any time. Despite its origin-story namesake, the new platypus is a cousin of the lineage of relatively small platypuses that led to the duck-mammal mash-up of today-probably one of several in a now-extinct side branch of giant platypuses.

Astro-bacteria could menace space stations

Future astronauts may have a new foe to contend with: space bacteria. Scientists have found that *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*, a common contaminant of medical equipment and a cause of urinary tract infections, among other diseases, grows better in zero gravity than it does on Earth, even when starved of nutrients.

The researchers grew the microbes in simulated urine both in an Earth-bound lab and onboard the space shuttle Atlantis in July 2011. In some of the samples, the team dramatically reduced the concentrations of dissolved phosphate and oxygen to simulate conditions that might exist inside equipment used to recycle urine into water on spacecraft during long-duration flights. When nutrients were plentiful, the growth rates of the bacteria

in zero-g conditions — and particularly, the concentrations of cells after 72 hours — were the same as those grown in the lab under normal conditions. But in samples with lower concentrations of phosphate and oxygen, the Earth-bound bacteria didn't grow as quickly as they did when fully nourished, while those cultured in microgravity grew as prolifically as those provided with a full complement of nutrients, the researchers reported online Tuesday in *BMC Microbiology*.

Reasons for the disparity aren't clear, the researchers say, but results suggest that bacteria introduced to space stations and spacecraft by people, given enough time, might grow to reach greater concentrations than they do in similar conditions on Earth, even if starved of nutrients. Besides helping scientists better understand the risks of *P. aeruginosa* colonising equipment on spacecraft or causing diseases such as urinary tract infections among astronauts, the experiments may improve scientists' ability to predict whether other species of bacteria might become more virulent in space.

Go ahead son, give up the flute

After spending thousands of dollars on music lessons and instruments for their children, parents often watch in dismay as once-coveted flutes, clarinets and violins are abandoned. Such investments in early musical education may not be wasted, however. New research suggests that even after going decades without practising their instruments, lapsed musicians have sharper ears.

To compare hearing ability in former musicians to people who never played an instrument, researchers measured the electrical brain activity produced by a type of auditory processing called "neural timing", which enables people to respond to split-second changes in sound such as the transition from a consonant to a vowel. This ability declines with age and is key to interpreting speech.

Compared with their nonmusical peers, adults aged 55 to 76 who had studied music for four to 14 years as youngsters had more precise neural timing, even though they hadn't practised in nearly 40 years, the team reported Tuesday in *The Journal of Neuroscience*.

– Washington Post

Monkeys use minds to control virtual arms

EMILY UNDERWOOD

MOST of us don't think twice when we extend our arms to hug a friend or push a shopping cart. Our limbs work together seamlessly to follow our mental commands. For researchers designing brain-controlled prosthetic limbs for people, however, this coordinated arm movement is a daunting technical challenge. A new study showing that monkeys can move two virtual limbs with only their brain activity is a major step toward achieving that goal, scientists say.

The brain controls movement by sending electrical signals to our muscles through nerve cells. When limb-connecting nerve cells are damaged or a limb is amputated, the brain is still able to produce those motion-inducing signals, but the limb can't receive them or simply doesn't exist. In recent years, scientists have worked to create devices called brain-machine interfaces (BMIs) that can pick up these interrupted electrical signals and control the movements of a computer cursor or a real or virtual prosthetic.

So far, the success of BMIs in humans has been largely limited to moving single body parts, such as a hand or an arm. Last year, for example, a woman paralysed from the neck down for 10 years commanded a robotic arm to pick up and lift a piece of chocolate to her mouth just by thinking about it. But, "no device will ever work for people unless it restores bimanual behaviors," says neuroscientist Miguel Nicolelis at Duke University, senior author of the paper. "You need to use both arms and hands for the simplest tasks."

In 2011, Mr Nicolelis made waves by announcing on *The Daily Show* that he is developing a robotic, thought-controlled "exoskeleton" that will allow paralysed people to walk again. Further raising the stakes, he pledged that the robotic body suit will enable a paralyzed person to kick a soccer ball during the opening ceremony of the 2014 Brazil World Cup. (Mr Nicolelis is Brazilian and his research is partly funded by the nation's government.)

The feat will require decoding the complex neural signals that coordinate two legs as they walk together

and keep a person upright. Now, by successfully training two monkeys to control virtual arms using only their minds, Mr Nicolelis' team has moved closer to that goal. The new experiment involved two monkeys, a male and a female. Before it began, each monkey had electrodes implanted into its right and left brain hemisphere, which recorded the activity of up to 500 neurons acting together — the highest number of neurons yet used in such an experiment, Mr Nicolelis says. The animal's task was to control the movement of two avatar arms on a computer monitor: To get a fruit juice reward, it had to place both hands over two circles and hold them there for 100 milliseconds. A computer algorithm processed the monkey's brain activity, homing in on patterns of neurons firing as it learned to do the task.

'I'm looking forward to higher performance and success rates and more realistic human movements'

Andrew Schwartz
University of Pittsburgh

The female monkey, called monkey C, first learned how to get the juice by moving joysticks with her real arms and hands — as she manipulated the joysticks, the right and left avatar arms did what she wished. After practising this during regular 20- to 40-minute sessions over the course of a year, she was strapped into a padded chair so that she couldn't move her own arms or hands, and trained to control the avatar arms just by thinking. After weeks of practice, she completed the task more than 75 percent of the time, the scientists reported Wednesday in *Science Translational Medicine*.

Because a paralysed person or amputee can't necessarily practice a task using joysticks, the next step was to

determine whether observation alone could teach the BMI. Monkey M, a male, wasn't allowed to use the joysticks or move his arms at any point in the experiment — he simply observed the task being performed. It took longer for him to learn, but monkey M also learned to control the virtual arms using only his thoughts. Both animals' performances improved over time, and the researchers noticed their neuronal firing patterns changed as this happened, suggesting that their brains were adapting to the BMI devices. This could be because the monkeys came to consider the virtual arms as part of their own bodies, Mr Nicolelis suggests. "The animals literally incorporate the avatar as if the avatar was them."

The basic technology that Mr Nicolelis and colleagues used to extract instructions for movement from the mishmash of monkey brain signals isn't new, says Jose Contreras-Vidal, a biomedical engineer at the University of Houston. The real advance of the study, he says, is that the team was able to figure out which neurons they needed to record to control two arms working together. Although one might assume that it would be possible to simply combine neural activity from two arms acting independently, the study shows that cells act differently when they are coordinating the movements of two limbs than they do when separately instructing one limb or the other, he says. This is the first study to extract and use that complex information to coordinate arm movements in real time, Mr Contreras-Vidal says.

Although he agrees that the new study is strong, Andrew Schwartz, a neurobiologist at the University of Pittsburgh, said he thinks scientists can do better. Even though the monkeys' task was quite simple, they had only about a 45pc success rate overall, he notes. "I'm looking forward to higher performance and success rates and more realistic natural movements."

Mr Nicolelis may have shown that the monkeys can learn to use these avatar arms to complete a simple task, but it's not clear if the same type of training will work for the more complex activities humans need to perform, Mr Contreras-Vidal cautions. "This is a first step." – Washington Post



IN PICTURES Geologist Bill Simpson cleans Sue, a 67-million-year-old Tyrannosaurus Rex on display at the Field Museum on November 12, 2013 in Chicago, Illinois. Sue is the largest, most complete, and best preserved T. Rex ever discovered. Simpson carefully cleans the skeleton twice a year. *Photo: AFP*



Cutting through complexity

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World

WORLD EDITOR: Bridget Di Certo | bridget.dicerto@gmail.com

TACLOBAN

UN says Philippine typhoon death toll 4460

THE United Nations said on November 15 the death toll from a super typhoon in the Philippines was at least 4460, citing regional officials, but the national disaster council maintained a much lower figure.

The UN's Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) said the number of 4460 was given from the regional taskforce of the Philippines' National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council on November 13.

But NDRMMC's spokesman Reynaldo Mr Balido insisted the official toll from the typhoon that ripped through the central Philippines on November 8 remained at 2360.

"As of 13 November, the government reported that 4460 people have died," an OCHA statement said.

Asked for the source of the figures, Manila-based OCHA spokeswoman Orla Fagan said, "We are getting it from the operations centre of the regional taskforce set up by the NDRMMC."

When asked about the UN's statement, Mr Balido replied, "Not true," then repeated the NDRMMC's published figure of 2360.

Philippine President Benigno Aquino said on November 12 that he estimated the final death toll would be around 2500.

Bodies still lie where they fell or were washed up, the defining motif of a tragedy.

The stench of bloated and discoloured human flesh decomposing under the tropical sun hangs everywhere in the central city of Tacloban, where wretched survivors and rescue workers cover their mouths to keep the cloying smell from their throats.

Hundreds have been collected, put into body bags and trucked off to wrecked municipal buildings to await burial in mass graves, a process that city authorities began on November 14.

Officials and aid volunteers say those bodies that have been recovered are just the beginning, a small fraction of those that could be seen when the storm surge subsided. Many more, they say, lie under the mountains of debris.

"Leaving them [the bodies] just decaying on the roadside, uncollected, is next to unforgivable," local Catholic priest Amadeo Alvero said.

Officials initially said picking up the bodies had to take second place to the effort to help those still living in utter destitution, their homes swept away and with precious little food or clean drinking water.

But they also conceded they had simply been overwhelmed by the number of dead, and had temporarily run out of body bags.

Echoing a fear expressed by many, Mr Alvero said the dead could be the source of contagious disease.

"The government needs to act fast because this could also become a health issue," he said.

Health Secretary Enrique Ona insisted the bodies did not pose a serious risk. Experts point out that a corpse can only carry a disease such as cholera if the disease was present before the person died.

"We have to assure our countrymen that ... there will not be an epidemic," he said. "The one thing we want is to identify them so we can give some peace to their relatives."

Identification is not always easy, for instance when whole families have died.

Teams have been dispatched to Tacloban from the Justice Department's investigating arm and the national police's crime laboratory.

They know they will not identify every body they find straight away, but hope to collect enough evidence to allow that to be done later.

"On the scene, our doctors begin the documentation," said chief superintendent Liza Sabong, head of the national police crime laboratory and part of the contingent sent to Tacloban.

"We tag them as male or female. They photograph them, list the belongings on the cadaver itself. We do fingerprinting. We measure the body and then they are placed in cadaver bags."

This "processing" will allow any surviving relatives at a later date to identify the body, possibly through its clothes or appearance, she said.

But the sheer scale of the task is overwhelming.

Only 13 of the 182 bodies collected by Ms Sabong's group have been picked up by their relatives, she said. The rest have been left behind.

Tacloban on November 12 began mass burials of some of those bodies that had been bagged and laid out by the shattered city hall.

The plan, said mayor Alfred Romualdez, was that all those whose name and family were known would be placed into one huge pit. The unidentified rest would go into a separate mass grave.

Mr Romualdez, who has been an outspoken critic of the rescue effort, said he believes three-quarters of all bodies collected had still not been claimed by family. — AFP



IN PICTURES

Corpses of victims of Super Typhoon Haiyan are lined up in Tacloban. Putrefying corpses in the ruined city exacerbate a growing health killed thousands. *Photo: AFP*

WASHINGTON

Obama: Health rollout deserves to be 'slapped'

BARACK Obama admitted on November 14 he deserved to be "slapped around" over the chaotic debut of his healthcare law, and pledged to work hard to restore confidence in his reeling presidency.

Mr Obama, with his approval rating tanking and fellow Democrats in open revolt, promised to fix website and coverage failures that have hampered the rollout of the new law and sparked an opening for gleeful Republicans.

The sports-mad president chose an American football metaphor to encapsulate his remorse.

"These are two fumbles on ... a big game, but the game's not over," Mr Obama said, announcing a plan to make good on his discredited promise that Americans who liked their existing healthcare plans could keep them.

"Everybody is properly focused on us not doing a good job on the rollout. And that's legitimate and I get it."

"There have been times where I thought we were, you know, slapped around a little bit unjustly. This one's deserved, all right? It's on us."

But the president denied that he had known ahead of the website's launch on October 1 that it would not work properly.

"Had I been informed, I wouldn't be going out saying, 'Boy, this is going to be great,'" Mr Obama said, though he warned that buying healthcare was a complicated business and was "never going to be like buying a song on iTunes".

Mr Obama's apology came as his second term risks being consumed by controversy over the healthcare law, with Capitol Hill Democrats par-



US President Barack Obama. *Photo: AFP*

ticularly showing signs of panic that plummeting public confidence in the president could hamper their own prospects in mid-term elections next year.

In a Quinnipiac University poll this week, the president's approval rating plunged to a lowest-ever 39 percent and surveys show his previously solid ratings on character and trust eroding.

Republicans, who en masse opposed Obamacare, immediately warned that his contrition did not go far enough.

"President Obama needs to admit that Obamacare cannot be fixed," said Eric Cantor, the Republican House Majority leader.

"Pointing fingers and claiming ignorance is not leadership. For four years, the president told the American

people they could keep the plans they liked and costs would go down, and even he now acknowledges that was simply not true."

Mitch McConnell, the top Republican in the Senate, insisted the only remedy was to dismantle the president's proudest domestic achievement.

"What makes this admission even worse is the fact that it was prompted not by the heartbreaking stories of millions of Americans, but by the private pleadings of a handful of endangered Democrats," Mr McConnell said.

"Americans are becoming increasingly aware of the fact Obamacare is broken beyond repair."

The president's current political woes stem partly from his repeated assurance that those with health care plans could keep them when Obamacare comes into force.

But that turned out not to be true as hundreds of thousands of Americans received notices from their health insurance companies that their policies would be cancelled as they did not satisfy the higher quality requirements of the new law.

Mr Obama announced on November 14 that policy cancellations would be postponed for a year while Obamacare's problems are fixed.

"The American people - those who got cancellation notices - deserve and have received an apology from me," Mr Obama said.

While admitting that the online marketplace for consumers to find new health plans had a "rough start", Mr Obama warned his political opponents not to try to overturn the entire law. — AFP



A soldier keeps vigil at a checkpoint where a curfew sign is displayed on the seventh day of the Typhoon Haiyan disaster in Tacloban. *Photo: AFP*



Australia catholic church inquiry urges changes

WORLD 35

‘Close your legs’ rape defence shocks New Zealand

WORLD 38



Hezbollah speaks out on Iran nuclear deal negotiations

WORLD 37



on the eastern island of Leyte on November 14. menace after one of the strongest storms on record

CAIRO

Nearly 1000 killed in Cairo since August 14 government crackdown

CLASHES in Cairo and its suburbs have killed at least 989 people since security forces launched an August 14 crackdown on supporters of ousted Egyptian president Mohamed Morsi, a forensic official said on November 14.

On August 14 itself, 627 people were killed when security forces stormed Cairo's Rabaa al-Adawiya square to disperse a sit-in by Mr Morsi's backers, said Hisham Abdul Hamid, spokesman for Egypt's forensic authorities.

The protesters had been calling for Mr Morsi's return after he was overthrown and imprisoned by the army on July 3.

Dozens more were also killed on August 14 in the capital's Nahda Square when police and troops dispersed a similar sit-in.

Abdul Hamid said the death toll was based on forensic details collected by several morgues in and around Cairo. It does not include security forces' casualties.

Egypt's military-installed authorities are engaged in a campaign against Islamist supporters of Mr Morsi,



A supporter of the Muslim Brotherhood and ousted president Mohamed Morsi holds up a placard that reads in Arabic, "Down with military rule". Photo: AFP

which has also seen more than 2000 people arrested since August 14.

Mr Morsi himself has been put on trial for charges related to deaths of protesters during his presidency.

Military chief General Abdel Fattah al-Sisi overthrew Mr Morsi, the country's first democratically elected president, after millions of Egyptians

took to the streets in July calling for the Islamist's resignation.

Protesters calling for his removal had accused Mr Morsi of working for the sole benefit of his Muslim Brotherhood, ruining an already dilapidated economy and monopolising power after the 2011 uprising that toppled long-time ruler Hosni Mubarak. – AFP

BOSTON

US mob kingpin Bulger gets two life terms

NOTORIOUS Boston underworld kingpin James "Whitey" Bulger was jailed for life on November 14 after a 40-year career of murder, extortion, money laundering, arms-trafficking and drug-dealing.

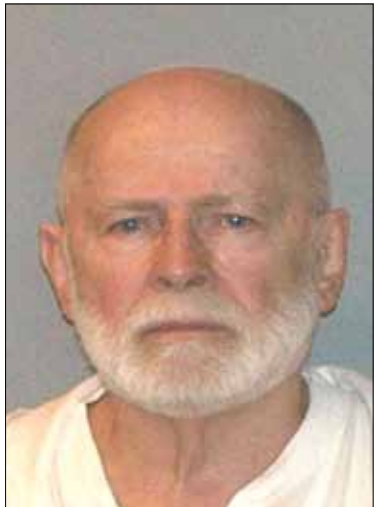
Mr Bulger, 84, who was arrested in 2011 after 16 years on the run, faces the prospect of dying in prison after Judge Denise Casper handed down two life terms and an additional five years in prison.

"The scope, the callousness, the depravity of your crimes is almost unfathomable," said Judge Casper, who ordered Mr Bulger to pay just over US\$19.5 million in restitution to his victims.

Mr Bulger, a former FBI informant, said only one word after sentencing, "Yes" when asked if he understood.

It was a dramatic end to the career of a man who provided the inspiration for Jack Nicholson's mob boss character in Martin Scorsese's Oscar-winning 2006 gangster film "The Departed".

Tom Donahue, whose father was



James "Whitey" Bulger. Photo: AFP

murdered by Mr Bulger, welcomed the verdict as offering "some closure".

"To hell with him. Next time I want to hear about him is that he's dead," he said.

A 12-person jury in August found the Irish-American octogenarian guilty of 31 separate charges that included 11 murders, extortion, money laundering and arms trafficking.

Judge Casper, who has won widespread praise for the aplomb with which she handled the two-month trial and enormously complex case, described Mr Bulger's crimes as "heinous".

"The motivation of your entire criminal history is based on money. It takes no business acumen to stick a gun in somebody," she told the US district court in Boston.

She read out the names of the 11 victims he was convicted of murdering and said it was impossible to know where to begin when faced with Mr Bulger's four-decade reign of terror.

"At times during the trial I wished we were watching a movie but it was real," she told the bespectacled, clean-shaven Mr Bulger, who sat impassively, wearing his short-sleeved, orange cotton jail uniform with a white long-sleeved jersey underneath.

"Your motivation behind these crimes or your entire criminal history is based upon money. Your crimes are all the more heinous because they were about money," Judge Casper said.

She said many of his victims' loved ones were still suffering and pointed out many had to wait years to find out how they died.

"The loss of a loved one is pain enough but to lose someone to violence is unimaginable," Judge Casper said.

She also gave voice to claims that other people are guilty.

"I considered you did not accomplish all your crimes by yourself and certainly you did have some FBI people in your pocket."

The trial, which featured 72 witnesses and 840 exhibits, produced chilling testimony worthy of a pulp novel.

It heard harrowing tales of teeth being pulled from the mouths of murder victims to foil their posthumous identification and the fatal strangulation of a mobster's girlfriend who "knew too much".

Mr Bulger refused to testify at his trial, saying the proceedings were "unfair and a sham" because it would not recognise what he claimed was immunity from prosecution given by federal agents.

Judge Casper said she had "struggled" with what would be just punishment for the nature and scope of his crimes, but dismissed Mr Bulger's complaints of a sham trial.

"Call it what you want, but in my estimation you received a fair trial," she said.

His lawyers said they would appeal the conviction.

Mr Bulger always denied being an FBI informant, but close links between some FBI agents in Boston and Mr Bulger's Winter Hill Gang in the 1970s and 1980s have been well documented.

Former FBI agent John Connolly is in prison after being convicted in 2002 of effectively becoming a member of the gang.

Mr Bulger was arrested in Santa Monica, California, where he had been living under an assumed name with his longtime girlfriend Catherine Greig.

She was sentenced separately to eight years for aiding and abetting him.

Police found some \$800,000 in cash and an arsenal of weapons in his modest apartment. – AFP

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For **Terumo Cardiovascular Systems Corporation**
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Dated. 18 November 2013

IN BRIEF**WASHINGTON****World Bank: end 'silly' debate**

WORLD Bank President Jim Yong Kim said on November 13 that the deadly typhoon disaster in the Philippines should put an end to "silly" arguments denying climate change.

"What I hope the tragedy in the Philippines helps us to do is to move away from having what I think are silly arguments about not really the science, but about science as a whole," Mr Kim said.

Speaking to journalists, Kim said people need to stop arguing over whether climate change is real, and do something about it.

"Ninety-five percent of climate scientists agree that anthropogenic (human-influenced) climate change is real, and that we have to do something about it or the impacts are going to be severe," he said.

SYDNEY**Australia PM to repeal climate tax**

AUSTRALIA'S new conservative Prime Minister Tony Abbott on November 13 moved to abolish a carbon tax designed to combat climate change as his first major economic reform since taking office.

Abbott said the September 7 election which he won decisively had been a referendum on the future of the tax.

He said the removal of the tax would strengthen the economy of Australia, which is among the world's worst per capita polluters due to its reliance on coal-fired power and mining exports.

Abbott had earlier been forced to wait for about an hour to move the legislation after Labor, which opposes the dismantling of the tax, stalled proceedings with debate about the government's nickname for opposition leader Bill Shorten. - AFP

COLOMBO

UK asks Sri Lanka to probe rape

BRITAIN on November 13 asked Sri Lanka to probe allegations that hundreds of men and women had been sexually assaulted by government forces during and after the island's drawn-out ethnic war.

Foreign Secretary William Hague told a public meeting in the Sri Lankan capital Colombo that Britain was concerned that no-one had been held accountable for rights abuses, including sexual assault and the use of rape to extract confessions.

He said there had been credible allegations, including those from a UN Panel of Experts, that Sri Lankan troops used sexual violence during their war against Tamil rebels and afterwards.

"I will be urging the Sri Lankan government to investigate these cases as they deserve," Mr Hague said.

Prime Minister David Cameron also promised to "shine a spotlight" on Sri Lanka's rights record ahead of a meeting of the Commonwealth Heads of Government in Colombo on November 15.

"Being in Sri Lanka does mean it's an opportunity to shine a spotlight on some of the problems there, some of the human rights issues," he said. "It's right to do that and that's exactly what I'll be doing."

Mr Cameron was responding to criticism from Sri Lanka's minister of mass media and communication, who dismissed the British premier's calls for an inquiry into alleged war crimes.

"We are a sovereign nation," Keheliya Rambukwella told the BBC. "You think someone can just make a demand from Sri Lanka."

"It can be a cordial request. We are not a colony. We are an independent state."

The New York-based Human Rights Watch (HRW) reported earlier this year that Sri Lankan security forces continue to use rape and other forms of sexual violence to torture suspected Tamil rebels four years after the end of the island's civil war.

HRW also claimed widespread rape of detain-



Pro-government activists block a train carrying Britain's Channel 4 television crew who made an award-winning documentary on alleged warcrimes in Sri Lanka, on the railway tracks at the north-central town of Anuradhapura on November 13. Photo: AFP

ees during the separatist conflict that ended in May 2009.

Mr Hague said there had been "progress" in economic development, clearing land mines and re-integrating some of the former rebels back in society.

But he said no-one had been held accountable for sexual crimes during and after the war ended.

"To date, nobody has been held to account for crimes of sexual violence," he said ahead of the Commonwealth meeting.

Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper is leading a boycott of the summit.

The prime ministers of India and Mauritius are also staying away from the meeting over Sri Lanka's human rights record.

Mr Cameron has also been under pressure to boycott the event, but he has promised to have "tough conversations" with President Mahinda Rajapakse about issues of accountability.

International rights groups say up to 40,000 civilians were killed by government forces in the final months of fighting in 2009, but the government has denied it killed a single civilian and has resisted calls for an international probe.

- AFP

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**WASHINGTON**

\$1m price for Laos poachers: US

US Secretary of State John Kerry on November 13 offered a US\$1 million reward to anyone who would help smash a Laos-based poaching network that slaughters endangered elephants and rhinos for their precious horns and ivory tusks.

The reward, which is the first of its kind by the US State Department, is targeting the Xaysavang poaching network which operates from Laos as far afield as South Africa, Mozambique, Thailand, Malaysia, Vietnam, and China.

"The involvement of sophisticated transnational criminal organizations in wildlife trafficking perpetuates corruption, threatens the rule of law and border security in fragile regions," Mr Kerry said in a statement.

He estimated that annual profits from wildlife trafficking reached as much as \$8 billion to \$10 billion, and were then pumped into other "illicit activities such as narcotics, arms, and human trafficking."

Another effect of poaching was that it "destabilizes communities that depend on wildlife for biodiversity and eco-tourism," he said.

Offering the department's first reward under the transnational organized crime rewards program, Mr Kerry said the Xaysavang network "facilitates the killing of endangered elephants, rhinos, and other species for products such as ivory."

He revealed that several major seizures of illegal wildlife products had been traced back to the network.

The lucrative Asian black market for rhino horn, used in traditional medicine, and ivory has driven a boom in poaching across Africa.

- AFP

Dust of corruption lingers over Nanjing

"It's like an eagle standing on the bank of a river catching fish: Some get



Mr Jiang is identified as head of the “Shanghai Clique” of officials with links to the commercial city, and is be-

China's new leaders aim to shift away from government-funded infrastructure projects as a key driver of economic growth to a more sustainable form of development.

– *AFP*

Afghan opium cultivation hits record high in 2013

An Afghan farmer collects raw opium as he works in a poppy field in Khoqyani District of Nangarhar province. Photo: AFP

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PARIS

EU fears for youth employment crisis

EUROPE'S leaders on November 12 put urgency into the search for a solution to high youth unemployment at a meeting in Paris on what is seen as the continent's most pressing challenge.

"What is important is to move quickly," stressed French President Francois Hollande, who hosted heads of state or government from 24 of the EU's 28 member states at the event.

The conference followed a July summit in Berlin initiated by German Chancellor Angela Merkel, who called youth unemployment "perhaps the most pressing problem facing Europe".

Triggering a raft of measures aimed at reversing the trend, she warned that the continent faced the emergence of a "lost generation".

Mr Hollande said a "youth guarantee" scheme, whereby young people are given jobs,

further education or training within four months of leaving school, would be put in place in the next two years.

To speed up the process, all member states who send in their plans for the scheme's implementation before the end of the year can "access the necessary financing from January 1".

European Commission president Jose Manuel Barroso said resources for the scheme depended on member states. "We need something concrete. We need fast results," he said.

According to the European Commission's latest statistics, the EU-wide youth joblessness rate stands at 23.5 percent. A total of 7.5 million aged 15-24 are not in work, education or training.

The sting of the crisis is felt differently across the bloc. The youth unemployment rate is pinned down at 7.7pc in Europe's healthiest economy

Germany, but soaring past 50pc in debt-crippled southern countries such as Greece and Spain.

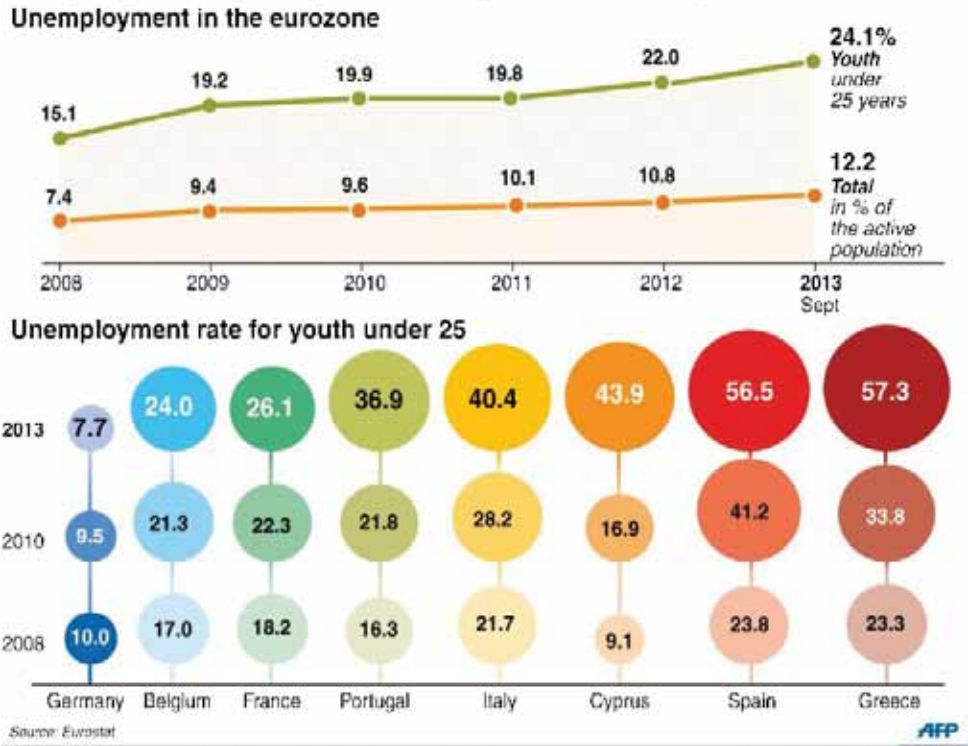
EU members have pledged 12 billion euros (US\$16 billion) over the next two years while the European Investment Bank and European Social Fund plan to spend similar amounts.

The focus on training can help Europe's youth become more employable but many observers argue no dramatic changes in joblessness statistics can be expected without economic growth.

"Without growth, there will be no jobs for the youth. Politics doesn't create jobs, business creates jobs," said Ms Merkel.

Mr Hollande, who is grappling with record-low popularity ratings, had made youth employment one of his mandate's top priorities. He has vowed a return to employment growth by year's end, but that looks an

Employment prospects are grim for Europe's under 25s



increasingly unlikely prospect.

"In 2014 unemployment will unfortunately remain too high, but there is perspective, there is hope," said European Council president Herman Van Rompuy.

Despite the new sense of urgency among the EU's leaders, critics say that Brussels' moves to ease the crisis often lack boldness and tend to rely too heavily on German policies that are not easily replicated.

— AFP

SYDNEY

Australia church child sex inquiry urges changes

AN Australian state inquiry into the handling of child sex cases by the Catholic Church on November 13 said religious leaders trivialised the problem and recommended concealment of abuse should be a crime.

Its report tabled in the Victorian parliament follows a long-running probe and concluded that "we can reasonably estimate that there have been several thousand victims criminally abused in non-government organisations in Victoria alone".

The most senior Catholic in Victoria, Melbourne Archbishop Denis Hart, admitted the church had been too slow to act on paedophile priests.

"I fully acknowledge that leaders in the church made mistakes – these are indefensible," he said.

The report, *Betrayal of Trust*, said failure to report serious child abuse should lead to prosecution, a move likely to conflict with the church's insistence that information gathered in the confessional should remain secret.

It also recommended: making it illegal to groom a child; a new state law making it a criminal offence to allow a child to remain at risk; and streamlined legislation to make it easier for victims to sue.

Victorian Premier Denis Napthine, who is a Catholic, said the state government would immediately begin drafting new legislation, which should be introduced to parliament early next year.

"I'm ashamed and embarrassed by the actions of the Catholic Church, or the lack of actions on these matters," he said. "The evidence throughout the report is that the Catholic Church has a lot to answer for in regard to their approach and culture, and their culture seemed to be one of protecting their priests and putting the interests of the church ahead of the interests of children and victims."

The report, which focused on the church but also examined other non-government groups including the Salvation Army, said it was "beyond dispute that some trusted organisations made a deliberate choice not to follow processes for reporting and responding to allegations of criminal child abuse".

"There has been been a substantial body of credible evidence presented to

the inquiry and ultimately concessions made by senior representatives of religious bodies, including the Catholic Church, that they had taken steps with the direct objective of concealing wrongdoing."

The inquiry heard "graphic accounts that detailed horrendous and traumatic experiences of victims abused as children in the care of non-government organisations that spanned a period of decades through to more recent times".

It found the Catholic Church had often trivialised the problem, shielded abusers or failed to disclose what was going on.

Archbishop Hart said, "I have to accept that church leaders in the past concealed crimes and caused other children to be offended against."

Inquiry committee chairwoman Georgie Crozier said children had suffered terribly.

"Children were betrayed by trusted figures in organisations of high standing and suffered unimaginable harm," she said.

"Parents of these children experienced a betrayal beyond comprehension. And the community was betrayed by the failure of organisations to protect children in their care."

Victim support group Broken Rites said the report was "a real milestone in this journey".

"It validates that the victims are not guilty in any way and the church, through their neglect of their duty, are the ones at fault," said spokesman John McNally. — AFP



Pope Francis gives his blessing at the Italian Union for the transportation of sick people to Lourdes and Shrines on November 9. Photo: AFP

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IN BRIEF

Amman

Jordan dailies strike in protest at state 'interference'

JORDAN'S largest daily, the government-owned *Al-Rai*, and its sister newspaper suspended publication on November 12 after staff held a one-day strike in protest at state "interference".

"*Al-Rai* and *Jordan Times* did not publish today after employees at the Jordan Press Foundation, which publishes the two dailies, observed a one-day strike on Monday," *Al-Rai* said on its website.

The unprecedented strike "came in protest at government interference and procrastination in implementing a 2011 labour agreement" on salaries, according to the notice. — AFP

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LONDON

'Spy in the bag' death accidental: UK police

Family of British spy whose remains were discovered inside a locked sports bag continue to contest the official verdict of 'accidental death'

A BRITISH spy whose naked body was found locked in a sports bag inside a bathtub three years ago most likely killed himself by accident, police said on November 13.

A fresh review of the mysterious "spy in the bag" case has concluded that 31-year-old Gareth Williams, a codebreaker for the MI6 foreign intelligence agency, was not murdered but had climbed into the bag without assistance.

The police findings contradict those of a coroner who concluded at an inquest last year that another person was probably involved in Gareth Williams's death.

"My personal view at the end of the investigation is that what happened was an accident," Martin Hewitt, deputy assistant commissioner of London's Metropolitan Police, told reporters.

"I am convinced that Gareth's death was in no way related to his work."

He admitted that several "odd" factors remained – notably the fact that no DNA was found on the padlock and there were no handprints on the bathtub.

The decomposed body of the talented mathematician was found locked in a red North Face holdall inside the bath of his flat in London's upmarket Pimlico district in August 2010.

Mr Hewitt refused to speculate whether the spy's death was linked to his alleged interest in escapology and bondage.

Coroner Fiona Wilcox concluded at the inquest last May that Gareth Williams probably died of suffocation or poisoning.

She had heard from experts who had repeatedly failed to padlock themselves into bags identical to his. One expert said escapologist Harry Houdini "would have struggled" to pull off the feat.

Gareth Williams' family said on November 12 that they stood by the coroner's view that someone else was probably involved in his death.

"We consider that [on] the basis of the facts at present known the



late British intelligence analyst Gareth Williams. Photo: AFP

coroner's verdict accurately reflects the circumstances of Gareth's death," they said in a statement.

"We are naturally disappointed that it is still not possible to state with certainty how Gareth died and the fact that the circumstances of his death are still unknown adds to our grief."

'My personal view at the end of the investigation is that what happened was an accident.'

Martin Hewitt

London metropolitan police

Mr Hewitt said police were satisfied that it was "theoretically possible" for a man to lock himself in the bag, and stressed that this had been

accepted by the coroner.

"The point is that we're satisfied that theoretically you could achieve that," he told reporters.

"Gareth's physical stature, Gareth's strength – my belief is that it would have been possible for him to do that."

Mr Hewitt acknowledged that several factors – including the lack of DNA on the padlock and the fact that the heating was on full-blast in the flat, despite it being mid-summer – had been used to support the theory that Gareth Williams was murdered.

"Most of the fundamental questions in relation to how Gareth died remain unanswered," he said.

"It is unlikely that his death will ever be satisfactorily explained."

Mr Hewitt insisted that the police investigation had enjoyed the full cooperation of the intelligence services, including access to Gareth Williams' personnel and vetting files.

Gareth Williams was a codebreaker for the British eavesdropping agency GCHQ but was working at MI6 on secondment when he died.

His death sparked a fierce debate about whether he had been murdered because of his work.

No one has been arrested over the death.

Mr Hewitt said it was "beyond credibility" that the secret services had been involved in some form of cover-up.

"I do not believe that I have had the wool pulled over my eyes. I believe that what we are dealing with is a tragic unexplained death."

He added that there was no evidence to suggest that Gareth Williams' flat had undergone a "forensic clean" before his body was found.

The inquest had heard that the area around the bathtub was strangely clean of evidence, but Mr Hewitt said police had found fingerprints and traces of DNA dating back several years.

Some "unidentified" traces of DNA were found within the flat, he said, but none that would suggest there was another person present when the spy died. — AFP

LONDON

Man who endangered Pakistan plane was an 'idiot', not a terrorist

A MAN accused of sparking a security alert on a Pakistan International Airways plane acted like an "idiot" but did not make a serious bomb threat, a British court heard on November 13.

Mohammed Safdar, 42, and his friend Tayyab Subhani, 30, were arrested in May after their flight from Lahore to Manchester in northwest England had to make an emergency diversion to London's Stansted Airport.

Britain scrambled Typhoon fighter jets to intercept the flight.

The British-born pair deny endangering the plane.

A previous court hearing was told that the men had become aggressive towards airline stewards and had made false threats that the "crew and passengers would be killed and the aircraft blown up before landing".

But a passenger on the flight told the men's trial in Chelmsford, southeast England, that although Mr Safdar had acted like an "idiot", he had not made a serious bomb threat and other travellers had not felt threatened.

"I heard the men say jokingly between themselves 'I bet they think there's a bomb on the plane,'" Ferzana Rana told the court.

"He was swearing in Urdu and a lot of the words and language were not something anybody would want to repeat."

Mr Safdar twice told a steward "I'm going to kill you" in Urdu, she added.

But asked if the steward had taken the remarks seriously, she said, "No, it was just an idiotic remark."

Once on the ground, many passengers expressed annoyance that the flight had been diverted over a "trivial incident", Ms Rana told the court.

Mr Subhani had encouraged Mr Safdar but had not behaved in an abusive manner, she added.

The men, from Lancashire in northwest England, claim the allegations are made up and that cabin crew encouraged passengers to corroborate their story. They had been returning from Mr Safdar's mother's funeral in Pakistan.

Prosecutors have stressed that the pair are not Islamic extremists or "terrorists" but that the crew was forced to take the threats seriously.

"Such utterances, if made at ground level, may sometimes be capable of being ignored," prosecutor Brian O'Neill told the court as the trial opened on Tuesday.

"But when those threats are made in flight at 30,000 feet on a commercial jet, that's not an option."

Once on the ground, the plane was surrounded by armed police under a full-scale bomb alert.

The trial is expected to last five weeks. — AFP

RIYADH



Illegal migrants wait with their belongings under police watch to be transferred by police buses on November 13. Photo: AFP

Sudanese killed in Saudi illegal immigrants clashes

RENEWED clashes on November 13 between Saudis and illegal migrants, targeted in a nationwide campaign, killed one person and wounded 17, police said.

A Sudanese died as Saudis clashed with illegal migrants in the southern Riyadh neighbourhood of Manfuhah, the scene of riots over recent days, police said in a statement carried by SPA state news agency.

Illegal migrants “rioted, hurling rocks at passersby and cars”, police said, before forces intervened and “controlled” the situation.

Last week, the ultra-conservative kingdom began rounding up thousands of illegals following the expiry on November 4 of a final amnesty for them to formalise their status.

Among them are foreigners who overstayed their visas, pilgrims who have sought jobs and migrants working under one sponsor trying to get jobs elsewhere.

Police had deployed in force in Manfuhah following clashes between Saudis and migrants, mostly reportedly African.

Three Ethiopians have been killed in clashes in the kingdom, according to their country’s foreign ministry.

Some 23,000 Ethiopians had handed themselves in.

Many illegal migrants living in the area turned themselves in to police to be deported.

Expatriates account for a full 9 million of the oil-rich kingdom’s population of 27 million.

The lure of work, even in low-paid jobs as domestics or construction workers, has made the country a magnet for migrants from Asia as well as from poorer Arab states.

Nearly a million migrants – Bangladeshis, Filipinos, Indians, Nepalis, Pakistanis and Yemenis among them – took advantage of the amnesty to leave.

Another roughly 4 million illegal immigrants were able to find employers to sponsor them.

Despite its huge oil wealth, Saudi Arabia has a jobless rate of more than 12.5 percent among its native population, a figure the government has long sought to cut.

The crackdown was marred by clashes between police and Ethiopian migrants on Saturday that led to the deaths of three people in the poor Manfuhah neighbourhood of Riyadh.

Ambassador Muhammed Hassan Kabiera told the English-language Arab News daily that the clashes “occurred because the illegal workers were frustrated they did not have a way to surrender to the police”.

The workers took to the streets to voice their concerns, prompting “clashes with some youths in the neighbourhood”, he said.

– AFP

BEIRUT

Hezbollah warns of ‘war’ if no Iran deal

HEZBOLLAH chief Hassan Nasrallah warned in a rare public appearance on November 13 that failure to strike a deal with ally Iran over its nuclear program would spell “war in the region”.

Mr Nasrallah, who normally appears via video link for fear of assassination by arch-enemy Israel, spoke in Hezbollah’s southern Beirut stronghold to mark the Shiite Muslim Ashura holiday.

World powers failed to reach an agreement with Iran over the weekend to curb its controversial nuclear program in exchange for some relief from crippling Western sanctions despite marathon high-profile talks in Geneva.

The West and Israel have long suspected Iran is pursuing a nuclear weapons capability alongside its civilian program, allegations fiercely denied by Tehran.

“What is the alternative to a deal with Iran and the countries of the world?” he asked. “The alternative is war in the region.”

And he pointed the finger at Israel, accusing it of being in league with Arab countries.

“Israel does not want any accord that would avert war in the region.

“It is regrettable that some Arab countries take the Israeli side in its murderous choices.

“It is regrettable that [Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin] Netanyahu is the spokesman for some Arab countries”

This was an apparent reference to Sunni Muslim Saudi Arabia and Qatar, who are strong backers of the rebellion against Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, with whom Iran and Hezbollah are allied.

“These countries reject any political solution that would stop the bloodbath and destruction in Syria. They also strongly oppose any accord between Iran and the countries of the world.

“We have two allies – Iran and Syria,” he said, adding, “We are sure of that alliance.” – AFP



The head of Lebanon’s militant Shiite Muslim movement Hezbollah, Hassan Nasrallah speaks during a rare live appearance from Beirut’s southern suburb neighbourhood of Rweiss on November 13. Photo: AFP

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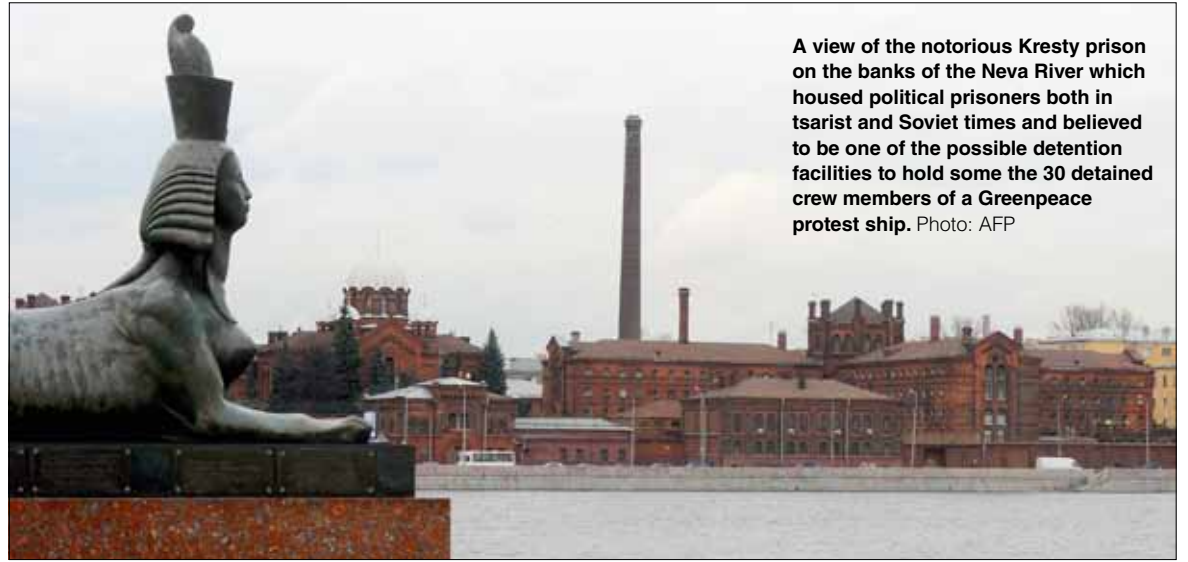
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MOSCOW

A view of the notorious Kresty prison on the banks of the Neva River which housed political prisoners both in tsarist and Soviet times and believed to be one of the possible detention facilities to hold some the 30 detained crew members of a Greenpeace protest ship. Photo: AFP

Notorious jail now home for Arctic activists

ITS red-bricked walls looming ominously on the banks of the Neva River, the Kresty jail in St Petersburg has housed detainees ranging from Trotsky to Soviet dissidents in its 120-year history spread between the tsarist era, the USSR and modern Russia.

The roll call of the prison's high-profile detainees has now been joined by at least half a dozen of the 30 Greenpeace activists arrested by Russia for a protest in the Arctic against oil drilling.

The Russian prison authorities on November 12 sent the 30 Greenpeace activists to three different jails in St Petersburg, including Kresty, after transferring them from the Arctic Circle city of Murmansk.

It is behind the famous red brick walls of the prison that the detainees will likely wait for news of when their trial will start and while away the hours as their governments work behind the scenes for a possible solution to the case.

Kresty is a prominent landmark in St Petersburg, in the centre and easily visible to the thousands of tourists who take cruises on the Neva River in summer.

But the walls hide a dark and disturbing history that began in 1890 when the Tsarist authorities commissioned a new prison that would

be the most modern and biggest in Europe in its time.

The bold design in two cross shapes gave the prison the name by which it is universally known in Russian - Kresty - which simply means “Crosses”. The prison also has a church which was consecrated in 1890.

Before the Russian Revolution, it housed enemies of the Tsarist state like Alexander Kerensky, who would lead the February Revolution, and Anatoly Luncharsky who would become Lenin's top cultural official, as well as Leon Trotsky himself.

But after the revolution, it was the enemies of Bolshevism who found themselves in the prison, especially during Stalin's 1930s purges when its cells were filled with the victims of political repression.

These included the historian Lev Gumilev, whose mother, the great Russian poet Anna Akhmatova, would wait outside the walls of the prison in the hope of passing him a package.

She immortalised the agony of having loved ones in Kresty in her classic poem “Requiem”, writing of waiting. “The three-hundredth person in line, with a package” outside the Kresty walls, “As you burn through the New Year ice/ With your hot tear”.

Also detained in the dark years of repression was the great Soviet

general Konstantin Rokossovsky, whom Stalin would eventually allow to be released to play a key role in the military defeat of Nazi Germany.

Since 1964, Kresty has been a so-called Investigative Isolator - a prison where detainees are held pending trials, a period that can last even years in Russia. Its formal title is now Investigative Isolator Number 1 of St Petersburg.

“The employees of Investigative Isolator Number 1 carry out their official duties in the best traditions of previous generations,” its official website proudly boasts.

The prison even has a museum, but according to the website it is currently closed to visitors.

The Greenpeace detainees may find some distractions: Prisoners in October played football against a team of seminary students, and the website says that the “isolator has always been known for its success in mini-football”.

Last month, guards and prisoners also took part in a prison production of Dostoyevsky's classic novel “Crime and Punishment”.

“The choice of subject was no accident,” according to the prison website, adding that the “great acting did not leave the audience indifferent”. - AFP

WELLINGTON

Anger in New Zealand as court hears ‘close your legs’ rape defence

VICTIM'S rights advocates in New Zealand on November 14 condemned a defence lawyer who told a rape victim she should have “closed her legs” if she wanted to avoid having sex.

Defence lawyer Keith Jefferies made the remarks when summing up at the trial of his client, a nightclub bouncer who was convicted of rape in Wellington District Court on November 13, *The Dominion Post* reported.

The newspaper said the 20-year-old woman was drunk in the central business district when the bouncer, George Pule, approached her and told her that he could get her into a nightclub where her friends were socialising.

Instead he led her down an alley and raped her, although Mr Jefferies said the victim did not struggle or cry out.

“All she would have had to do was to close her legs ... it's as simple as that,” the newspaper quoted him as saying in his closing arguments.

“Why didn't she do that? The reason she didn't do that was because the sex was consensual, as easy as that.”

Natalie Gousmett from the Wellington Rape Crisis Centre said the remarks were “horrific” and attempted to shift the blame for sexual assault onto the victim.

She said the case, and the so-called “Roastbusters” controversy - which involved a group of Auckland youths boasting online about having group sex with underage girls - had thrown a spotlight on attitudes to sexual assault in New Zealand.

“It is an example of victim-blaming comments and rape culture, which we've seen all too much in the last week-and-a-half,” she said.

“It's very offensive obviously, and harmful for the victim and her family.”

Mr Jefferies conceded he had made the comments but said they came while defending his client and did not reflect his personal views.

He said he was quoted out of context and that for anyone to fully understand what he meant they would have had to have attended the entire trial, which involved complex issues of consent.

“If there had been anything unduly wrong with what I said I would've been reprimanded by the judge and also the crown lawyer would have complained,” he told commercial radio on November 14.

“It was relative to the facts of this particular case.”

The Dominion Post said prosecutor Geraldine Kelly told the court that the victim, who was not identified, did not fight back because she was petrified of her attacker.

“No, she didn't fight back. She didn't scream her head off. She didn't go running into the street screaming ‘Rape!’” Ms Kelly said.

“But this isn't an American TV show, this is real life. She was scared, and she didn't want to make the situation worse.”

Mr Pule is awaiting sentencing.

- AFP

FRANKFURT

Family kidnaps son to get him out of Syria

MICHAEL BIRNBAUM AND
SOUAD MEKHENNET

FOR hours, she had been worrying about her 16-year-old son, Pero. He said he planned to attend a rally downtown, then sleep over at a friend's house. But he had disappeared.

The next morning, his mother's cellphone rang.

"Where are you?" she cried, angry but relieved to hear from him.

She burst into tears at the answer.

"I'm in Syria," he said.

The previous evening, Pero and 22 others, including at least four teenagers, took a budget flight to the Turkish resort city of Antalya and continued by road to the border with Syria.

The group was part of an increasing number of European Muslims seeking to fight in the Syrian civil war alongside extremist groups, some of them linked to al-Qaeda. And security officials worry that some of these volunteers will return radicalised and determined to strike in Europe.

But for members of one Frankfurt family, the secret departure of their teenager sparked an elemental obsession: how to snatch their baby-faced but troubled boy back from his chosen path of martyrdom.

The gawky late-bloomer, the darling of a close-knit Muslim family that immigrated to Germany from the Balkan nation of Macedonia before Pero was born, had grown pious and distant over the previous year.

The old Pero loved chess and Kermit the Frog, and blushed when his Aunt Serce's female friends pecked him on the cheek.

The new Pero attended a conservative mosque, whispered prayers under his breath and raged at his father's consumption of alcohol, puzzling a family that had a far more casual relationship with Islam.

In ultraconservative mosques in cities across Europe, Syria has become the focus of a widening fury. Imams sermonise about atrocities committed by Syrian government forces and urge their young faithful to join the struggle there to topple President Bashar Assad and create an Islamic state.

Bargain flights to Turkey abound, and the citizens of some countries, including Germany, need to show only a government identity card, not a passport, to enter, frustrating authorities' attempts to restrict movement by confiscating travel documents.

Precisely how many Europeans have travelled to Syria is difficult to track, but counterterrorism officials in the European Union estimate the number at 800 to 900, principally from Britain, France, the Netherlands, Belgium and Germany.

Pero's road to Syria started a year ago, shortly after his father, Mitko, returned to the Frankfurt area after an absence of seven years, some of that



A rebel fighter points his weapon as he stands amid rubble and debris during clashes with Syrian government forces in the northeastern city of Deir Ezzor on November 11. Photo: AFP

time spent in prison on a drug-distribution conviction. Father and son had a tough time getting used to each other, especially in the cramped Frankfurt apartment where Pero had to sleep on a cot in the corner of the living room while his two sisters shared a bedroom. He started hanging out with new friends at a local mosque.

Eventually, the talk turned to the civil war in Syria and the desire to establish an Islamic state.

"I had no idea how to handle it," said Mitko, a muscular, compact man with a wisp of a beard. "I thought it would be enough to make sure my children weren't lacking for money."

On the day they left for Syria, Pero and his companions gathered with 700 others to listen to Pierre Vogel, a man who is described as a radical preacher by German and European security and intelligence officials.

Mr Vogel is a 35-year-old former boxer and native-born German who converted to Islam in 2001. He exhorted the crowd, gathered on a plaza lined with luxury boutiques, to give money to the men wearing orange T-shirts that read "Donations for Syria."

Pero's parents immediately notified German authorities that their son was in Syria.

"He hasn't said a whole lot about life in Syria," Mitko said, looking at the photos of his son scattered around his sister's living room.

Pero told his family that he was living in a house filled with other single men, all German speakers, somewhere close to a camp.

He wouldn't talk about his training, but the family got some glimpses of his life.

The surrounding town had shops that sold doner, a German-Turkish snack similar to gyros, and the group would occasionally slaughter a lamb for dinner. But Pero also complained about being hungry, and his parents worried that he wasn't getting enough to eat.

When Pero's family called him during the day, his phone was always turned off — he wasn't allowed to take

it to training. He was reachable at 9pm, usually through a Turkish superior at the camp who had once lived in Frankfurt, the parents said.

Mitko said Pero's superior told him that the most helpful thing the family could do was to buy their son an AK-47 assault rifle or a bulletproof vest.

Pero's family feared that he was about to vanish into the war.

Mitko arranged to meet with a conservative imam named Hesham Shashaa who has gained prominence for his efforts to fight radicalisation within Germany's Islamic community.

Shashaa offered several options: reason with Pero, telling him that the Koran puts family obligations first and condemns violence; or convince him that his mother is sick and that he needs to come home, or at least visit her on the Turkish side of the Syrian border.

There was also another option, Shashaa suggested.

"Kidnap him."

Five days after Mitko met with the imam, Pero agreed, over Skype, to meet his mother and his aunt in Turkey near the border. "Maybe this is our last chance," Pero's mother, Bagica, told a reporter one evening in her family's cramped apartment.

"He might not come alone," Pero's father said. "It might be a bit dangerous, but I can't stand here and watch as I lose my son."

A Turkish police officer who is a family friend put Pero's parents in touch with counterterrorism officials in the border region. Pero's father flew that night. His mother and aunt followed the next day.

It was a long journey — first to Istanbul, then a puddle-jumper flight to the southern city of Adana, then a dusty ride in a rented van to Antakya, a Turkish town just 15 miles from the Syrian border. On a Monday, the trio had breakfast with Turkish anti-terrorism police and told them to be ready to take Pero into custody the next day.

As the hour drew near, six plainclothes police officers posted themselves in cars parked at the front and rear exits of the hotel. Serce was waiting in the hotel lobby. Mitko was keeping a lookout from one of the cars.

At 3pm, a text message: "Where are you, Mama? ... I'm coming."

Pero arrived by bus. When he stepped off, he was alone.

His father gave the signal. The police officers got out of the car, took Pero by the arms and led him into the hotel. He wasn't armed. He didn't fight back, his aunt said.

Mitko stroked his son's arm as Pero embraced his mother. Mitko was crying, too, the first time that Serce could remember seeing him weep.

"The little one was a bit shocked that he had been captured," she added.

Eventually, after praying at the hotel, Pero got into a car with his family and went home. — *The Washington Post*



Imam Hesham Shashaa prepares to pray in a mosque in Leipzig, Germany. Photo: The Washington Post

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Dated: 18 November 2013

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Dated. November 18, 2013



Chin women once wore facial tattoos to signify tribal allegiance. But changing times mean the tattoo habit is no longer as indelible as it once was

Tradition's fading marks

It's a little bit painful but I thought that I'd be beautiful like the others," Daw Khui Shing Awi says, speaking in Chin with a bashful smile.

Under a hazy evening in Mindat, Chin State, the 71-year-old is discussing the tattoos she's had on her face for nearly five decades.

Of Myanmar's over 130 ethnic groups, more than 50 are Chin, and in the past the women of each tribe would wear distinct tattoo designs, including: *pa mae*, which covers the whole face including the ears and eyelids; *pa pyouk*, which drops black spots across the whole face; *pa khyang*, which puts eight lines across each cheek; *pa kyar*, which draws four lines and four drops; and *pa wine*, which mixes circles and lines.

"I didn't think of anything except having those tattoos on my face," remembers Daw Khui Shing, a member of an ethnic group calling themselves Mun, "because all of my friends and relatives were having them too in that time."

But "that time" is decades ago now, and today tattoo-wearers are an ageing breed.

Still, even as they see it vanishing before their eyes, many continue to believe in the importance of the tradition.

Daw Khui Shing Awi was encouraged to get tattooed by her parents.

She says the tattoos make Chin people look "more beautiful" when paired with traditional costumes, large earrings and necklaces.

Called *ming* in Chin, facial tattoos are made from heating the bark of green pine trees and capturing the smoke in a mud pot. The smoke is then mixed with a kind of bean leas and the resulting liquid is injected under the skin, using the thorn of a cane plant.

"Afterward we had to wash our faces for two days," remembers Daw Khui Shing Awi. "Though it was painful, there was no blood. If there was no marking visible after washing, we needed to make it again because the liquid of the tattoo was not good."

There are many stories about the origins of Chin tattoos, but the most influential is that a Burmese king married a beautiful Chin lady and brought her back from Chin State to his palace. When his new bride, unhappy in her new surroundings, snuck away to return home, she disguised herself for her journey by using a knife to make incisions in her face. Later, the Chin adopted facial markings as part of their culture.

Daw Gei Sein, a 75 year-old Mun, 75, says the markings have since taken on deeper significance.

"The king of hell will call those without tattoos on their faces," she says. "The gods will show goodness only to the girls with tattoos. Those

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without tattoos will only be shown the bad ways."

In spite of her beliefs, Daw Gei Sein says peer pressure was what pushed her into getting her own tattoos.

"My mother forced me to do it but in my mind I was really afraid. On the other hand, I wanted to be a real Chin woman who keeps her culture. All girls wore tattoos on their faces, so that's why I didn't argue," Daw Gei Sein says.

Daw Hung Hnyein Pai, 80, of the Dei ethnic group, says that in the past it was crucial to get tattooed before marriage.

"If we had tattoos before marriage, our partner recognised our love and thought it was true, so we used to be tattooed young" - and alone, as well, she adds, due to a belief that someone else watching would make the procedure more painful.

While Daw Hung Hnyein Pai says she does not feel a bond with women who don't have tattoos, her own family has not carried on the tradition.

"I was very glad to be tattooed but all my four daughters didn't get it

done as they were afraid of the pain," she says. "I don't blame my daughters for going without tattoos, because they make themselves look good by using thanakha. Though I have tattoos to be known as a Chin, it doesn't make me more beautiful."

She adds that facial tattoos are more beautiful on those with young skin, but when people grow older, it becomes uglier.

Daw Laung Ya, who is over 100 years old, disagrees. She says she doesn't use any soap on her face, believing it will blur the beauty of the black tattoo designs descending across her face according to the traditional M'kang pattern of her group.

"Faces without tattoos, and also without the help of make-up and thanakha, look uglier with oily skin. I feel the tattoos make the face naturally beautiful without any help."

But against her hopes, Daw Laung Ya's own family has given up the tradition.

"We criticised women who were afraid to be tattooed in the past, but my grandchildren and great-grandchildren don't have any on their faces," Daw Laung Ya says.

Those getting tattoos used to need to make appointments in advance, ahead of the rainy season during which it was believed the process did not hurt as much. They also needed to bring payment, something U Shing Phui Ling, who

researches Chin tattoo culture, says was typical.

"For the price of making tattoos, they needed to give a small pig, K10 and a pot of traditional juice. They believed it was less painful if they drank more traditional juice. But actually, the juice made them feel dizzy, I think."

U Shing Phui Ling says the habit of making tattoos on faces started from the border of Chin State, but the arrival of Christian missionaries in the area, combined with a ban on the tattoos by the Revolutionary Council that ruled from 1962 to 1974, led to the tradition's subsequent decline.

For some, the attraction is still powerful. U Ha Ling, the former head of the education department of Mindat township, now retired, is married to a Chin woman who wears the traditional tattoos on her face.

"I feel a woman who fills her face with traditional tattoos is more brave and beautiful than those who don't. When I was teenager, I liked only those women," U Ha Ling says.

Still, most people today see Chin tattoos only in books, Daw Khui Shing Awi says.

"I don't know if our culture was right or wrong but I found whenever I visited the cities that all women who wear tattoos are old and near to death," she says.

"The tattoo habit will surely disappear when we die."



An intimate glimpse into Daw Aung San Su



Photo: Boothee

u Kyi's daily life during her darkest years

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The members of 'Black Voices'. Photo: Supplied

Soul standards unplugged

World-renowned group to play free show on November 20

NANDAR AUNG

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BRITISH all-female vocal group Black Voices have worked with everyone from Wynton Marsalis to Ray Charles and Nina Simone. They've performed for British royalty, the Pope and Nelson Mandela.

But lucky for you, you don't have to be a world-class talent to get within earshot – not with a free show happening this Wednesday at Yangon's Strand Hotel.

Invited by British Council, Black Voices will perform at the Strand on November 20 at 6:30pm. Sharing

the stage with Black Voices will be performers from Gitameit, a non-profit music school in Yangon.

"We are very pleased indeed to be able to present Black Voices for the first time in Myanmar in collaboration with our friends at Gitameit," said Kevin Mackenzie, director of the British Council in Myanmar.

"Black Voices is the leading all-female a cappella collective in Europe. They are globally celebrated for the unique form of a cappella singing in the Black oral tradition that they bring to the world stage."

Founded in 1987 and led by musical director Carol Pemberton,

Black Voices perform a capella – literally "in chapel style", or without accompanying instruments. Blending jazz, gospel, pop and reggae, and reflecting African, Caribbean and British musical heritages, the group has recorded multiple albums and made radio and television appearances in several countries.

Prior to the concert, Black Voices will be conducting a workshop at Legacy Music Academy for members of the Myanmar Music Association and students from the National University of Arts and Culture, Gitameit and the Institute of Theology's Music Department on November 19.

KABUL

Afghanistan's modern artists puzzle and provoke

SHOCKING, intimate and often bemusing to outsiders, the modern art produced by a small group of young Afghans would come as a surprise to connoisseurs who stalk the galleries of New York, London and Tokyo.

At work in small studios and spare rooms in Kabul, they make pieces that seem far away from the harsh, practical world outside, where many Afghans focus on surviving the bloody 12-year insurgency.

Picasso, Damien Hirst and Chinese dissident Ai Weiwei are among their influences, but they also admit that Afghanistan's long war has had an inescapable effect on their work.

Arif Bahaduri, 22, uses medical plasters to make three-dimensional images at his US\$100-a-month rented studio in south Kabul, and he is now preparing a 30-minute piece of performance art.

"It will be one of the first-ever such events in Afghanistan," he told AFP, wearing a chic black linen jacket and black T-shirt.

"I can't say exactly how it will go or what will happen, but it is an expression of my deepest inner feelings and identity."

Bahaduri will present his live show later this month at the Afghan Contemporary Art Prize, an annual competition to encourage local artists to move beyond sketches of market-places and landscapes.

"My complete wish is to live as a professional artist, but my family are not happy because I took a year out of my psychology course at university to do this," he said. "They do not understand."

"I work with plasters to represent pain and unhealed wounds, and now I hope my performance piece will lead me in a new direction."

From 106 applicants, 10 artists were chosen to compete in the final round of this year's prize, which is funded by the Turquoise Mountain Foundation, an Afghan arts organisation.

The contestants received an intensive two weeks of workshops and lectures to immerse them in modern art,

and then had one month to produce a competition piece for an exhibition opening on November 16.

"A lot of what we saw in the workshops was new to me and it had a big effect, and I looked in many books and on the internet," said Bahaduri, naming Serbian-born performance artist Marina Abramovic as his current inspiration.

Also among the finalists is Orna, who is casting her naked back for her prize entry – an idea that could provoke outrage in conservative Islamic Afghanistan.

"The cast is part of a body that I have made that has no arms and no legs," said Orna, 22.

"I was born in exile in Iran and this is my reaction to coming to Afghanistan and seeing so many people missing one foot due to bombs and mines."

Orna, who only uses one name, admits that her family do not know anything about her art and that it would perplex many Afghans, but she says there is a strong and supportive community of fellow artists in Kabul.

"Some friends worry that it will be a problem for me to have used my own body, but this is what I am determined to do," she said, citing existentialist author Franz Kafka as a source of ideas.

"Only a few people understand. Many people here are more concerned about how to feed themselves. They don't think about galleries and they shouldn't be blamed for that."

The artists are being mentored by Francesca Recchia, a Kabul-based Italian academic who says the experience has been one of the most rewarding of her decades of working in the arts.

"It has not been easy organising a competition like this in Kabul, but it has been great to see the artists engage with new ideas and question their own artistic language," she said.

The art prize, which was established in 2008, will be judged by a jury of experts before the exhibition opens, with the winner receiving \$1,500 and second place \$800. – AFP



Mr. Baqir Ahmadi poses for a photo beside a piece of his artwork at his studio in Kabul. Photo: AFP



Music student Meena practices the violin at "Kabul School of Rock" in Kabul.

Photo: AFP

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29.11.13



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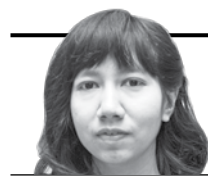
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Hands tell the history



ZON PANN
PWINT

zonpann08@gmail.com

DURING his stay in England, artist Htein Lin broke his arm and was in plaster for months. As a former political prisoner, it began to dawn on him that plaster is like a political prisoners, as it holds broken bones in place just as the political prisoners hold the system that was bankrupt in place.

One day, the inspiration just came to make copies of the hands of former political prisoners by using plaster.

"It is believed that there are 3000 political prisoners in Myanmar. I imagined the hands of the political prisoners will make a visual record of their prison memoir," artist Htein Lin told *The Myanmar Times*.

His inspiration was soon realized. His return to Yangon was timed to coincide with the president's amnesty for political prisoners.

"At the time, many political prisoners had been freed," he added. But he kicked off the project just two months ago.

Artist Htein Lin served a six-year prison sentence from 1998 to 2004 for his performance arts. His prison time was occupied with painting. His white prison uniforms were his canvases and he replaced the

paintbrush with his fingers. In prison, he entertained fellow inmates with jokes and songs.

"Like plaster, political prisoners have corrected the system that was broken. I visit each prisoner's house, apply the plaster and make a copy of their hands," he said.

"I ask them what they think of prison, what it was like for them and how they managed to get through the dark days while I am the making copy of the hand and I write it on paper to document it," he said.

So far he has made about 120 plaster hands of 120 political prisoners.

"In Europe, there are museums dedicated to remembering mass murder of Jews in the Holocaust and the Killing Fields Museum in Cambodia," Htein Lin said.

"A visit to the museum makes us feel as if we are living in its period. But there is no such museum to record the past history in Myanmar," he added.

His aim is to complete one thousand hands of political prisoners and found a small art museum where he will fill the shelves with hands and label each hand with its biography.

"Each hand has its own story," he said.

On November 11, he made copies of the hands of former political prisoner and writer Maung Moe Thu, director U Aung Lwin, comedian U Zaganar, A Yine, U Zaw Thet Htwe, blogger Nay Phone Latt, writer San San Nwe (Tharyarwady) and Cho



Artist U Htein Lin makes a plaster cast of former political prisoner U Maung Moe Thu. Photo: Boothee

Nwe at HOME (House of Media and Entertainment) on Bo Aung Kyaw Street.

At the event, over 100 casts were displayed on a line of tables and scrolls on which each prisoner's biography is written are kept inside the hands.

"I think that is a very sensible idea to create hands of political prisoners who suffered from separation from their families and the anguish of living alone in cold and filthy prison cells," director

U Aung Lwin told *The Myanmar Times*.

As famous artists, cartoonists, film directors, actors and writers involved in the 8888 uprising, director U Aung Lwin was among other artists. They called for a truce between government and the people by sending their signatures to embassies and other news agencies.

"It is too early to relive the pains of prison by looking at the hands. But it is certain that they will bring tears to our eyes to see the hands

decades later when this broken system is gone," he said.

"Even if our descendants don't have feelings about the hands, they will make them remember the period we were struggling through together," he added.

Writer and filmmaker Maung Moe Thu who worked for National League for Democracy when it was initiated in 1988, said, "I admire artist Htein Lin's idea. It is true that political prisoners put right the failings in systems of government."

MUSIC REVIEW SU ZY, HEARTBEAT NO 3

Su Zy fails to rise above the fray with new album

EI EI THU
91.eiethu@gmail.com

WHEN pop vocalist Su Zy released her debut album, *Ya Tu A Sat Sat* (Consecutive Jubilee), in 2007, she quickly shot to fame based on the broad appeal of the CD's title track.

Her 2010 follow-up, *Twe Sa Ka a Tane Pal* (We Met), was less successful, a phenomenon the singer attributes to the fact that she was pursuing her education in Japan at the time of the album's release, and therefore she was not around to participate in promotional events or to hold live concerts.

Now Su Zy is back with her third album, titled *Heartbeat No 3*, which offers 13 tracks of karaoke-friendly pop music similar to that found on her previous releases. The CD even comes with a lyric booklet to help fans prepare for those all-important sing-alongs.

Backing instrumental music on the new album is provided by Lazy Club and other musicians, and about half the songs were written by Soe Lin, who contributed to Su Zy's first two albums and is also famous for composing a number of popular Thingyan songs.

Others who appear on the album

as songwriters and singers include Mi Mi Ke, Phoe Chan, Yone Lay, Snare Aung Thu, Thounpu and Glal (Ar T Choke).

The album kicks off on an unusual note with recorded birdsongs, which provide a brief introduction to "A Way Ka Sue Taung" (Long-distance Wish).

Su Zy's capable, saccharine singing - along with the opening song's catchy melody - will draw in fans of Myanmar-style soft pop, and their attention will be sustained with tunes like "That Sone Taing Htar Wa Ye" (Forever), a love song penned by Mi Mi Ke.

Overall, however, it's difficult to judge whether the new CD can be considered better or worse than Su Zy's first two albums; it merely offers more of the same familiar formula. The result is that people who are already fans will find something to like in *Heartbeat No 3*, while others are likely to conclude that the album is a bit boring.

The main weakness is that Su Zy has not developed much as an artist in the six years since her 2007 debut, and the new album does not offer anything special that sets her apart from the growing throng of similar female singers vying for attention in Myanmar.

MYANMAR MARKETING COMMITTEE

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22nd November

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Universal Crossword

Edited by Timothy E. Parker

DENTAL BUSINESS? By Tim Burr

ACROSS

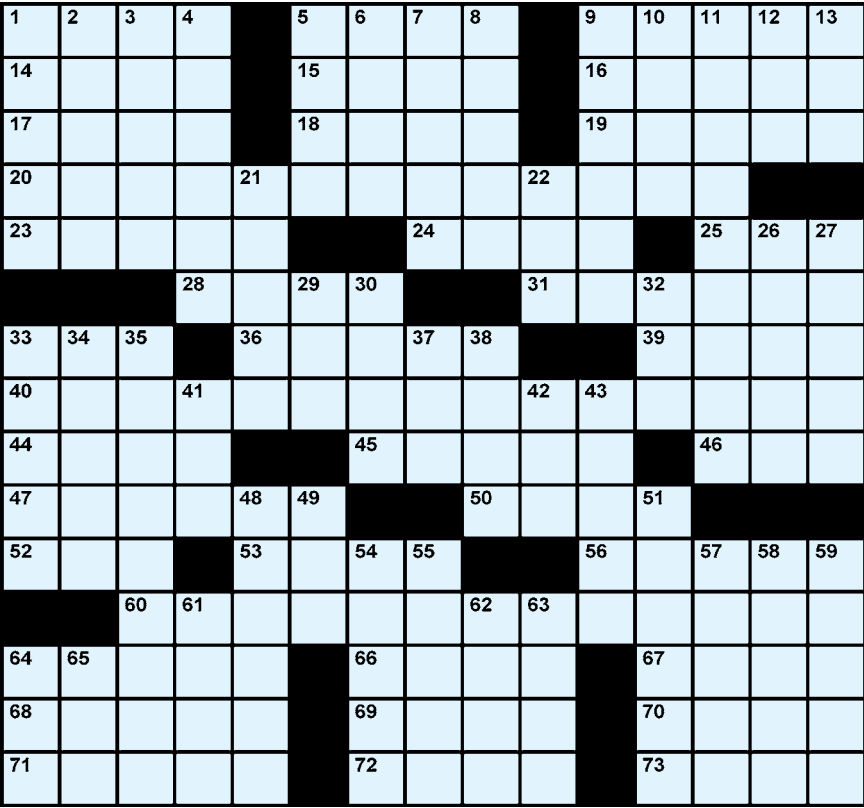
- 1 Sound before "Snap out of it!"
- 5 What some plants produce?
- 9 Prepares flour
- 14 Water or gas carrier
- 15 Powerful energy grp.
- 16 The Snake snakes through it
- 17 It's often tested by shouting "Hello!"
- 18 Type of support
- 19 Elaine ("Seinfeld" role)
- 20 Made slow but steady progress on
- 23 Inch like a crab
- 24 Dark shadow
- 25 Bowl-like curve
- 28 Make a deep impression
- 31 Having more volcanic fallout
- 33 Hardworking insect
- 36 Remains to be seen?
- 39 "If all ____ fails..."
- 40 Popular ice cream flavor
- 44 Overdo it at the bar
- 45 Animal track
- 46 Batik requirement
- 47 Open, as a change purse
- 50 "To ____ it may concern"
- 52 ____ Wee Reese
- 53 Cold War-era alliance
- 56 Welsh breed of dog
- 60 Young hospital helpers
- 64 Anatomical horn
- 66 Troopers' head?
- 67 ____ moss
- 68 Venue for big crowds
- 69 They give people big heads
- 70 Like Darth Vader
- 71 Floral feature
- 72 Adam and Eve's third son
- 73 Editor's removal mark

DOWN

- 1 Dimensions and details, for short
- 2 Chinese fruit (var.)
- 3 Destructive insect
- 4 Streisand classic
- 5 ____ d'Azur
- 6 Mocked
- 7 Anchor's summary
- 8 Unstressed vowel
- 9 Female prophets
- 10 The very beginning of an invention
- 11 Like some birds and fish
- 12 Common start to a book title
- 13 "Help!" kin

- 21 Dish for the lab
- 22 Pie ____ mode
- 26 Express anew
- 27 ____ de menthe
- 29 Something awaited in the wings
- 30 Sound from a cat with an arched back
- 32 "... and sat down beside ____"
- 33 Start to malfunction
- 34 Worst turnout for a party
- 35 Clandestine
- 37 Short snooze
- 38 Frosted flakes?
- 41 Man from Mattel
- 42 Homer's exclamation

- 43 Early spring bloomers
- 48 Once-a-year bloomer
- 49 Mouse's place?
- 51 Swabbed
- 54 Enters data
- 55 Tributary of the Missouri River
- 57 Superman portrayer on film
- 58 Holy ____ (chalice)
- 59 Carpet-maker's fiber
- 61 Jodie's role in a 1999 epic
- 62 Home run hitter's gait
- 63 Word with "diaper" or "heat"
- 64 Commencement wear
- 65 Metal in the rough



DILBERT

BY SCOTT ADAMS



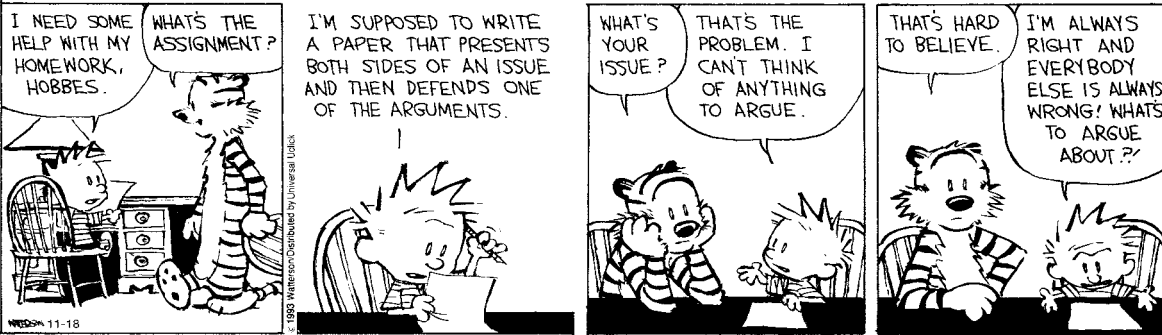
PEANUTS

BY CHARLES SCHULZ



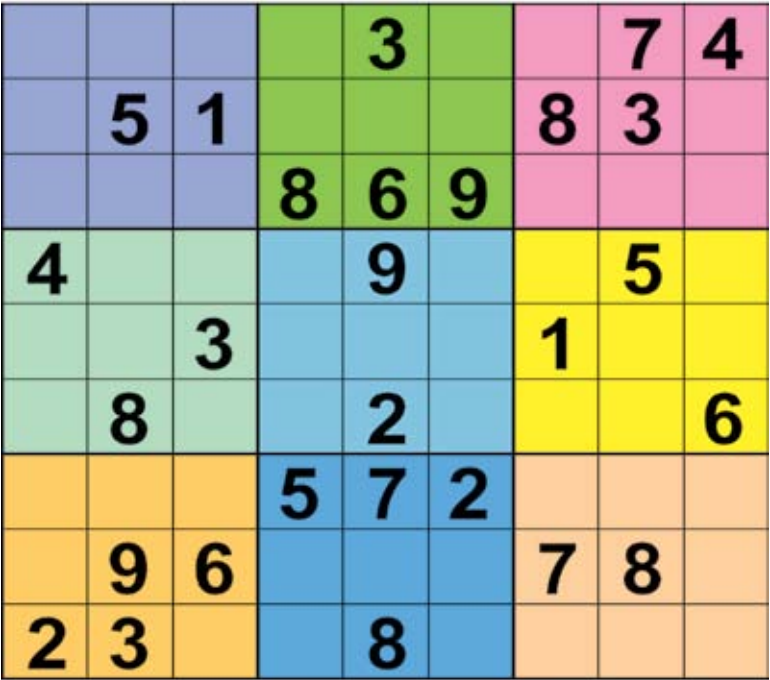
CALVIN AND HOBBS

BY BILL WATTERSON



SUDOKU PACIFIC

Complete the grid so that every row, column and 3x3 box contains every digit from 1 to 9 inclusively.



11/21 DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

WONDERWORD

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD. The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

BUTTERSCOTCH Solution: 7 letters



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Bars, Boil, Bread, Butter, Cake, Candy Cane, Chip, Chocolate, Chop, Coating, Confectionery, Cream, Curd, Delicious, Dessert, Drops, Essence, Extract, Flavor, Fruit, Fudge, Ganache, Golden, Hard, Homemade, Hot, Jell-O, Melt, Oven, Pastries, Plead, Popcorn, Rich, Salt, Sauce, Scones, Score, Smooth, Soda, Soft, Sticky, Sugar, Sweet, Syrup, Treacle, Vanilla, Yogurt

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PHYLO'S COOKING ADVENTURE

Tired of rice? Try noodling around instead

WHAT better way to wrap up a package of ingredients into a tasty morsel for your mouth than with rice paper noodles? As my recipe for vegetarian Vietnamese-style rice noodle rolls shows, rice paper noodles are fresh, simple to prepare and – with a filling of hard tofu or bean curd – perfect for those looking for lighter bites.

This week's second snack-sized delight was inspired by childhood memories of the teashop near where I grew up, which served a flat rice noodle parcel called *kaw pyant sein paung*. It's not easy to find this steamed dish today so I've set out to duplicate it on my own, swapping out the chilli sauce we once used for a more sophisticated homemade blend.

VIETNAMESE RICE NOODLE ROLLS WITH TOFU (SERVES 6)

- 280 grams rice vermicelli
- 1 bunch lettuce
- 1 bunch chives (cut into 4-5cm lengths)
- 1 bunch Asian basil (leaves only)
- 1 medium carrot
- 1 medium cucumber
- 1 tablespoon hoisin sauce

- 2 blocks tofu, hard
 - 12 sheets rice paper
- FOR DIPPING SAUCE**
- 2½ tablespoons sugar
 - ¼ cup fish sauce
 - ¼ cup white vinegar
 - 2½ tablespoons lime juice
 - 3 cloves garlic, crushed
 - 1 large red chilli, diced
 - ½ cup water

Prepare rice vermicelli according to package instructions and set aside. Wash lettuce, chives and basil; drain and dry well. Peel the carrots and slice thinly (julienne). Peel cucumber, cut in half and discard seeds, then cut into 5-6 cm strips. Mix ½ teaspoon hoisin sauce with 1 tablespoon of water and set aside.

Slice the bean curd or hard tofu into 1cm thicknesses and deep-fry. When they turn a golden colour, but still remain soft and not crisp, scoop them out and drain them on kitchen paper. Cut into strips.

For dipping sauce, dissolve sugar in water and add all the ingredients except the chilli into a bowl to mix. Then garnish with chilli.

To assemble ingredients, fill a shallow bowl, just large enough to submerge rice paper, with lukewarm water. Dip rice paper individually into water slowly until they soften, then lay it flat on the chopping board or plate.

Cover 1/3 of the rice paper with 7-8cm length of lettuce. Spread ½ teaspoon hoisin sauce on the lettuce. Add handful of rice vermicelli, 2 chives, basil leaves, a few carrots, a couple of cucumber and few fried bean curds on top as fillings.

Take bottom end of rice paper and roll up over the fillings. Handle gently and don't pull too tightly. Bring left and right ends toward the centre then continue rolling upward all the way. Arrange rolls on plate with ends tucked underneath. Serve with dipping sauce on the side.



The finished rice paper parcel, served with tangy soy sauce Photo: Phylo

RICE PAPER PARCELS (SERVES 4)

- 200 grams pork or chicken mince
- 1 tablespoon soy sauce
- ¼ teaspoon sugar
- ¼ teaspoon ground white pepper
- 1 tablespoon corn starch
- 1 small carrot
- 250 grams Chinese cabbage
- 10-12 french beans
- 1 green shallot
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 900 grams rice paper (8 inches square)

FOR THE DIPPING SAUCE

- 4 tablespoons Heinz chilli sauce
- 4 tablespoons Kikkoman soy sauce
- 2 tablespoons sweet chilli sauce
- ½ teaspoon roasted sesame oil
- 1 tablespoon water
- ½ teaspoon freshly grated ginger
- 1 green shallots (finely sliced)
- Pat mince dry with kitchen

paper. Marinate in bowl with soy sauce, ground white pepper, sugar and corn starch for at least half an hour.

Peel carrot and dice finely. Cut Chinese cabbage into 1cm-wide ribbons. Snap ends of French beans, discard fibres along the side and slice thinly. Slice green shallots.

Add vegetable oil into wok and heat on medium. When oil is ready stirfry green shallots for a few seconds then add the mince. Use a wooden spatula and break up the mince in the pan. Add Chinese cabbage, carrots and French beans one after another and fry them. Add 2 tablespoons of water into wok and cover with lid. When the water is absorbed, remove wok from heat and let fried ingredients cool.

To wrap the parcels, lift a sheet of fresh flat rice paper gently and lay it on a flat surface, preferably a wooden one. Add 3 or 4 tablespoons

of stirfried mixture to the middle of the sheet. Sprinkle on some ground black pepper and wrap mixture up in rice paper like a parcel. Lay them on a plate without stacking them. Set aside or keep covered in the fridge.

Before serving, steam parcels in a steamer for 10-15 minutes, letting the water boil gently and wrapping the lid of the steamer with a tea towel to keep the water from dripping on the parcels. Meanwhile, mix sauce ingredients well in a bowl.

When ready, set parcels on plate, slice each down the middle and pour sauce over.

TIPS

Don't let the rice paper get too wet; just dip it in long enough to go soft.

Make sure your vegetables and herbs are fully dried after washing, as introducing extra drops of water with the ingredients makes the rolls soggy.

Don't prepare the filling too far ahead, as rolling everything up is a fun part of the meal.

SHOPPING LIST

I buy my rice paper in dry packages, made in Thailand, at City Mart Marketplace. Hoisin sauce can also be bought at the supermarket: I use Lee Kum Kee brand, which is also available in Chinatown. Ask for the sauce to eat with *kaw pyant* (fresh spring rolls).

Large flat rice paper noodles are available at some wet markets; sometimes you have to order them a day ahead.

QUOTE

"You don't mince words."
"Just garlic."
– Joan Bauer, author

NEXT WEEK
Noodle Salad

Wine Review

RED WINE

Seahorse Bay Cabaret Shiraz Merlot 2010 - Australia

Made from real seahorses. But seriously, this is a well-crafted, full-bodied wine with overtones of raspberries and black pepper. This bottle would make an ideal companion to pork chops or a plate of emmental cheese.

Score

9/10

κ13,000

WHITE WINE

Astica Sauvignon Blanc Semillon 2009 - Argentina

Could almost qualify as 'dessert wine.' Sickly sweet when it hits your tounge, but finishes with a tart and wholly unsatisfying aftertaste. If you must have some, make sure your bottle is ice cold.

Score

6/10

κ7,800

Unassuming facade and in-your-face flavours at Phar Kant

IN every city there are those hidden gems – places that are so good you want to tell people, but are loathe to lest you find yourself unable to find a seat as a result of its newfound popularity. Phar Kant is one such place.

While Shan restaurants in downtown Yangon are a dime a dozen, Phar Kant stands out with its punchy flavours and friendly local vibe. Located just near the intersection of Yaw Min Gyi Lan and Bo Yar Nyunt, in a nondescript open-front shop, it's already a popular spot for locals and the area's burgeoning expat population.

While its name conjures up images of the rugged hills of jade-rich Kachin state, the majority of the fare it offers up is of Shan origin.

As you wait for your main meal you'll be brought a bowl of complimentary clear broth. The assortment of roots and shoots floating around in it doesn't give much of a hint of its unique, sharp flavour.

The spicy tomato and coriander salsa by way of the Shan hills (also complimentary) is sent out with a plate of sliced cucumber – something you'll be grateful for in

order to neutralise the salsa's chilli kick.

The fried tofu is an entree that will please all tastebuds and tide you over while you wait. It's fried to perfection, never excessively greasy, and comes with a – forgive the technical jargon – a vinegary dipping sauce.

The *malahin*, a spicy shan noodle dish, is not one to be missed. While other establishments might find themselves falling short with dulled flavours clinging to flaccid vegetables, Phar Kant is consistently on point with crispy lotus root, a colourful array of fresh veggies and several types of noodles set off by a chilli sauce that's packing just the right amount of heat and complexity.

The Kachin chicken is a zesty crowdpleaser but, like the *malahin*, is only one for those who can handle a chilli kick. Those with more cautious tastebuds are advised to try the cashew chicken.

There's no shortage of options on the menu, with a wide variety of meat, egg and vegetarian dishes to explore but please – if you don't mind, go at lunchtime. I don't want to have to wait for a seat.

Kachin-style chicken served with fried tofu. Photo: Staff

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Saturday: Roast and steak	- USD 32 nett per person.

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nyeineihtwe23@gmail.com

SOCIALITE didn't get a week of sleep this past week. There was just too much going on! On November 4, she attended the AIGLON college seminar at Sedona Hotel as well as Spectra construction laser project launch at MICT park. The next day, she was at the Air Bagan 9th year ceremony at 8 mile before heading for the Edulink Australia graduation ceremony at Junction Square. On November 7, she went to the Park Royal hotel for the Clear Men lucky draw event. Day after that, she enjoyed a visit to Monument book store, where a line of Barbie dolls were unveiled. Always up on the latest trends, Socialite's next stop was the Myo Min Soe wedding dress house opening on November 9. From there, she continued to Sayar San Plaza to attend Cooperative Business's souvenirs sale. On November 10, she was at Junction Square. Not for shopping, but for Camella Brand Ambassador announcement.

Shwe Poe Nan Daw silk shop opening



Aung Khine and Wah Wah Aung Nan Myat Phyto Thin and attendees

Lemon Detox Slim Center ceremony



Ma Hla Win Nwe May Thinzar Oo



Dr Lwin Hnin Oo

Edulink Australia graduation ceremony



Nang Shen Noon and Anthony Lucas



Aung Phyto Naing and Ei Thet Paing Moe

AIGLON College seminar



Haymar Nay Win and her friends



Mark Silverstein

MK 'Power of Women' event



Pa Pa Win Khin



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YANGON TO NAY PYI TAW				
Flight	Days	Dep	Arr	
FMI A1	1,2,3,4,5	7:30	8:30	
FMI A1	6	8:00	9:00	
FMI B1	1,2,3,4,5	11:30	12:30	
FMI A1	7	15:30	16:30	
FMI C1	1,2,3,4,5	16:30	17:30	

NAY PYI TAW TO YANGON				
Flight	Days	Dep	Arr	
FMI A2	1,2,3,4,5	8:50	9:50	
FMI A2	6	10:00	11:00	
FMI B2	1,2,3,4,5	13:00	14:00	
FMI A2	7	17:00	18:00	
FMI C2	1,2,3,4,5	18:00	19:00	

YANGON TO MANDALAY				
Flight	Days	Dep	Arr	
YH 917	1,3,4,5,6,7	6:00	7:40	
YJ 901	2,7	6:00	7:25	
YJ 901	4,5	6:00	9:00	
YH 917	2	6:00	8:20	
YJ 891	Daily	6:10	8:15	
Y5 234	Daily	6:15	7:30	
YH 909	2	6:15	7:55	
6T 401	Daily	6:20	8:25	
YJ 901	1	6:30	8:35	
K7 222	Daily	6:30	8:40	
K7 626	1,5	6:45	8:10	
K7 226	2,4	6:45	8:10	
YJ 001	3	7:30	8:25	
YJ 001	1,2,4,5	7:30	9:20	
W9 201	Daily	7:30	8:55	
8M 6603	2,4,7	9:00	10:10	
K7 624	Daily	10:30	11:55	
YJ 201	1,2	11:00	12:25	
YJ 761	1,2,4	11:00	12:55	
YJ 201	3	11:00	12:55	
YJ 211	7	11:00	12:55	
YH 729	2,6	11:00	14:00	
YJ 761	6	11:00	14:00	
W9 251	2,5	11:15	12:40	
6T 807	7	11:30	12:55	
YH 729	4	11:30	13:10	
YH 729	4	11:30	13:10	
YH 727	1	11:30	13:40	
YH 737	3,5,7	11:30	13:40	
YH 729	6	11:30	14:30	
6T 807	1	12:00	13:25	
YJ 201	4	12:00	13:25	
YJ 211	5	12:00	13:25	
YJ 601/W9 7601	6	12:15	13:40	
K7 224	Daily	14:30	16:35	
W9 129	Daily	15:00	16:55	
YH 731	1,2,3,4,5	15:00	17:10	
YJ 005	1,3,5	15:30	16:25	
6T 501	Daily	15:30	17:30	
YH 731	6,7	15:30	17:40	
W9 211	Daily	15:30	16:55	

MANDALAY TO YANGON				
Flight	Days	Dep	Arr	
YJ 901	2,7	7:40	9:45	
YH 910	2	7:55	10:00	
Y5 233	Daily	8:10	9:25	
YH 918	2	8:20	10:15	
YJ 891	Daily	8:30	10:25	
6T 402	Daily	8:45	10:45	
YJ 901	1	8:50	10:15	
K7 223	Daily	8:55	11:00	
W9 201	Daily	9:10	11:05	

YH 918	1,3,4,5,6,7	9:10	11:05	
YJ 902	4,5	9:15	11:20	
W9 144	Daily	9:20	10:45	
YJ 002	3	9:25	10:20	
YJ 001	1,2,4,5	9:50	10:45	
Y5 132	3,5,6,7	9:30	10:30	
K7 227	2,4	10:35	12:00	
K7 627	1,5	10:55	12:20	
K7 845	2,4,7	12:50	16:00	
YH 730	4	13:10	17:10	
6T 808	7	13:15	15:15	
YH 738	3,5,6,7	13:40	18:00	
YH 738	5	13:40	18:05	
6T 808	1	13:45	15:45	
YH 730	2	14:00	18:55	
YH 730	6	14:30	18:15	
YJ 202	1	15:30	16:55	
YJ 202	2	15:30	17:35	
YJ 202	3	16:00	17:25	
YJ 212	5	16:30	17:55	
YJ 202	4	16:30	18:35	
YJ 602/W9 7602	6	17:40	19:45	
YJ 762	1,2,4	16:35	18:00	
W9 120	1,3,6	16:30	17:55	
K7 225	Daily	16:50	19:00	
YJ 005	1,3,5	16:55	18:45	
YJ 212	5	17:00	19:05	
YH 728	1	17:00	18:25	
W9 129	Daily	17:10	18:35	
W9 211	Daily	17:10	19:15	
YH 732	1,2,3,4,5	17:10	19:15	
K7 625	Daily	17:10	18:35	
8M 6604	2,4,7	17:20	18:30	
YJ 752/W9 7752	3,7	17:30	18:55	
YJ 762	6	17:40	19:05	
YH 732	6,7	17:40	19:45	
YH 738	7	17:40	19:05	
6T 502	Daily	17:50	19:55	
YJ 752/W9 7752	5	18:00	19:25	

YANGON TO NYAUNG U				
Flight	Days	Dep	Arr	
YH 917	2	6:00	7:35	
YJ 901	4,5,6	6:00	7:20	
YJ 901	2,7	6:00	8:10	
YH 917	1,3,4,5,6,7	6:00	8:25	
YJ 891	Daily	6:10	7:30	
W9 141	Daily	6:15	7:35	
YH 909	1,4,5,6,7	6:15	7:50	
YH 909	2	6:15	8:40	
6T 401	Daily	6:20	7:40	
6T 351	1,2,3,4,6,7	6:30	7:50	
K7 222	Daily	6:30	7:50	
YJ 901	1	6:30	7:50	
YH 909	3	6:30	8:05	
YJ 901	3	6:30	8:20	
YJ 761	6	11:00	12:20	
W9 143	Daily	7:15	8:35	
K7 224	Daily	14:30	17:25	
YH 731	1,2,3,4,5	15:00	17:55	
YH 731	6,7	15:00	18:25	
6T 501	Daily	15:30	18:20	
W9 211	Daily	15:30	17:40	

NYAUNG U TO YANGON				
Flight	Days	Dep	Arr	
YJ 901	6	7:35	8:55	
YH 917	2	7:35	10:15	
YJ 891	Daily	7:45	10:25	
YH 917	1,3,4,5,6,7	8:25	11:05	
W9 144	Daily	8:50	10:10	

6T 401	Daily	7:55	10:45	
YJ 901	1	8:05	10:15	
K7 222	Daily	8:05	11:00	
6T 351	1,2,3,4,6,7	8:05	11:10	
YH 910	3	8:05	10:10	
YJ 901	2,7	8:25	9:45	
YJ 901	3	8:35	9:55	
YH 910	2	8:40	10:00	
W9 141	Daily	7:50	10:40	
YH 910	1,4,5,6,7	9:40	11:00	
YJ 902	4,5	10:00	11:20	
6T 351	5	10:50	13:55	
YJ 761	6	11:00	12:20	
YJ 202	2	16:15	17:35	
YJ 202	4	17:15	18:35	
K7 225	Daily	17:45	19:00	
YJ 212	5	17:45	19:05	
W9 211	Daily	17:55	19:15	
YJ 602/W6 7602	6	18:25	19:45	
6T 502	Daily	18:35	19:55	
YH 731	6,7	18:25	19:45	

YANGON TO MYITKYINA				
Flight	Days	Dep	Arr	
K7 844	2,4,7	7:30	11:05	
K7 624	Daily	10:30	13:25	
YJ 201	1,2	11:00	13:50	
W9 251	2,5	11:15	14:10	
YJ 211	7	11:00	14:20	
YJ 201	3	11:00	14:20	
YJ 201	4	12:00	14:50	
YJ 211	5	12:00	14:50	

MYITKYINA TO YANGON				
Flight	Days	Dep	Arr	
YJ 202	1	14:05	16:55	
YJ 211	7	14:35	17:55	
YJ 202	2	15:30	17:35	
K7 625	Daily	15:40	18:35	
YJ 202	3	16:00	17:25	
W9 252	2,5	16:05	19:00	
YJ 202	4	16:30	18:35	
YJ 212	5	17:00	19:05	

YANGON TO HEHO				
Flight	Days	Dep	Arr	
YH 917	2	6:00	9:05	
YH 917	1,3,4,5,6,7	6:00	9:55	
YJ 901	4,5	6:00	8:15	
YJ 891	Daily	6:10	9:00	
W9 141	Daily	6:15	8:20	
6T 401	Daily	6:20	9:20	
K7 222	Daily	6:30	9:30	
6T 351	1,2,3,4,6,7	6:30	8:45	
W9 201	Daily	7:30	9:40	
K7 828	1,3,5	7:30	8:45	
YJ 791	6	9:15	10:25	
YH 505	2,3	10:30	11:55	
YJ 751/W9 7751	3,7	10:30	11:40	
YJ 751/W9 7751	5	11:00	12:10	
YJ 761	1,2,4	11:00	12:10	
YJ 211	7	11:00	12:10	
YJ 761	6	11:00	13:15	
YJ 201	3	11:00	12:10	
6T 807	7	11:30	13:50	
YH 727	1	11:30	12:55	
YH 505	4,6,7	11:30	12:55	
YH 737	3,5,7	11:30	12:55	
YH 729	4	11:30	16:00	
W9 203	Daily	11:00	12:10	
W9 119	1,3,6	11:15	12:25	

W9 129	Daily	15:00	16:10	
K7 826	2,6	11:45	13:00	
6T 807	1	12:00	14:20	
K7 224	Daily	14:30	15:45	
YH 731	1,2,3,4,5	15:00	16:25	
6T 501	Daily	15:30	16:40	
YH 731	6,7	15:30	16:55	

HEHO TO YANGON				
Flight	Days	Dep	Arr	
YJ 901	4,5	8:30	11:20	
W9 141	Daily	8:35	10:40	
YH 910	1,4,5,6,7	8:45	11:00	
6T 352	Daily	9:00	11:10	
YH 910	3	9:00	10:10	
YH 918	2	9:05	10:15	
YJ 891	Daily	9:15	10:25	
6T 402	Daily	9:35	10:45	
K7 223	Daily	9:45	11:00	
W9 201	Daily	9:55	11:05	
YH 918	1,3,4,5,6,7	9:55	11:05	
YJ 791	6	10:40	11:50	
YH 506	2,3	11:55	14:00	
W9 204	Daily	12:25	13:35	
YH 506	4,6,7	12:55	15:00	
K7 829	1,3,5	13:50	15:05	
6T 808	7	14:05	15:15	
6T 808	1	14:35	15:45	
YH 728	1	16:15	18:25	
YH 738	3	16:50	18:00	
YH 738	5	16:55	18:05	
YH 738	7	16:55	19:05	
W9 120	1,3,6	15:45	17:55	
YJ 762	1,2,4	15:50	18:00	
K7 224	Daily	16:00	19:00	
W9 129	Daily	16:25	18:35	
YH 731	1,2,3,4,5	16:25	19:15	
YJ 752/W9 7752	3,7	16:45	18:55	
6T 501	Daily	16:55	19:55	
YH 731	6,7	16:55	19:45	
YJ 762	6	16:55	19:05	
K7 827	2,6	17:25	18:40	
YJ 752/W9 7752	5	17:15	19:25	
YH 730	2	17:45	18:55	

YANGON TO SIT T WE				
Flight	Days	Dep	Arr	
6T 605	Daily	11:15	13:15	
6T 611	4,6	14:30	15:55	
W9 309	1,3,5,6,7	11:30	12:55	
K7 426	Daily	12:30	13:50	

SIT T WE TO YANGON				
Flight	Days	Dep	Arr	



INTERNATIONAL FLIGHT SCHEDULES

YANGON TO BANGKOK				
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr	
PG 706	Daily	7:15	9:30	
8M 335	Daily	8:20	10:05	
TG 304	Daily	9:50	11:45	
PG 702	Daily	10:30	12:25	
TG 302	Daily	14:55	16:50	
PG 708	Daily	15:20	17:15	
8M 331	Daily	16:30	18:15	
PG 704	Daily	18:20	20:15	
Y5 237	Daily	18:05	19:50	
TG 306	Daily	19:45	21:40	

YANGON TO DON MUENG				
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr	
DD 4231	1,3,5,7	8:00	9:45	
FD 2752	Daily	8:30	10:20	
FD 2756	Daily	12:15	14:05	
FD 2754	Daily	17:50	19:35	

YANGON TO SINGAPORE				
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr	
MI 509/SQ 5019	1,2,6,7	0:25	5:00	
8M 231	Daily	8:00	12:25	
Y5 233	Daily	10:10	14:40	
SQ 997/MI 5871	Daily	10:25	14:45	
8M 6232	Daily	11:30	16:05	
3K 586	Daily	11:40	16:20	
MI 517/SQ 5017	Daily	16:40	21:15	
TR 2827	1,6,7	15:10	19:35	
TR 2827	2,3,4,5	17:10	21:35	

YANGON TO KUALA LUMPUR				
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr	
8M 501	1,2,3,5,6	7:50	11:50	
AK 1427	Daily	8:30	12:50	
MH 741	Daily	12:15	16:30	
MH 743	Daily	16:00	20:15	

YANGON TO BEIJING				
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr	
CA 906	2,3,4,6,7	14:15	21:55	

YANGON TO GAUNGZHOU				
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr	
8M 711	2,4,7	8:40	13:15	
CZ 3056	3,6	11:35	15:50	
CZ 3056	1,5	17:40	22:15	

YANGON TO TAIPEI				
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr	
CI 7916	1,2,3,5,6	10:50	16:15	

YANGON TO KUNMING				
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr	
MU 2012	1,3	12:20	18:35	
MU 2032	Daily	14:40	18:00	
CA 906	2,3,4,6,7	14:15	17:35	

YANGON TO CHIANG MAI				
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr	
W9 9607	4,7	14:20	16:10	

YANGON TO HANOI				
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr	
VN 956	1,3,5,6,7	19:10	21:30	

YANGON TO HO CHI MINH CITY				
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr	
VN 942	2,4,7	14:25	17:10	

YANGON TO DOHA				
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr	
QR 619	1,4,5	7:30	11:15	

YANGON TO PHNOM PENH				
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr	
8M 403	1,3,6	8:35	12:30	

YANGON TO SEOUL				
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr	
OZ 770	4,7	0:50	8:50	
KE 472	Daily	23:35	08:05+1	

YANGON TO HONG KONG				
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr	
KA 251	1,2,4,6	01:10	05:35	

YANGON TO TOKYO				
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr	
NH 914	Daily	21:45	06:45+1	

YANGON TO KOLKATA				
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr	
AI 228	1,5	14:05	15:05	

MANDALAY TO BANGKOK				
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr	
TG 2982	1,2,4,6	9:30	11:45	
TG 2984	3,5,7	19:35	21:45	
PG 710	Daily	14:15	16:40	

MANDALAY TO DON MUENG				
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr	
FD 2761	Daily	12:45	15:00	

MANDALAY TO KUNMING				
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr	
MU 2030	Daily	14:40	17:20	

BANGKOK TO YANGON				
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr	
8M 336	Daily	11:30	0:15	
TG 303	Daily	7:55	8:50	
PG 701	Daily	8:50	9:40	
TG 301	Daily	13:00	13:45	
PG 707	Daily	13:40	14:30	
PG 703	Daily	16:45	17:35	
TG 305	Daily	17:50	18:45	
8M 332	Daily	19:15	20:00	
PG 705	Daily	20:15	21:30	
Y5 238	Daily	21:10	21:55	

DON MUENG TO YANGON				
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr	
DD 4230	1,3,5,7	6:30	7:15	
FD 2751	Daily	7:15	8:00	
FD 2755	Daily	11:10	11:45	
FD 2753	Daily	16:35	17:20	

SINGAPORE TO YANGON				
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr	
SQ 998/MI 5872	Daily	7:55	9:20	
3K 585	Daily	9:10	10:40	
8M 6231	Daily	9:10	10:40	
8M 232	Daily	13:25	14:50	
TR 2826	1,6,7	13:10	14:30	
MI 518/MI 5018	Daily	14:20	15:45	
TR 2826	2,3,4,5	15:00	16:30	
Y5 234	Daily	15:35	17:05	
MI 520/SQ 5020	1,5,6,7	22:10	23:35	

BEIJING TO YANGON				
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr	
CA 905	2,3,4,6,7	8:05	13:15	

KAULA LUMPUR TO YANGON				
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr	
AK 1426	Daily	6:55	8:00	
MH 740	Daily	10:05	11:15	
8M 502	1,2,3,5,6	14:00	15:00	
MH742	Daily	13:50	15:00	

GUANGZHOU TO YANGON				
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr	
CZ 3055	3,6	8:40	10:30	
CZ 3055	1,5	14:45	16:35	
8M 712	2,4,7	14:15	15:50	

TAIPEI TO YANGON				
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr	
CI 7915	1,2,3,5,6	7:00	9:55	

KUNMING TO YANGON				
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr	
MU 2011	1,3	8:20	11:30	
CA 905	2,3,4,6,7	13:00	13:15	
MU 2031	Daily	13:30	13:55	

CHIANG MAI TO YANGON				
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr	
W9 9608	4,7	17:20	18:10	

HANOI TO YANGON				
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr	
VN 957	1,3,5,6,7	16:35	18:10	

HO CHI MINH CITY TO YANGON				
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr	
VN 943	2,4,7	11:40	13:25	

BANGKOK TO MANDALAY				
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr	
TG 2981	1,2,4,6	7:25	8:50	
TG 2983	3,5,7	17:30	18:45	
PG 709	Daily	12:05	13:25	

DOHA TO YANGON				
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr	
QR 618	Daily	21:15	06:00+1	

PHNOM PENH TO YANGON				
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr	
8M 404	1,3,6	13:30	14:55	

SEOUL TO YANGON				
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr	
KE 471	Daily	18:40	22:30	
OZ 769	3,6	19:30	23:40	

TOKYO TO YANGON				
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr	
NH 913	Daily	11:45	17:15	

HONG KONG TO YANGON				
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr	
KA 250	1,3,5,7	21:50	23:45	

KOLKATA TO YANGON				
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr	
AI 227	1,5	10:35	13:20	

DON MUEANG TO MANDALAY				
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr	
FD 2760	Daily	10:50	12:15	

KUNMING TO MANDALAY				
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr	
MU 2029	Daily	13:55	13:50	

International Airlines

Air Asia (FD)
Tel: 251 885, 251 886.

Air Bagan Ltd.(W9)
Tel : 513322, 513422, 504888, Fax : 515102

Air China (CA)
Tel : 666112, 655882.

Air India
Tel : 253597~98, 254758. Fax: 248175

Bangkok Airways (PG)
Tel: 255122, 255 265, Fax: 255119

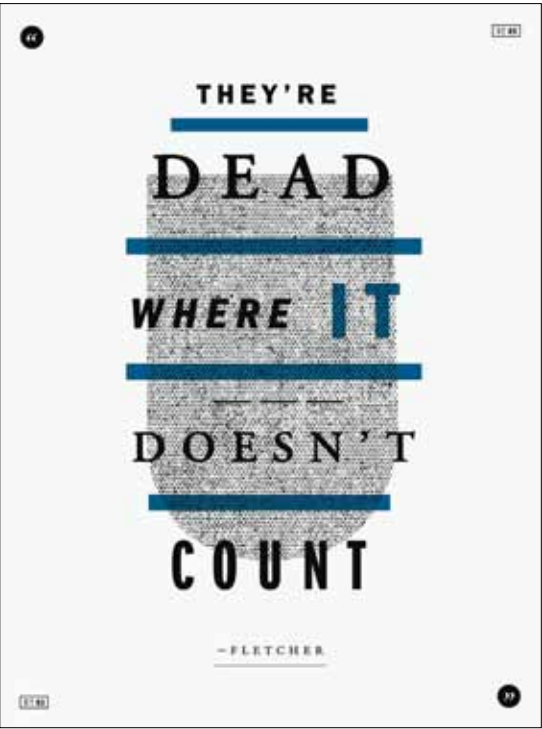
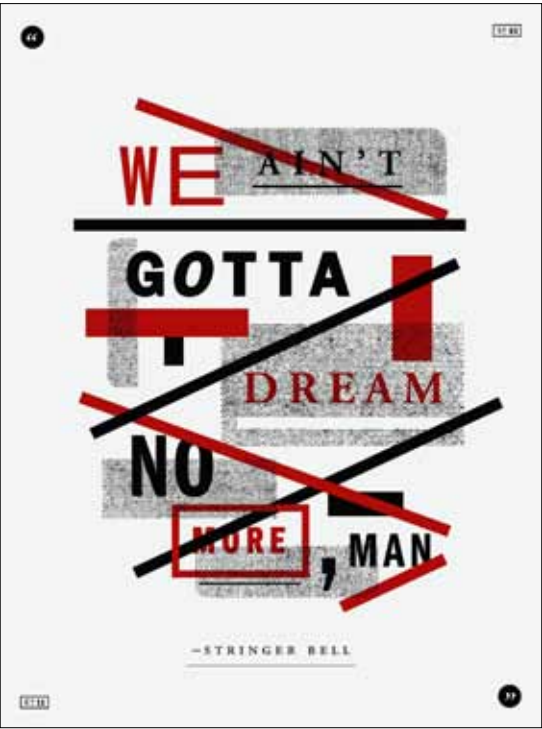
Condor (DE)
Tel: + 95 1 -370836 up to 39 [ext : 810]

Dragonair (KA)
Tel: 95-1-255320, 255321, Fax : 255329

Golden Myanmar Airlines

NEW YORK

‘The Wire’ fan art raises money for urban youth



GRAPHIC designer Oliver Munday was just another fan of *The Wire* when he decided to rewatch all five seasons of the critically acclaimed, much admired HBO series a couple of years ago. He was living in New York, but had spent five years in Baltimore as a student, and felt an extra connection to the real-life city at the heart of the fictional show. After watching David Simon's television masterpiece again, he felt moved to memorialise that connection.

"I was compelled to try to respond to it in some way or create something as a fan," Munday told me. He said that he had always been taken by the epigraphs at the beginning of each of the 60 episodes. He decided to use that collection of haunting, sometimes mysterious quotations to create a series of posters that would embody the spirit of the show and of Baltimore itself using typography and color.

As a point of departure, he looked to Baltimore's Globe Poster Company, an institution founded in 1929 whose posters have been part of the city's visual vernacular for decades, even featuring in an episode in the form of an old poster

that reveals tone of *The Wire's* main characters, Avon Barksdale, was once a boxer. (The Globe's collection was purchased by the Maryland Institute College of Art, Munday's alma mater, after the printing company closed in 2010.)

"For most young designers studying in Baltimore it's a rite of passage to reinterpret Globe," Munday said. "It's been referenced so much in design, everyone has done their take on an old boxing poster or a 70s/80s gig poster."

He said he wanted to celebrate the reference while injecting his own sensibility — which is heavily influenced by Russian constructivist poster design — in a way that would make fans feel like it embodied the show in an authentic way.

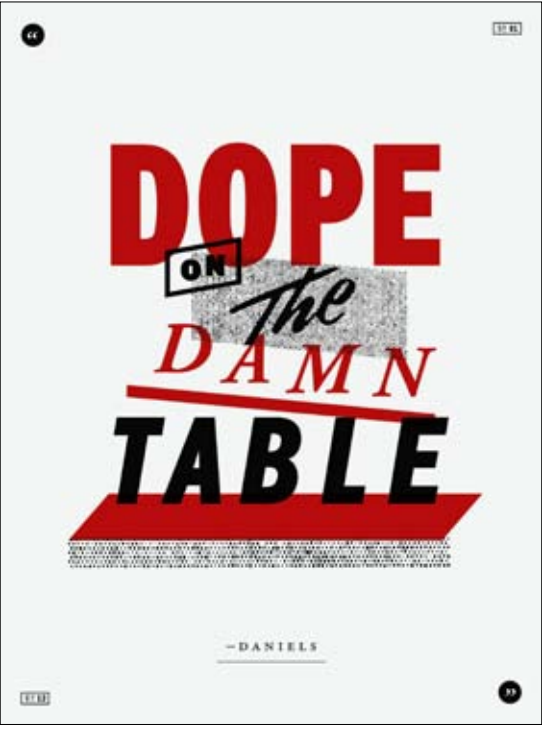
The Wire is an ambitious, novelistic piece of television drama that is characterised less by a particular look than a multi-layered, sustained mood of modern human urban tragedy that permeates every aspect of the production. The quotations are in the voices of many different characters, and for those who have seen the show and remember the references, they have a resonance that isn't necessarily apparent when read as standalone quotations.

Munday used a combination of Franklin Gothic and Garamond

fonts in a variety of widths and weights, interspersing a few hand-drawn words that were a nod to vintage Globe style. He used scans of half-tone silk-screen swatches reminiscent of the printing process at Globe to add a sense of grit. The colour palette of black, white and accent colours of basic primary red, yellow and blue were somewhat arbitrary, he said, as were the compositional flourishes in the form of straight lines at various angles that almost look like abstract slashes or wounds, perhaps a subconscious reference to the violence at the core of the show.

"I wanted to create a fragmented, layered, emotion-filled poster," Munday said "to have all these pieces coming together that would reflect the complexity of the show. It's a lofty goal for a piece of printed matter."

Munday is donating the profits from the sale of the posters to the Baltimore Urban Debate League, which helps at-risk kids in Baltimore and figures in a memorable episode in the final season when, shortly after being taken in by Howard "Bunny" Colvin, a young character called Namond Brice gives an award-winning speech about HIV and AIDS in Africa at a league event. — *The Washington Post*



WEEKLY PREDICTIONS

NOVEMBER 18 - 24, 2013

AQUARIUS | Jan 20 - Feb 18



Manage your attention and invest in your own talent. Never distrust your inner wisdom and potential. They need positive thoughts to sustain. Use your imaginative faculty as a virtue to make creative solutions for the obstacles of your everyday life. Translate your desires into practical answers. This will help you when emotional challenges arise.

LEO | Jul 23 - Aug 22



Your leadership ability, self-esteem and confidence must be developed in order to challenge the psychological force of pessimism all around you. Whether you desire to be a monarch or great person, you need to understand the value of optimism and the power it has to make everything easy and harmonious. Emphasising your own humanity will purify your heart.

PISCES | Feb 19 - March 20



The word "IMPOSSIBLE" has disappeared in the "Electronic and Space Travel Age", which is great news for you. Your unusual personality will make you a popular and influential role model. You will be able to cope with the conditions of everyday life as you build a social foundation based on the needs of others. Concentrate on being conscientious and trust worthy and you will be in favor with Cupid.

VIRGO | Aug 23 - Sep 22



Impurities are the beginning of disorder, unhappiness and uneasiness. You can stay well by maintaining a pure mind, a pure body and pure emotions. Realise that good health is more than just physical. In all aspects of life, if you want to be successful you must stay as pure as possible. Your inner peace must be protected against the adverse elements that will try undermine your confidence.

ARIES | Mar 21 - Apr 19



Develop your sense of humor and learn not to take yourself too seriously. Anxiety can result from a lot of loose ends. Changes will come quickly. Embrace ambiguity and accept the changes. Increasing your flexibility and adaptability to alternative situations will serve you well for the rest of your life. Learn to say what you think and feel in ways which others can relate to.

LIBRA | Sep 23 - Oct 22



Beauty does not exist in isolation. Your soul has the power to express beauty and justice in all of its forms. The cosmos is calling you to do the right and just thing, even if it is unpleasant and difficult. However, it is up to you, to discern what is legitimate responsibility and what is not. Your good fortune depends on you making the right decision.

TAURUS | Apr 20 - May 20



Constancy of purpose is the secret to success. A disciplined mind and heart should allow you to achieve your aims. Learn more about your goals, whatever they may be. Learning to work through pain is another aspect of discipline. Focus on your energy and understand your heart's power.

SCORPIO | Oct 23 - Nov 21



Your bird of fortune, the phoenix, will create a most intriguing and profound transformation in your life. Your philosophical side will have a radical change. You will become sharp and alert in your actions. Your interests and business deals must have real substance to stimulate your mind.

GEMINI | May 21 - June 20



Time will help you. Waiting will let you practise the art of nonresistance, to accept the inevitable with grace and without bitterness or frustration. Remember, accepting gradual change which is more fruitful in the long run. Good mental health will improve your probability of success, when, ultimately, you do figure out how to actualise your personal vision.

SAGITTARIUS | Nov 22 - Dec 21



Use your personality to expand your personal sphere of influence. Your philosophical and spiritual concepts must be strong to organise yourself and others in social and political causes. The emotional risks you take should be considered wisely. Be courageous in action and never forget to take responsibility.

CANCER | Jun 21 - Jul 22



When examining the things that upset you, try to see they all stem from the same problem. A harmonious home and family life is key to finding the kind of emotional stability you need at this point in your life. Upcoming trials and tribulations will only lead to great success.

CAPRICORN | Dec 22 - Jan 19



Your ambition is not a fatal flaw, but rather your highest virtue. Remember this and plan your moral code accordingly. You must have an extraordinary mind to manage and solve the many different social problems which will threaten to overwhelm you in the near future. Do not trust new offers of friendship.

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VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT (GIZ/011/2013)

giz Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

National Expert- Accounting and Auditing in the Banking Sector

The Deutsche Gesellschaft fuer Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH is a federal enterprise with worldwide operations. It supports the German Government in international cooperation for sustainable development and in international education work. GIZ currently runs three projects in Myanmar (1) Private Sector Development, (2) Technical and Vocational Education and Training, and (3) Financial Sector Development (FSD).

For the FSD project, GIZ is hiring

Position : 1 position

Location : Yangon

Contract period : Until September 2015

Starting date : As soon as possible; latest by February 1st

Responsibilities

The National Expert for Accounting and Auditing in the Banking Sector is responsible for

- Coordinating relationship with other stakeholders such as Office of Auditor General of the Union (OAG), Myanmar Institute of Certified Public Accountants (MICPA), Central Bank of Myanmar (CBM), banks, etc.
- Planning, organizing and delivery of workshops, roundtables from beginning to end.
- Organizing, attending and taking briefing notes during meetings with stakeholders when international consultant is visiting Myanmar.
- Making follow up discussions of key stakeholders and answering queries on accounting and auditing issues.
- Analysis of financial statements of banks and insurance companies.

Tasks

The National Expert performs the following tasks :

- Ensures that workshop/roundtables are organized on time and relevant participants are invited well before the events
- Responds to emails and queries within 1 day and follow up with necessary actions
- Prepares and update slides presentations on accounting and auditing
- Prepares feedback forms for workshops and training events
- Liaises with key stakeholders in Myanmar to follow up actions after missions of international consultant
- Analyze banks financial statements and extracting key disclosures to contrast and compare good and bad disclosures
- Analyze IFRS and ISA standards and compile key sections of the standards
- Assist in planning and organizing study visits in other countries
- Performs other duties and tasks at the request of management.

Qualifications :

We are looking for a candidate who possesses:

- University Degree in Business Administration, Accounting or other relevant field plus CPA qualifications
- Minimum eight years of experience in Accounting/ Auditing or other related fields in international organization
- Good knowledge of workings of MICPA ,OAG , CBM and banking sector of Myanmar
- Effective organizational and multi-tasking ability
- Very good in English Language: spoken and writing
- Excellent computer skills (Microsoft Office, Email, Internet)

Application procedure :

GIZ offers a competitive salary and a social benefits package. Please submit CV, including application letter and contact detail of two referees **no later than November 30th 2013.**

Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH No 35 (B) / 15 New University Avenue ,Yangon, Myanmar (OR)

Fax: 01 860 5065 (OR) E-Mail: giz-myanmar@giz.de

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Only short-listed candidates will be contacted.

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JOHANNESBURG

World sport bodies welcome stricter anti-doping rules

GLOBAL sporting bodies voiced wide support for more stringent punishment of athletes who use banned performance-enhancers as they discussed revised rules at a conference Wednesday.

Delegates welcomed longer bans for athletes caught doping intentionally, which will change from two years to four when the new anti-doping code comes into effect in 2015.

But global athletics body the IAAF called for an even harder crackdown on culprits, signalling "clean" athletes are frustrated that dopers sometimes go free amid low numbers of abnormal tests.

"The theme that came through time and time again is we are working for the clean athletes of the world," said outgoing World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) president John Fahey after a second day of discussions.

"The overwhelming majority of athletes who made submissions ... made it abundantly clear that a more severe penalty was what they wanted," Fahey told journalists.



Spain's Nuria Llagostera Vives, pictured in April 2008, has been suspended for two years after testing positive for methamphetamine at a tournament, the International Tennis Federation announced on November 11. Photo: AFP

FIFA backed four-year bans, but said doping risks were lower with fewer possible drugs and the global football body's extensive screening programs.

"We have nothing against [the ruling] that civil violation of the anti-doping regulations are sanctioned by four years," FIFA chief medical officer Jiri Dvorak told AFP.

"Let's put it in perspective. In football, we have somewhere between five to eight anabolic steroids cases a year so it's not really a huge number."

For the past three years FIFA has built up biological passports of athletes - a database of tests which helps to detect deviations outside normal levels in each individual.

The football body will continue to do this for the World Cup in Brazil next year, flying samples to Lausanne in Switzerland after WADA revoked the accreditation of the laboratory in Rio de Janeiro.

American anti-doping agency USADA was also in favour of stringent punishments, a year after it handed a lifetime ban to fallen cycling hero Lance Armstrong.

"We support what clean athletes support," USADA chief Travis Tygart said, adding that some sports-people had called for life bans in general, but later came down to four years.

Proportionality was the big word at the conference, with debates over whether the punishment fit the crime. - AFP

AUSTIN

Vettel looks to break Schumacher mark

SEBASTIAN Vettel will be focused on records and reconciliation this week-end when he seeks an eighth consecutive victory of the season at the United States Grand Prix.

The newly crowned four-time World Drivers Champion will overhaul fellow-German Michael Schumacher's all-time Formula One record if he is triumphant again at the Circuit of the Americas.

Seven-time champion Schumacher set his mark of seven wins in the 2004 season for Ferrari and will be among the first to congratulate Vettel, 26, if he records another victory.

Only Italian Alberto Ascari has a better record, winning nine consecutive races during the world championship's Formula Two era in 1952-53.

Vettel began his winning run at the Belgian Grand Prix in August and has accumulated 11 this year.

Two more wins, in Texas and then in Sao Paulo, would lift him level with Schumacher's record of 13 in a season, again set in 2004.

But Vettel, whose competitive instincts remain undimmed by his success, may have one eye also on soothing his oft-strained relationship with Red Bull teammate Mark Webber.

Webber will retire from Formula One after the final event in Brazil - to be replaced by fellow-Aussie Daniel Ricciardo - and will hope to bow out with a smile, if not on a high.

He admitted recently that he felt that Vettel was "in another category" and the German responded, ahead of this week's penultimate event, by acknowledging how much respect he has for his partner.

"We've always had respect on the track when we've been fighting each other," he said. "I don't think we've lacked respect. We've respected each other inside the car and the other's abilities."

"As teammates for the last five years we've got to know each other very, very well. That means I know his strengths and I know ... not his weaknesses, but corners where I might have an advantage for instance, and vice versa."

"It has always been very close, maybe closer than people remember, and I've appreciated that, so therefore I have enormous respect for him."

"Being honest, if you look back, we've not had the best relationship on a personal level."

"At the end of the day we've been very successful for the team, winning four constructors' championships in a row, always scoring enough points for the team."

Vettel made little of the furore that surrounded his decision to disobey team orders and snatch victory ahead of Webber earlier this year in Malaysia.

That omission could hint that he is prepared to repay a debt before the season ends, if the circumstances allow, by helping Webber win again before he leaves to go sportscar racing with Porsche.

The Australian would love to take his 10th Formula One Grand Prix win in his own style, of course, but is hardly likely to refuse a gift in an event that delighted all visitors a year ago.

In that race, Briton Lewis Hamilton was in sparkling form and claimed a victory that he described as "one of my best ever" with McLaren, the team he left behind to join Mercedes this year.

His replacement at McLaren, Mexican Sergio Perez, has not worked out and the 23-year-old announced on Wednesday he will be leaving at the end of the season, so, like Webber he will be hungry to finish the season positively - his goal being to persuade a team to take him on for next year. - AFP




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MUMBAI

Emotions run high as Tendulkar farewell begins

INDIAN cricket legend Sachin Tendulkar took to the pitch last Thursday for his 200th and final test, bidding farewell to his adoring public and basking in tributes from fellow players, politicians and fans.

The 40-year-old is ending an international career spanning nearly a quarter of a century during which he became the all-time leading test and one-day batsman and the only man to score 100 international centuries.

The end of the "Little Master", who has almost god-like status in his cricket mad country, has been met with nationwide nostalgia for his sporting feats since his international debut in 1989.

Tendulkar, who led the team out onto the field in his home city of Mumbai, said the last 20 years had been "marked by some of the most challenging, exhilarating, poignant and memorable moments of my life".

"The game has seen so much change over the last two decades - from advances in technology, new formats, yet the basic spirit and passion surrounding the game remains the same," he wrote in a front-page *Hindustan Times* piece.

Excitement ahead of the game has



Indian cricketer Sachin Tendulkar.
Photo: AFP

been building since he announced his intention to retire last month, with highlights of his innings and interviews looping on news channels.

"He's not just a cricketer. For me he's an ideal son, an ideal friend. The biggest thing about him is his humility," said fan Himanshu Kapadia, queuing for entry to the stadium with his two sons.

"It's a piece of history for me," he said of the farewell match.

Many fans have expressed disappointment that only 5000 tickets went

on sale for the general public despite the 32,000 seats in the Wankhede stadium, many of which are reserved for VIPs such as sponsors and cricket club members.

Such was the demand for tickets for the game against the West Indies that the main website selling them crashed within minutes of sales opening on Monday.

Footage broadcast on Indian television showed Tendulkar leading the team out to the pitch and the toss taking place with a specially minted coin bearing his image on one side.

"We will be very fortunate if we get another Sachin," Indian captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni said at the toss. "So it is important that we learn from the great man."

Since 16-year-old Tendulkar made his debut in Karachi in 1989, he has racked up an astonishing 15,847 runs in 199 tests, helping India win the 2011 World Cup and reach the top of the world rankings.

On the eve of his final match, which extends his record for Test appearances to 200, he thanked his fans on Twitter "from the bottom of my heart for 24 years of support".

Tendulkar's wheelchair-bound moth-

er Rajni is due to watch her son bat for the first time after a special ramp was built for her at the south Mumbai stadium, despite her previous fears that her presence at matches could bring him bad luck.

Along with Tendulkar murals, banners and billboards that have sprung up in the countdown, Mumbai's tattoo parlours have reportedly seen a spike in requests for designs of the sporting icon.

"Sachin Tendulkar was the best batsman of my generation and it will be a privilege to be in Mumbai," wrote Australia's Warne, who is commentating on the match.

British Prime Minister David Cameron, on a visit to New Delhi, called him "absolutely an all-time great" and said he was an example and inspiration to cricket-lovers.

Father-of-two Tendulkar has avoid-

'Sachin Tendulkar was the best batsman of my generation and it will be a privilege to be in Mumbai.'

Former Australian bowler Shane Warne

"Since it was for Sachin Sir, I hardly felt any pain," Rikin Dedhia told *The Times of India* after a smiling Tendulkar was etched on his upper arm.

Cricketing greats Brian Lara and Shane Warne have also flown in for the farewell game at Wankhede, where a huge security force has been deployed for the next five days.

ed the limelight off the pitch and has steered clear of controversies, earning a reputation for modesty and self-control.

Despite his glowing reputation, his cricketing powers have waned in recent years and some suggested that he should have retired earlier, with the latest of his 51 test centuries back in January 2011 against South Africa. - AFP



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Sport

Sports bodies back new anti-doping measures

SPORT 58

IN BRIEF

London
Man U lose Carrick for up to six weeks
Manchester United received a blow on Wednesday with the news that key midfielder Michael Carrick will be unavailable for up to six weeks due to an Achilles injury.
The 32-year-old withdrew from the England squad on Tuesday for the friendly games against Chile and Germany and faces a battle to return to fitness in time for Christmas.
"Manchester United midfielder Michael Carrick will be out for four to six weeks with an Achilles injury, the club has confirmed," read a statement on the United website.
Carrick stands to miss league games against Cardiff, Tottenham, Everton and Newcastle United, as well as United's final two Champions League games against Bayer Leverkusen and Shakhtar Donetsk.
A six-week absence would also leave him unavailable for the league game at Aston Villa on December 15, as well as the League Cup quarter-final against Stoke City three days later.

Johannesburg
Armstrong ban reduction talk 'premature': USADA
Any discussion on a reduction of fallen cycling star Lance Armstrong's lifetime ban is "premature" and "speculative" until he offers information about doping, US Anti-Doping Agency chief Travis Tygart told AFP last week.
"Technically it's a possibility for him to receive a reduction," Tygart said on the sidelines of the World Conference on Doping in Sport.

London
Ecclestone says his trial "good" for F1
Formula One boss Bernie Ecclestone insisted Monday that a trial where he has been accused of making a "corrupt bargain" was good for the sport.
German media group Constantin Medien, which claims it lost out in a deal to sell the Formula One group, has launched legal action against the 83-year-old British tycoon and three other defendants. Constantin is seeking over US\$100 million in damages.
Ecclestone says the claim "lacks any merit" and has denied being party to any form of "conspiracy". - AFP

SINGAPORE

Macao fight may be Pacquiao's last: trainer

MANNY Pacquiao's trainer Freddie Roach said he would order the Filipino boxer great to retire if he suffers a bad loss in this week's comeback fight against Brandon Rios.
The flamboyant Roach backed Pacquiao for a fifth- or sixth-round knockout of the American in their November 24 World Boxing Organisation welterweight title bout in Macau.
But if the fight does not go according to plan, he said he would have no hesitation in telling Pacquiao to quit the sport after what would be his third straight defeat.
And Roach, a former boxer who suffers from Parkinson's disease, said they had an "agreement" that Pacquiao would retire if advised to by his trainer.
"If I see he is slowing down and slipping in the fight I will be the first one to tell him," Roach told journalists via conference call from Pacquiao's training camp in General Santos City, the Philippines, late on November 13.
"We have an agreement that I will tell him that and he will retire. I don't see him slipping in the gym at this moment and he's doing really well. He's fired up and anxious to get back in the ring and I see good things.
"If things don't go well we will talk about retirement and going into politics full-time or something like that."
Pacquiao, who is nearly 35 and was regarded as one of the best pound-for-pound boxers of his generation when he won world titles in eight weight divisions, is currently a member of Congress in the Philippines. He has not fought in nearly a year since he was knocked out by

Pacquiao-Rios showdown

Filipino boxer Manny Pacquiao faces American Brandon Rios in the south Chinese gambling enclave of Macau



Manny Pacquiao		Brandon Rios
34	Age	27
5' 6 1/2" (1.69m)	Height	5' 8" (1.73m)
67" (170cm)	Reach	70" (178cm)
54-5-2	Record (Win-loss-draw)	31-1-1
38	Knockouts	22
Eight-division world champion	Title	Lightweight world champion

Sources: TopRank/MannyPacquiao.ph/Bambamrios.com

Mexico's Juan Manuel Marquez in the sixth round in Las Vegas last December.
It was Pacquiao's second consecutive defeat after he lost a controversial split decision to Timothy Bradley six months earlier - his first loss in seven years.

'If things don't go well we will talk about retirement.'

Freddie Roach, Pacquiao's trainer

Pacquiao's build-up to the "must win" fight with Rios has been disrupted by super typhoon Haiyan, which killed thousands of people and left hundreds of thousands homeless when it swept through central regions of the Philippines.
But Roach said he had told Pac-

quiao that it was impossible to take time out of training to visit survivors and survey aid efforts in the affected areas.
"He told me he wanted to go down on Sunday but it's too close to the fight for him to take any time off and we talked about that," Roach said. "He is focused on the fight still but obviously it is a big distraction because it killed all of those people."
"We do talk about it in the gym - about how many people got killed in the storm and how many more have been affected. He is concerned about it, yes, very much. But I think we have him pretty much on track on the fight."
"He knows it's a big fight and he knows it's a must-win situation and it's bigger than that because he has to win for the country also, not just his boxing career. He knows he has to win for the people and he told me that yesterday."
"They seem to be inspiring each other."
Roach added that Pacman was "90 percent ready" to face "fat guy" Rios, who is seven years younger and 1.5 inches taller than the 5-foot-6.5-inch (1.69-metre) Filipino southpaw.
He said if Pacquiao wins in Macau, they will seek a rematch with Marquez as a priority ahead of the long-awaited match-up with undefeated American Floyd Mayweather.
"We want Marquez one more time, yes. That's the fight we want," he said. "Mayweather too of course, but Marquez, he got lucky and we want to take that back."
Pacquiao ends his training camp and departs for Macau on Monday, ahead of the fight which will be held next Sunday morning local time so as to be live for Saturday evening TV audiences in the United States.
- AFP



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