

UNICEF and gov't officials discuss family separations, child abuse



Photo shows the happy life of a family.—PHOTO: UNICEF MYANMAR

By Khaing Thanda Lwin

According to Myanmar research, orphanages, youth training schools and group homes all over the world are not safe places for children and may even create psychological problems.

More than 8 million

children around the world live in orphanages and other homes. In such an environment children often fall victim to abuse, including sexual abuse, child trafficking and other crimes.

Often relatives send

children to such places, hoping they will get education, health care services and other benefits.

In Myanmar, more than 12,000 orphans across the country are living in over 140 homes for children with poor facilities.

The Social Welfare Department under the Min-

istry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement and the United Nations Children's Emergency Fund-UNICEF gathered data about the conditions in 2011.

According to the Myanmar survey result, all data indicates that the homes are in poor condition.

The authorities found 5,509 children living in homes have parents, which researchers said was an interesting fact.

Myanmar officials have said they want to help prevent the separation of families in future, by monitoring these places.

A media workshop on the prevention of family separation took place on Friday at Central Hotel on Bogoyoke Aung San Street in Yangon, aimed at spreading awareness on the issue and child abuse through the media.

At the workshop, officials of UNICEF and the

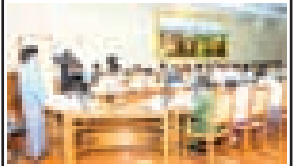
department discussed the situation of children in residential care facilities in Myanmar.

"The social welfare department appointed Child Protection Officers in six townships in Yangon—Hlinethaya, Shwepyitha, Dala, Kungyangon, Hline and Twantay—in order to prevent a further rise in the number of children in "out-of-home" care, said an official of the department.

They are now monitoring and providing necessary services to grass-root families in the townships. An official from UNICEF urged donors to join community-based responses and directly provide aid to low-income families to prevent family separation.

Another workshop under the title of "National Forum on Prevention of Family Separation" will be held on 27 May in Yangon to discuss ways to prevent family separation.

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By Ye Myint

Since the increase in the national healthcare budget, the number of patients seeking medical care has increased, but number of hospital staff has not increased to the same degree, a senior medical staff member of Yangon General Hospital said on Friday.

While the increased workload is to be somewhat expected, the disparity in the number of healthcare workers and the number of patients is causing misconceptions, particularly among patients about missing appointments or having their appointments suddenly rescheduled.

Government healthcare expenditures have quadrupled and public hospitals are now much more able to provide patients with free, or nearly free,

medicine and other services.

But with staff numbers not having increased nearly as quickly as the number of people seeking medical care, trying to balance serving everyone quickly and efficiently has become increasingly difficult.

The result is often patient dissatisfaction because what many patients believe should be a quick visit to the hospital for treatment, often takes much longer than they expected.

At the 1,500-bed Yangon General hospital, the flood of patients can overwhelm the staff, resulting in missed appointments, long waits or sudden rescheduling that leaves too many patients feeling poorly treated.

Even if staff can handle the numbers each day, a further frustration for both

patients and staff is that sometimes tests and other examinations cannot be completed in a single visit and patients must return for second, third or more visits even before full treatment of their ailments can begin, the senior staff member said.

In a speech to the National Health Committee on Tuesday, Vice-President Dr Sai Mauk Kham underlined the importance of bringing more balance to staff-patient ratios across the country, saying that is required to create a happy and healthy environment (See page 2)

Yangon General Hospital, located in central Yangon, giving health care services to Yangonites.
PHOTO: YE MYINT



PyinOoLwin scout's camp closed



Union Minister U Soe Thane lights the celebration of bonfire before closing scout camp in PyinOoLwin Township.—MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 2 May—Bonfires marked the closing of the scout's camp in PyinOoLwin Township in Mandalay Region on Thursday evening.

Boy and girl scouts demonstrated their scouting skills on the occasion and Union Minister at the President Office U Soe Thane and Mandalay Region Chief Minister U Ye Myint awarded the outstanding scouts.

MNA

Youth scouts enjoy bonfires at PyinOoLwin Camp.

MNA



Increased patient-to-staff ratio sparks misconception ...

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for both healthcare workers and for patients.

Offering free medical care to every patient with the help of the increased health budget Yangon General Hospital has become both an attractive and a reliable oasis for Yangon's citizens.

"Health services delivery is far better than before. Most of the medicines, including urgently needed ones, are provided by the hospital. Patients have to spend less money on prescription drugs", said a 30-year-old woman in line to buy medicine from a drugstore in the

hospital.

About 56,000 patients got in-patient medical treatment at Yangon General Hospital's three medical wards, three surgical wards, trauma and orthopaedic ward and 24 specialist departments last fiscal year.

The 1,500-bed hospital also runs an emergency department in which more than 30 doctors and nurses and a non-medical 50 staff perform their duties in rotation.

The hospital, originally completed in 1873, now has a medical staff of about 300 doctors and more than 400 nurses.

Myanmar, Norway tie for environmental conservation

By Aung Khin

YANGON 2 May—The governments of Myanmar and Norway are planning to cooperate in environmental conservation, according to a *Xinhua News Agency* report on Friday.

As part of bilateral cooperation, the Ministry of Environmental Conservation and Forestry of Myanmar and the Ministry of Climate and Environment of Norway will jointly implement preservation of biodiversity and forests in Myanmar, water resources preservation and water resources administration in the Sittoung and Bago river

basins.

Research centre Forest Trends said the two major drivers of deforestation in Myanmar are expanding plantation farming and government licenses to log in natural forests.

Other factors for deforestation and forest degradation in Myanmar include agriculture, logging, fuel-wood collection, and, to a lesser extent, development for energy infrastructure. Although Myanmar implemented a ban on raw timber exports from 31 March 2014, the move affects only raw timber exports, not milled lumber.

The development of the world-famous tourist

site of Inlay Lake in Shan State and betterment of social economy of ethnic minorities residing around the lake will also be on the agenda of Myanmar and Norwegian governments.

The joint effort will include putting Inlay Lake on the World Heritage list, implementation of reducing emissions from deforestation and degradation (REDD+), promoting cooperation with NGOs in environmental conservation tasks, development and poverty alleviation schemes. Myanmar has invited Norwegian companies to invest in the country's energy and information and technology sectors.

Union FM felicitates Polish counterpart

NAY PYI TAW, 3 May—U Wunna Maung Lwin, Union Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, has sent a message of felicitations to His Excellency Mr Radoslaw Sikorski, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland, on the occasion of the National Day of the Republic of Poland, which falls on 3 May 2014.—MNA

President's excellent award presentation ceremony to broadcast live on 3 May

NAY PYI TAW, 2 May—President's excellent award presentation ceremony will be held at 9 a.m. on Saturday at the Presidential Palace in Nay Pyi Taw.

People may watch both live and after the evening news programme through Myanmar Radio and Television-MRTV.

MNA

Regional chief minister's cup sports competitions to start in June

NAY PYI TAW, 2 May—Myanmar will hold state or region chief minister's cup

sports competitions beginning in June.

Previously, the events were named state- and region-level sports contests and usually held in the cities of Yangon and Nay Pyi Taw, according to the Sports Ministry and Myanmar Sports Federations, the organizers. Now, the sports events will take place in the respective regions and states and plans are under way for district-level teams or sports clubs to be able to participate for the regional or state cups.

The Ministry of Sports is reported ready to sell sports gear for the events at reduced prices.

MNA

Myanmar to hold regional forum for Olympic committees

NAY PYI TAW, 2 May—The Olympic Solidarity(OS)/Olympic Council of Asia (OCA) Regional Forum for East Asian and South East and NOCs will be held in Nay Pyi Taw on 11-12 May, officials said.

The event at the Hotel Royal ACE will bring together four members of OS, five from the OCA, 16 from eight countries in East Asia, 22 from 11 Southeast Asia countries, five from the organizing committee of the Incheon Asian Games, five from organizing committee of the Asian Beach Games in Phuket and six from the organizing committee of the Nanjing 2014 Youth Olympic Games.—MNA

NATIONAL

U Nyan Tun calls poverty reduction unsustainable without rural development



Vice-President U Nyan Tun speaks at a poverty reduction meeting. —MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 2 May—Vice-President U Nyan Tun emphasized Friday that poverty reduction in Myanmar cannot be sus-

tainable “without comprehensive development for people in rural areas who make up the majority of the population.”

Speaking at a meeting of the Work Committee for Reduction of Poverty in Rural Areas at the President Office in Nay

Pyi Taw, he stressed the importance of “inclusive” rural development, which he said includes the capacity and right to participate

in the political process, economic development process and all-inclusive social development.

After the vice pres-

President U Thein Sein felicitates Polish counterpart, PM

NAY PYI TAW, 3 May—U Thein Sein, President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, has sent messages of felicitations to His Excellency Mr Bronislaw Komorowski, President of the Republic of Poland and Mr Donald Tusk, Prime Minister of the Republic of Poland, on the occasion of the National Day of the Republic of Poland, which falls on 3 May 2014.—MNA

ident’s opening remarks union ministers, chief ministers and officials reported on work being carried out for poverty reduction in their regions and states.

MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 2 May—Thura U Shwe Mann, Speaker of Union Parliament and of People’s Parliament, wrapped up his three-day tour of Rakhine State on Friday.

Earlier, he attended a Rakhine national conference in Kyaukpyu in the Rakhine.

The conference held from 27 April to 1 May was also attended by Buddhist monks, members of parliament, regional cabinet members, representatives from the Rakhine National Party, members of social organizations and local residents.

The speaker also held a meeting with local authorities, members of political parties, civil servants and local residents to discuss regional development.

He then visited the

Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann wraps up tour in Rakhine State



Union Parliament Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann meets with MPs, local authorities and people and political party members in Rakhine State.—MNA

Kyaukpyu-Maei Road project office and proceeded to Yanbye Township. Thura U Shwe Mann discussed

regional development work with local authorities and people at the township administrator’s office.

Friday, he visited An and Minbu townships and discussed regional development with the local au-

thorities and people.

Before the Rakhine trip, the speaker visited Yangon Region, Mon

State, Kayin State and Ayeyawady Region starting on 24 April.

MNA

Myanmar scout troop visits Maha Muni Buddha Image in Mandalay

MANDALAY, 2 May—A 289-member scout troop from PyinOoLwin visited the Maha Muni Buddha Image in Mandalay on 2 May along with their leaders.

The group also studied at temple museum and took time to buy souvenirs at

the stairway before visiting Myanan Sankyaw Golden Palace.

While they camped in National Kandawgyi Gardens of PyinOoLwin from 20 April to 1 May, the scouts joined cleaning at the local home for the aged, helped take care

the aged and helped clean the School for the Needy Blind.

The world’s first Scout Association was founded in 1908 and Myanmar established a women’s scouts association in 1916 and a men’s scouts association in 1920 as independent organ-

isations.

After a 50-year hiatus from 1962, Myanmar was able to reorganise the scout association in the 2012-2013 academic year, bringing together more than 7,000 scouts from 78 schools across the country.—Kyemon-012



Buddhist culture course in Pa-O language attracts monks, youths



HOPONG, 2 May—More than 400 monks and 2,500 Pa-O nationals participated a Buddhist culture course in Pa-O language on 1 May at Jotika Rhama Patipati Monastery in Yankin Village in

Shan State (South).

“It is over 30 years since the last Buddhist culture course in Pa-O language was conducted,” said presiding Monk U Arnanda of Ponshebin village.

The participants in the course were from various townships, including Hopong, Hsihseng, Pinlaung, Naungtaya, Pekhon, Loikaw, Kalaw, Heho, Pindaya, Aungban, Loilem,

Panglong and Thaton. They will conduct similar courses in their villages after completion of the course which lasts from 1 May to 9 May.

Nan Oo Hkam (Hopong)

Local residents in Monywa want DAC to collect rubbish in every street

MONYWA, 2 May—Local people in Monywa want the township development committee to collect rubbish in every street instead of collecting from major roads only.

The people are beginning to worry about their health due to bad smells from rubbish heaps and sewage around roads and markets, according to the residents.

“The rubbish heap at the corner of Nyaung Tabin Street and Theindaw Street becomes higher and bigger every day. The smell is awful. There are some people who have to receive medical treatment due to respiratory problems caused by the unpleasant smell from the rubbish heap,” said one resident.

“This is not because the staff of the township

development affairs committee failed to do their work but because the rubbish problem is too big for them to solve. Local residents and the staff must cooperate to find a solution,” he added.

Similarly, rubbish problem are a cause of concern for people who live near Bogyoke Road and Anauk Market.

As rubbish is collected only in major roads, those who live in small streets have to throw their rubbish into major streets, leaving big rubbish heaps until they are collected by the township development affairs committee the next day.

People who live along the big roads then have to endure the unpleasant smell the whole night.

Myo Win Tun (Monywa)

Arid Magway villages face severe water shortages as drought worsens

YESAGYO, 2 May — Residents in arid areas of Magway Region are facing difficulties with their drinking water supply as the drought worsens this summer, drying up lakes and ponds, according to local sources.

“For drinking water, we have to rely on the lake in our village. We have a

well, but its water is too salty to drink,” said U Myint Thein, administrator in Gwaybintha Village.

“We have another well and we can drink its water, but the water is not enough for 369 villagers because the well is drying up. Moreover, that water is not clean anymore.”

U Myint Thein said the

township military station and fire service department sent the village six vehicles carrying 9,000 gallons of water. With the worsening drought plus intense heat, several other villages in the township are reportedly facing severe shortages of drinking water.

*U Tun Tun Hlaing-Yes-
agyo reporter*

Meiktila turns to more mechanized farming



MEIKTILA, 2 May—Farmers in Meiktila Township in the Mandalay Region are using more power tillers recently to make up for planting-time lost to the untimely arrival of rain

last month. “Power tillers can be used to plough three acres a day, the same as five pairs of oxen, but because of the time lost to the rains, farmers without oxen cannot rent them this year from

others because they too are still using their oxen,” one local farmer said.

The power tillers cost about K 5,000 an hour to rent.—*Thein Myint Kyaw (Meiktila)*

Novitiation depicts Myanmar’s fine tradition



MANDALAY, 2 May—A Myanmar traditional novitiation ceremony was held on a grand scale at the

monastery near Maha Muni Buddha Image recently.

Most parents have sons initiated as novices every

summer, aimed at learning the Buddha’s teachings to have more politeness.

Myint Than (Oxygen)

Zeedaw villagers receive healthcare services

YEZAGYO, 2 May—A mobile clinic from Yezagyo Station visited the monastery in Zeedaw Village and provided healthcare services to local residents on 29 April.

The clinic provided services to elderly peo-

ple who were suffering from lack of appetite and sleep due to extremely hot weather, the village administrator said.

The team conducted general medical examinations on two monks and

81 elderly people and gave them necessary medicines.

In addition to healthcare services, the team advised people how to live and eat healthily in very hot weather.

Pe Tun Zaw (Yezagyo)

WORLD

Subway trains crash in South Korean capital, 200 people hurt



Damaged subway trains are seen at a subway station in Seoul on 2 May, 2014.—REUTERS

SEOUL, 2 May — South Korea suffered its second serious transport accident in just over two weeks on Friday when a subway train in the capital, Seoul, crashed into a train at a station, injuring 200 people although no

one was killed. The country is still mourning the victims of a ferry accident on April 16, when 300 people were killed or are missing in the submerged hull of a capsized ship in the country's worst disaster in 20 years.

Most of those hurt in the mid-afternoon accident on Friday appeared to have suffered minor abrasions, according to emergency officials at Sangwangsimmni station in the east of the capital, although one person was being treated for a brain hemorrhage and one for a fracture. "An incoming train crashed into one that was stopped at

the station," fire department official Kim Kyung-su told a news conference.

About 1,000 people were evacuated, Kim said.

Seoul Metro official Chung Soo-young said the accident was caused by a signal failure and that two subway cars were derailed.

"I fell forwards" maybe two or three meters," said Lee Dong-hyeon, 26, an office worker on the train that crashed into the one stopped at the station.

"It was like tripping over when running really fast."

Reuters

US military sexual assault reports jumped 50 percent last year

WASHINGTON, 2 May — Reported sexual assaults in the US military jumped 50 percent last year, the Pentagon said on Thursday, and officials welcomed the spike as a sign that a high-level crackdown has made victims more confident their attackers will be prosecuted.

Defence Secretary Chuck Hagel said the jump in reported sexual assaults to 5,061 in the 2013 fiscal year from 3,374 the previous year, was "unprecedented."

He announced six new directives to expand the fight, including an alcohol policy review and an ef-

fort to encourage reporting by male victims. Men are thought to represent about half of the victims of military sexual assault but made up only 14 percent of the reports that were investigated.

"We believe victims are growing more confident in our system," Hagel told a Pentagon news conference. "Because these crimes are underreported, we took steps to increase reporting and that's what we're seeing."

Despite increased focus on the issue over the past year, the military has continued to face embarrassing incidents in which

officers have been accused of tolerating sexual misconduct and even encouraging it, rather than fighting the problem. Critics said the Pentagon's



US army soldiers are seen marching in the St Patrick's Day Parade in New York, on 16 March, 2013.—REUTERS

numbers on increased reporting demonstrated little improvement in the proportion of cases going to trial or the percentage of convictions.—Reuters

In Iraq and Syria, a resurgence of foreign suicide bombers



A policeman inspects the site of a car bomb attack at a checkpoint in the city of Hilla, on 24 April, 2014.—REUTERS

WASHINGTON, 2 May — Shortly before Abdul Waheed Majeed, a 41-year-old British truck driver, blew himself up in an attack on a Syrian prison, he brushed aside a question in Arabic.

"I'm sorry, I can't speak it," he said in a

video. "My tongue bro'... it's got like a knot in it."

That suicide-bomb attack on 6 February by the Pakistani-born Majeed, appeared to be part of a resurgence of such attacks that represented a disturbing shift in tactics among

radical jihadists in the sectarian killing grounds of Syria and Iraq.

Many of them have been carried out by foreigners drawn to the conflicts from across the region and from Europe, US and European security and

intelligence officials say.

Will McCants, an expert at the Brookings Institution think tank in Washington, said given the rapid increase of foreign fighters in Syria "if the war drags on, the number of fighters will far eclipse those we saw in Afghanistan."

The security officials estimated that several thousand foreign nationals are active in the two countries.

Most are with the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), an ultra-conservative militant group reconstituted from an earlier incarnation of al-Qaeda and is active in Syria and Iraq and with Jabhat al Nusra, an al-Qaeda affiliate which is one of the most powerful rebel forces in Syria. In the last year the rate of suicide bomb attacks in Iraq has risen sharply, back to levels not seen since 2007, US officials said.—Reuters

United Nations Secretary-General's Message on World Press Freedom Day 3 May, 2014

Each year on World Press Freedom Day, we reaffirm our commitment to the fundamental freedom to receive and impart information and ideas through any media, regardless of frontiers, enshrined in article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Yet every day of the year sees this right under assault.

Journalists are singled out for speaking or writing uncomfortable truths — kidnapped, detained, beaten and sometimes murdered. Such treatment is completely unacceptable in a world ever more reliant on global news outlets and the journalists who serve them.

In conflict areas, journalists often wear blue uniforms and helmets so that they can be easily identified and protected against attack. As we know from the UN's own peacekeeping operations, the colour blue provides no guarantee of safety.

Last year 70 journalists were killed, many caught in the cross-fire of armed hostilities. Fourteen more have suffered the same fate this year.

Last year, 211 journalists were being held in prison. Some 456 journalist have been forced into exile since 2008. And since 1992, well over 1,000 journalists have been killed — nearly one per week.

These are alarming figures. Behind each statistic stands a man or a woman simply going about their lawful business.

There must be no impunity for those who target journalists for violence, intimidation or distorted uses of legal procedures to disrupt or impede their work.

Media freedoms must continue to be at the centre of our work to promote security, dignity and prosperity for all.

Member States are deep in discussion about the post-2015 development agenda. This is a once-in-generation opportunity to steer the world in a more sustainable and equitable direction.

Free media, traditional and new, are indispensable for development, democracy and good governance. They can promote transparency about the new goals that Member States will adopt — progress as well as shortfalls. Social media and mobile technologies offer new tools for accelerating citizen participation and economic and social progress. The media's watchdog function is essential for holding Governments, businesses and others to account.

On this World Press Freedom Day, I call on all Governments, societies and individuals to actively defend this fundamental right as critical factors in achieving the Millennium Development Goals and advancing the post-2015 development agenda.

Freedom of expression, independent media and universal access to knowledge will fortify our efforts to achieve lasting results for people and the planet.

UNIC/Yangon

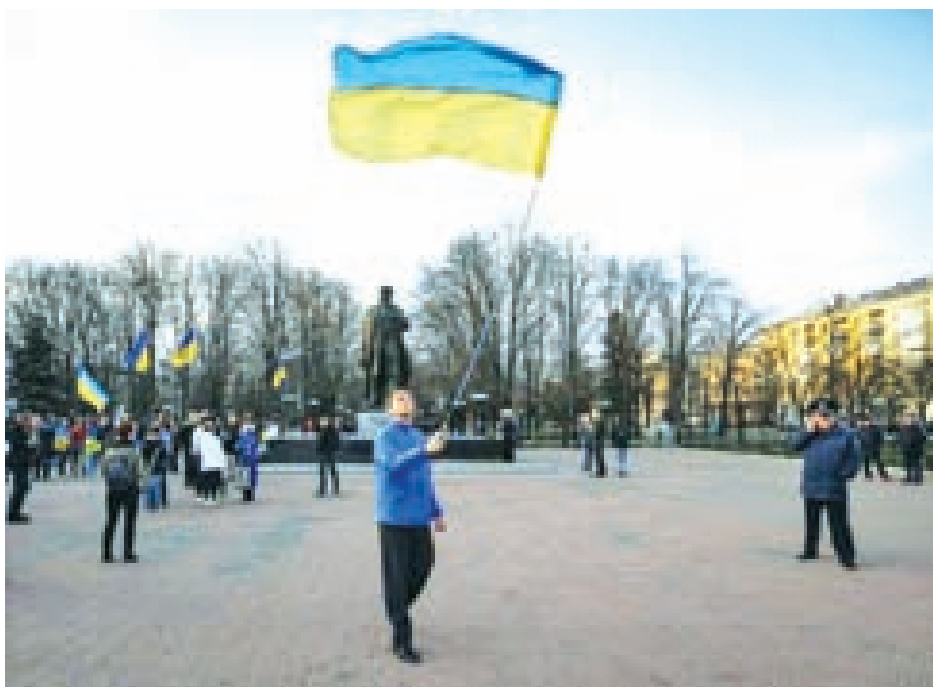
Cuba calls terrorism designation by US absurd, manipulative

HAVANA, 2 May — Cuba labelled as absurd and manipulative an annual US State Department report that once again designated Cuba as a state sponsor of terrorism, a setback for advocates hoping for a change in Washington's Cuba policy this year. The annual Country Reports on Terrorism issued on Wednesday continued to list Cuba, Iran, Sudan and Syria as countries that have "repeatedly provided support for acts of international terrorism." Cuba has been on the list since 1982.

The designation carries with it economic sanctions beyond those already imposed in the US trade embargo of Cuba.

Cuba's Foreign Ministry "energetically rejects the manipulation of a matter as sensitive as international terrorism by turning it into an instrument of policy against Cuba and it demands that our country be definitively excluded from this spurious, unilateral and arbitrary list," the Cuban government said in a statement late on Wednesday.—Reuters

IMF says Ukraine would need modified bailout if eastern region lost



A man waves a national flag as he attend a pro-Ukrainian rally in Luhansk, eastern Ukraine on 15 April, 2014.—REUTERS

WASHINGTON, 2 May—The International Monetary Fund warned on Thursday it would be forced to re-design its \$17 billion bailout for Ukraine and require additional financing if the country lost territory in its restive eastern region. The Fund also said a deterioration in relations between Ukraine and Russia, which buys about a quarter of Ukrainian exports, could further hurt

Kiev's economy and force an adjustment to the bailout approved by the IMF board on Wednesday.

"A long-lasting disruption of relations with Russia that depresses exports, investment, and growth, or a loss of economic control over the East that reduces budget revenue would require a significant recalibration of the programme and additional financing, including from Ukraine's bilateral partners," the IMF said in a staff report released on Thursday.

In outlining the risks to the programme, the IMF also warned of uncertainty about the Ukraine government's commitment to an extensive programme of reforms, many of them politically unpopular, especially after its 25 May presidential election.

Ukraine's prior two

IMF aid packages were suspended after Kiev failed to comply with promised economic changes. This time, the IMF committed to reviewing Ukraine's progress with reforms every two months, with the next review set for the end of May.

The IMF bailout should unlock another \$15 billion in additional aid from Ukraine from the World Bank, the European Union, Canada and other donors. The money is intended to help stabilize Ukraine's economy in the middle of its worst civil turmoil since independence in 1991.

Ukraine's pro-Western leaders conceded on Wednesday they were "helpless" to counter the takeover of government buildings and police stations to pro-Russia separatists in the Donbass coal

and steel belt region, located in eastern Ukraine and accounting for up to a third of the country's industrial output.

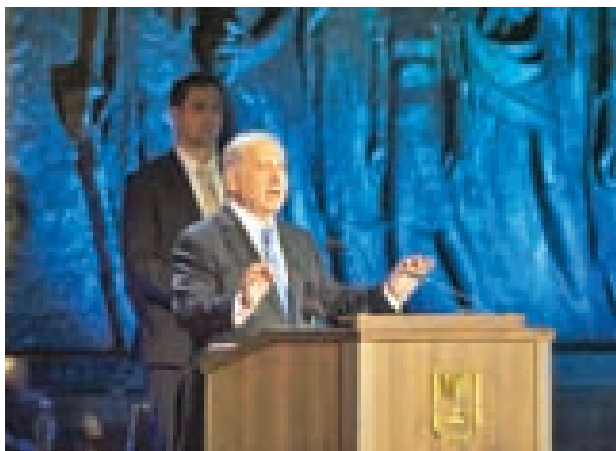
Ukraine says Russia is behind the unrest, but Russia denies having any part in the rebellion.

The unrest follows months of anti-government protests and Russia's annexation of the Crimea region, which had already pushed Ukraine's economy to the brink of bankruptcy and into a likely 5 percent contraction this year, according to the IMF.

The IMF acknowledged Ukraine no longer has control over Crimea, but said the region accounts for only 3.7 percent of Ukraine's national output, and its annexation should not hurt the central government's ability to carry out reforms.

Reuters

Netanyahu wants to define Israel as Jewish state in law



Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu speaks during the opening ceremony of Holocaust Memorial Day at the Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial in Jerusalem on 27 April, 2014.—REUTERS

JERUSALEM, 2 May—Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said on Thursday he would seek a new law declaring Israel a Jewish state, striking back against a Palestinian refusal to recognise that status in now-collapsed peace talks.

"I will promote a Basic Law that will define Israel as the nation-state of the Jewish people," Netanyahu said in a speech in Tel Aviv that alluded to Palestinian rejection of his demand to recognise Israel as such in the US-backed

negotiations. Palestinians fear this label would lead to discrimination against Israel's sizeable Arab minority, which makes up a fifth of its population, and negate any right of return of Palestinian refugees from wars since 1948 to what is now Israel.

Israeli enshrinement in law of the concept of Israel as a Jewish state — a definition that was included in its 1948 Declaration of Independence — could complicate any efforts to restart negotiations that stumbled over that issue and others.

Netanyahu, speaking in the hall where the Declaration of Independence was signed in 1948, said those seeking the creation of a Palestinian state, while refusing to recognise Israel as a Jewish nation, were challenging its right to exist.—Reuters

NATO looking at next steps to bring Georgia closer to alliance

TBILISI, 2 May—NATO secretary-general's special representative for the Caucasus and Central Asia on Thursday said that the alliance is looking at next steps to bring Georgia closer to NATO.

James Appathurai made the remarks at a joint press briefing along with Georgian Foreign Minister Maia Panjikidze.

"I can tell you that in overall this assessment in

NATO is positive," said the special representative, referring to NATO assessment of progresses made by aspirant countries.

"Georgia continues to improve and that's because of the hard work done in this country," he said.

"We have consistently assessed Georgia's progress based on two things reforms and Georgia's contribution to

international peace and security and those will remain the prisms through which we look at this progress; in other words we will judge Georgia on Georgia's merits and regardless what's happening in elsewhere and regardless of comments from the Kremlin or elsewhere."

The NATO special representative arrived in Tbilisi on Thursday.

Xinhua

Northern Ireland rocked by Gerry Adams arrest over 1972 killing



Sinn Féin president Gerry Adams arrives at the funeral of veteran British Labour politician Tony Benn at St Margaret's Church, Westminster Abbey in London on 27 March, 2014.—REUTERS

ANTRIM, (Northern Ireland), 2 May—Northern Irish police questioned Sinn Féin leader Gerry

Adams on Thursday after arresting him under an investigation into one of the province's most notorious murders, a move that stirred fierce political reaction in Britain and Ireland.

Reviled by many as the spokesman for the Irish Republican Army in the 1980s during its campaign against British rule, Adams reinvented himself as a Northern Ireland peacemaker and then as a populist opposition parliamentarian in the Irish Republic.

His Sinn Féin party, which shares power in the

Northern Ireland government, said he was arrested in the town of Antrim on Wednesday evening by police investigating the 1972 abduction and murder of Jean McConville, a widowed mother of 10 children.

Adams can be held for up to 48 hours, or until 8 pm (3.00 p.m. ET) on Friday, before a judge must rule on whether he can be detained any longer. Under British anti-terrorism laws, a suspect can be held for up to 28 days before being charged.

Reuters



Indian police issues high alerts to all airports after bomb blasts in Chennai: An injured passenger of a train blast is carried to a hospital in Chennai, India, on 1 May, 2014. Indian Armed Police Force, CISF, issues high alerts on Thursday to all airports after bomb blasts in Chennai, news channel CNN-IBN reported. Two minor-intensity bombs ripped through a passenger train in the southern state of Tamil Nadu's capital Chennai early this morning, killing one woman and injuring over 14 others.—XINHUA

WORLD

N Korea seen testing engine for intercontinental ballistic missile



A missile is carried by a military vehicle during a parade to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the signing of a truce in the 1950-1953 Korean War, at Kim Il-sung Square in Pyongyang on 27 July, 2013.

REUTERS

SEOUL, 2 May — North Korea has recently conducted engine tests for an intercontinental ballistic missile that could potentially deliver a nuclear warhead to the United States, a US think tank said on Friday.

North Korea conducted at least one engine test

for the KN-08 missile in late March or early April, the think tank 38 North said, marking the latest in a series of tests for a missile believed to have a range of more than 10,000 km (6,000 miles).

Following the engine tests, the next stage for North Korea would be a

test launch of the missile, according to 38 North, which is affiliated with Johns Hopkins University's US-Korea Institute.

"As this effort progresses, the next technically logical step in the missile's development would be a flight test of the entire system," 38 North said in

its report.

Commercial satellite imagery indicates movement and removal of missile stages and fuel tanks as well as changes in the flame trench that point to North Korea having conducted one or more tests in the two-week period from 22 March, the report said.

South Korea's defence ministry declined to confirm the specifics of the report citing intelligence policy but said a long-range missile launch by the North could not be ruled out.

"It's not easy to conduct a long-range rocket launch right after a engine test but they may have had other things prepared," ministry spokesman Kim Min-seok said.

North Korea is believed to be developing on a nuclear weapon and the

technology to miniaturize a warhead to mount it on a long-range missile.

In December 2012 it launched a long-range rocket that successfully put an object into space orbit and in February last year conducted a third nuclear test.

The report on the engine testing comes a week after the think tank reported heightened activities at the North's nuclear test site at Punggye-ri, indicating it was ready to conduct a fourth nuclear test.

A South Korean government official said preparations for a nuclear test at Punggye-ri appeared to be complete, including the sealing of tunnels dug into mountain range, and all that remained was for the North's leader Kim Jong Un to order it.

Reuters

Regulators need more info for Kyushu nuclear plant safety checks

TOKYO, 2 May — Regulators said on Friday that Kyushu Electric Power Co has not included enough information in a key document outlining the safety measures for two nuclear reactors the utility is seeking to restart.

The document was submitted to the Nuclear Regulation Authority on Wednesday so that the NRA can confirm that the reactors at the Sendai plant have satisfied a set of new

safety requirements introduced in the wake of the 2011 Fukushima nuclear crisis.

The Nos 1 and 2 reactors at the Sendai plant in Kagoshima Prefecture, southwestern Japan, are seen as the closest to being allowed to restart among Japan's 48 offline commercial reactors, as the NRA has decided to prioritize the safety checkup process for the two units.

Kyodo News

Heavy fighting, explosions in Libya's Benghazi city

BENGHAZI, 2 May — Heavy fighting broke out between Libya's army and a militia in the port city of Benghazi in the country's volatile east on Friday, residents said.

Gunfire and explosions were heard for more than one hour in the early hours. The army's special forces moved vehicles to the scene of fighting near the city's security headquarters, residents said.

The identity of the enemy was not immediately clear, residents said, though there have been frequent clashes in the city between security forces and Islamists militants.

There were reports of

casualties but government and security officials could not be immediately reached for comment.

The fighting came days after a suicide bomber had detonated an explosive-packed minibus outside a Libyan army camp in Benghazi, killing two people and wounding two more in the second suicide attack since December.

Car bombings and assassinations of soldiers and police are common in the eastern city, where troops have clashed regularly with militants from Islamist group Ansar al-Sharia—listed as a terrorist organization by Washington.

Reuters



Policemen stand guard during the annual May Day demonstration in Berlin, Germany, on 1 May, 2014. Thousands of protestors gathered on Thursday in Berlin for an annual rally to mark the International Labour Day.—XINHUA

Jordan opens desert camp for Syrian refugees

AZRAQ, 2 May — Across the desert horizon of eastern Jordan rows of iron skeleton structures rise from the sand, marking what the United Nations says could become the biggest camp for Syrian refugees in the Middle East.

Azraq refugee camp, 100 km (62 miles) east of the capital Amman, was formally opened on Wednesday after 10 months of work paving tarmac roads and constructing thousands of zinc and metal shelters that will ultimately be able to host 130,000 residents.

In planning the sprawling 15-square-km site, donors sought to avoid the pitfalls of Jordan's first

camp at Zaatari, hastily opened two years ago in a dust-filled border zone where poor services and mismanagement provoked violent protests.

"What you are seeing when you drive around is possibly one of the best

planned refugee camps in the world and probably what will be one of the biggest refugee camps in the world," UNHCR's Jordan representative, Andrew Harper, told donors and government officials attending the

opening ceremony.

Unlike Zaatari, the new camp already has two schools and a central hospital run by the Red Cross plus a large supermarket that accepts vouchers from the World Food Programme.—Reuters

A general view of the new Azraq Syrian Refugee camp which was officially announced for opening near Al Azraq, east of Amman, on 30 April, 2014.

REUTERS



Iran to buy 400 airliners if sanctions removed

TEHERAN, 2 May — Iran will purchase 400 passenger planes in the next ten years if the sanctions on its aviation fleet are lifted thoroughly, local media reported on Thursday.

Under the country's Twenty-Year Vision Plan, which runs until March 2025, the Iranian air transportation industry will need 400 passenger planes, meaning that Iranian airlines should buy 40 aircraft a year, head of Iran's Civil Aviation Organization Alireza Jahangirian was quoted as saying by Press TV.

The National Development Fund of Iran has allocated 500 million US dollars for purchasing new passenger planes, and another 500 million dollars to buy spare parts, Jahangirian said. Following an interim nuclear deal between Iran and the P5+1 group, the five permanent members of the UN Security Council plus Germany, Boeing Co and General Electric Co have obtained licence by the US Treasury Department to export spare parts to Iran.

Jahangirian referred to the licence as a "positive signal" from the United States, which would enable the country to renew its aged fleet.

The United States imposed sanctions on Iran after the victory of the Islamic revolution in 1979, banning the international air industries from selling passenger planes and spare parts to Teheran.—Xinhua

PERSPECTIVES

Saturday, 3 May, 2014

Income not enough to cover living costs for residents in urban areas

By Aung Khin

The average daily wage for a common labourer in Myanmar is between K2,000 and K5,000 (US\$ 2 to 5), compared with the baht 300 (US\$ 9) Asian migrant workers can earn in Thailand. Myanmar public employees are paid a minimum of K50,000 (US\$ 56.8) per month.

According to a survey in 2013 by ECA International, a global consulting firm, Yangon has become the sixth most expensive city in the ASEAN community for expatriates behind Singapore, Bangkok, Jakarta, Vientiane and Kuala Lumpur.

While the rent for ordinary apartments is baht 2,000 (US\$ 70) in suburban areas of Bangkok and baht 4,500 (US\$ 150) where the rental can be paid month by month, the rental rate for an apartment in Yangon suburban areas is between K. 100,000 and K. 150,000 (more than US\$ 100) per month, not including the bills for electricity and water. At least six-month rental is to be paid together with a one month agent fee. Renting in the city centre is impossible for low-income citizens.

The high living costs are causing problems to people on grass roots level, with no access to good health care, education or a better living standard.

The role of the middle class is very crucial for the development of a country in regards to politics, economy and international relations. Insufficient income leads to a loss of confidence in citizens as the country is opening up to the international community.

Therefore, the minimum wage of employees should not be too different from those in neighbouring countries, not only to guarantee reasonable living standards, but also to create a sense of humanity.

Write for us

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



Price of river fish goes up due to high demand

YESAGYO, 2 May —The price of fish has gone up in the town of Yesagyo in Magway Region located by the Chindwin River as demand for river fish has gone up substantially, officials said.

Customers prefer fresh river fish over frozen sea fish, with prices for local catch going up regularly, a local fishmonger said.

Some people make a business by buying fish from fishermen and selling them again, with some saying that the prices range from K 5,000 to 6,000 per 1.5 kg.

The price for prawns is also up to about K 15,000 for 1.5 kg, but those prices are fluctuating, a fishmonger said.

Local housewives say they prefer river fish to sea fish, as they are more tasty and have not been stored for too long.

Some locals have, however, raised the issue of overfishing, saying that systematic measures should be taken to protect river fish.

U Tun Tun Hlaing
(Yezagyo reporter)

Vendors selling river fish at a market.

GOLD PRICE, FE RATE (2-5-2014)

Yangon Gold Price

Buying K 659,600 per tical: Selling K 660,600

Mandalay Gold Price

Buying K 659,400 per tical: Selling K 660,400

FE RATE

USD Buying K 960 - Selling K 965

SGD Buying K 758 - Selling K 768

Euro Buying K 1315 - Selling K 1335

Waterway maintenance underway along Upok Creek in Kalay Township

KALAY, 2 May—Heavy machinery is being employed to maintain the waterway and flow in Upok Creek in Kalay in north-west Sagaing Region.

The township authorities have spent more than K 9 million to maintain the important waterway and construct retaining walls

for prevention of erosion.

The township development committee so far has built a 265-foot retaining wall at Myalin Village, and retaining walls of 500 feet at Natdaga Village, 620 feet at Natnan Village and 230 feet at Zingalin Village.

Linlet Kyelsin

Myeik Tsp provides solar panels to rural people

MYEIK, 2 May—Myeik Township Rural Development Department is installing solar panels in Nga-in, Mawson and Pyingyi villages in the township to increase electricity supply for the residents.

Each residence can get a solar set, free of charge, consisting of 70-A solar panel to run one TV set and two sets of fluorescent tubes and one incandescent bulb.—Khaing Htoo (Myeik District IPRD)

Forum for rural development programmes held in delta area

MYANAUNG, 2 May—A forum for rural development programmes and welfare for farmers was held in delta township Myanaung in Ayeyawady Region on 1-3 May.

The forum was jointly organized by Ayeyawady

Social Development Group and the Green Peasant Institute.

The forum, attended by 31 farmers, is aimed at sharing knowledge about farmland laws and vacant land laws.

Nay Win Zaw (Myanaung)



ARTICLE

Farmers in Nargis-hit areas preparing for another major monsoon-season storm

By Aye Min Soe

THAYET THON PIN, 2 May —Farmers in the areas hit by Cyclone Nargis six years ago are closely monitoring this year's weather patterns and other signs, fearing another major storm may be in the offing this monsoon season.

"We always keep on watching the weather and watch for traditional signs of bad weather. The tides that should always come to us did not come this year. It is hard to find bird nests this year. These signs show a very strong wind might come to us," said U Kyaw Aye, 60, from the village of Thayet Thon Pin. "We feel that the current weather is strange to us and looks like weather before Nargis hit."

As part of their heightened preparedness for another storm, people in Nargis-hit areas are carefully listening for radio weather warnings as the monsoon season draws near, believing that a storm warning, which they ignored six years ago, is very important for them to escape from another natural disaster.

"We live joyfully without thinking always of our nightmare before the monsoon, but we are aware of the weather news and are keeping on alert with our parents in the monsoon season," said Yun

"Nargis is the first time in our life," said Mahn Chit Phwe, 69, of Thayet Thon Pin Village, "so, we did not care about it even though we saw the cyclone warning on TV on that night."

When the storm hit his village, he was away in another town. The wind got stronger and stronger from 5 pm in the evening and the house he was staying in collapsed around 9 pm. All the people sheltering there fled to a nearby monastery, which was also damaged by the storm.

Everyone was soaked and scared as the roofs of the monastery sprang leak after leak.

Mahn Chit Phwe said at first light he felt almost immediate depression as all he could see was sea in



Ko Naing, 18, walks past the cyclone shelter at the village of Thayet Thon Pin.—PHOTO: AYE MIN SOE

Moe Yan, 18. "We all understand what we should prepare and how we can escape from a storm. We have a cyclone shelter. But we all, children, men and women still fear a strong wind whenever it blows."

Every house in Nargis-hit areas, including the village of Thayet Thon Pin about 35 miles south of

Yangon, keep empty 5-gallon tanks and some empty plastic bottles tied with rope to be used as life-jackets.

Some also have maps for the first time in their lives, in order to follow the course of any strong storm.

They have also stored dry rations including rice, wood, medicines, candles,

lamps and so on at the cyclone shelter near their village.

Kyaw Win Than, 36, head of the local Fire Services Department in Kungyangon who led the rescue team during Nargis, strongly believes that everyone is well-prepared to respond to another storm.

Since Nargis, towns

and villages in the cyclone-hit areas have seen a lot of improvements.

They have new roads and new schools that can also be used as cyclone shelters.

And most of the villages have mobile phones and their "cyclone-awareness" is now very high every monsoon season.

"The reason why we experienced such huge losses during Nargis is we had no experience and we did not pay attention, even though we knew a storm was coming to us," said Kyaw Win Than. "Now we feel sure there will not be such huge losses even if another storm hits."



Mahn Chit

Phwe, 69.

PHOTO:

AYE MIN

SOE

every direction he looked.

Immediately, he realized his family, relatives and friends at home had suffered even more at the hands of Cyclone Nargis.

While praying for the safety of his family, other villagers began to arrive at the monastery. Some had lost their children, some had lost their par-

ents, some their husbands, some their wives.

In the afternoon, after Nargis had moved on, a villager brought worse news than Mahn Chit Phwe had feared. His daughter's body had been near a dike.

"I could only tell my son to bury her body if it was near a cemetery or

throw away it into a river if it was found near a river because I was so depressed," Mahn Chit Phwe said.

His daughter, her husband and two children, and nephews and nieces who were living at his home were killed by Nargis.

Pointing to his wife sitting near him, Mahn Chit Phwe said they had to console each other, realising such tragedy fell not only on them but also on many, many other families in many, many other villages.

"We now feel scared of a storm whenever the monsoon comes. We will run to the cyclone shelter if something happens again," he said.

Mitsuko

Shikada,

SEEDS Asia.

PHOTO: AYE

MIN SOE



"Your experiences should be passed down to your future generation. We need to pass down all the lessons and experiences to the future generation so that they can respond to and recover from in case a storm like Nargis hit them within 10 years, 15 years, 100 years. All of us have to think about the

next generation and the next disaster."

(SEEDS Asia, a non-profit organization from Japan, and Kungyangon Township Disaster Preparedness Committee jointly organized the 6th Memorial Event on Cyclone Nargis at the Village of Thayet Thon Pin on 2 May, 2014.)

Air strike kills 33 in Syria's Aleppo



Residents run after, according to activists, two barrel bombs were thrown by forces loyal to Syria's president Bashar Al-Assad in Hullok neighbourhood of Aleppo on 1 May, 2014.—REUTERS

BEIRUT, 2 May — At least 33 people were killed when Syrian government warplanes attacked a busy market in a rebel-controlled district of Aleppo on Thursday, the Syrian

Observatory for Human Rights said.

Activists in the area put the death count as high as 40 and said dozens were wounded. They said a warplane struck the neigh-

bourhood of Hullok in the northeastern part of the city with a missile, turned around and then fired another one.

The attack came a day after an air strike on

a school in Aleppo killed at least 18 people, mainly children.

Despite the continuing civil war, Syrian authorities are preparing for a June presidential election in which President Bashar al-Assad is expected to extend his grip on power.

Aleppo is divided between Assad's forces and rebels aiming to topple him. Fighting has destroyed much of what was once Syria's commercial capital.

For months Assad's forces have rained barrel bombs — crude but powerful explosives which are not designed for precision targeting — on rebel held parts of Aleppo despite a UN appeal to end the practice.

More than 150,000 people have been killed in three years of conflict that grew out of street protests against Assad's rule.

Reuters

Clashes in Sudan impacts 16,500 people

UNITED NATIONS, 2 May — Recent fighting in parts of Sudan's South Kordofan and Blue Nile states has displaced or affected an estimated 16,500 people, deputy UN spokesman Farhan Haq said on Thursday.

The figure, released by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), came from the Sudanese government and is based on statistics gathered over the past two weeks, Haq told reporters here at a daily news briefing. "In response, the World Food Program (WFP) and its partners have already distributed one-month emergency food rations to 8,500 people," he said, adding that the Sudanese Red Crescent Society has established two emergency health clinics in Rashad, a town in north-eastern South Kordofan.

In addition, the spokesman said, the UN

Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Health Organization (WHO) supported the South Kordofan health ministry with emergency medicine and equipment, including basic health kits to cover 10,000 people for three months, nutritional supplements and water and sanitation services.

In Abyei, Ali Al-Za'tari, the Humanitarian Coordinator for Sudan, expressed his concern on Thursday about the increasing number of people from South Sudan seeking refuge in Abyei, an area contested by South Sudan and Sudan. According to the UN, at least 3,000 people have arrived in Abyei fleeing violence in South Sudan's Unity State over the past few days, bringing the total number of South Sudanese in the area to 6,000. The influx is stretching the existing resources to people in need.—Xinhua

Three S African soldiers wounded in DR Congo

CAPE TOWN, 2 May — Three South African soldiers were wounded in an attack on Wednesday by rebels in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DR Congo), authorities said on Thursday. The three soldiers were serving in the UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the DR Congo (MONUSCO), the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) said.

An armed group

launched an attack on a UN base in the eastern part of DRC on early Wednesday, prompting the UN mission to stage a counter attack, the SANDF said.

Of the three South African soldiers wounded, one was in a serious condition and now recovering in a hospital in Goma, said SANDF spokesperson Jaco Theunissen.

"An armed group of rebels attacked one of the

South African army operating bases in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo yesterday (Wednesday) morning. The details of the attack are still unknown," Theunissen said.

South Africa has more than 1,300 soldiers in the MONUSCO as part of the Force Intervention Brigade mandated by the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2098.

Xinhua

Suspected bomb on edge of Nigerian capital kills at least 15

ABUJA, 2 May — A suspected car bomb exploded on the outskirts of Nigeria's capital Abuja on Thursday, killing at least 15 people a week before the city was to host a conference of leaders and business executives focused on Africa's growth prospects, witnesses said.

The explosion hit the suburb of Nyanya, close to the site of a morning rush hour bomb attack at a bus station last month that killed at least 75 people. The 14 April attack was claimed by the radical Islamist movement Boko Haram which is waging an insurgency against President Goodluck Jonathan's government.

Flames lit up the area around the blast, which was

strewn with drying blood and contorted bodies, and sirens wailed.

"There was a loud blast then a ball of fire," witness Lateef Adebayo told Reuters by telephone from Nyanya. "There were

many dead bodies and ambulances were rushing there."

Kayode Adeyemi said he counted at least 15 bodies at the scene of the blast, which shook the ground next to him.—Reuters



Volunteer rescue workers travel on a police van used to evacuate victims after a bombing to Asokoro General Hospital in Abuja on 1 May, 2014.—REUTERS



Customers check out in a supermarket in Baghdad, Iraq, on 1 May, 2014, one day after the country's parliamentary elections, the first since the withdrawal of US troops from the country by the end of 2011. XINHUA

Riot police clash with May Day protesters in Istanbul

ISTANBUL, 2 May — Turkish police fired tear gas, water cannon and rubber pellets on Thursday to stop May Day protesters, some armed with fire bombs, from defying Prime Minister Tayyip Erdogan and reaching Istanbul's central Taksim square.

Citing security fears, authorities shut parts of the city's public transport system, erected steel barricades and deployed thousands of riot police to block access to Taksim, a traditional union rallying point and the focus of weeks of anti-government protests last summer.

Erdogan, who warned last week he would not let labour unions march on Taksim, has cast both last year's street protests and a

corruption scandal dogging his government since December as part of a plot to undermine him.

While it was the unions who called for demonstrations to press workers' rights and express broad opposition to Erdogan's government, some of those who clashed more violently with police were from marginal leftist groups.

The Istanbul governor's office said it had received advanced information that "illegal terror organizations and their extensions" would resort to violence to stoke unrest.

On the fringes of a massive security cordon around the square, pockets of protesters played cat and mouse with police in tear gas-shrouded side streets.

Demonstrators in surrounding neighbourhoods repeatedly tried to breach police lines blocking the way to Taksim, a normally teeming shopping and tourism district which lay virtually deserted and ringed by security checkpoints.

Bemused tourists, their hotels lining the square, picked their way nervously through police lines, some shepherded by bell boys, their luggage in tow.

The Istanbul governor's office said 90 people were injured, 19 of them police officers, and 142 detained in the unrest, much of which took place early in the day with calm largely returning by the evening. It said police had found eight home-made bombs.

Reuters

HEALTH & BUSINESS

Exxon, Conoco see a quarterly payoff from natural gas

HOUSTON / NEW YORK, 2 May — US oil companies Exxon Mobil Corp and ConocoPhillips both reported first-quarter earnings that exceeded Wall Street expectations on Thursday, helped partly by higher natural gas prices.

A brutal winter in North America sapped supplies of natural gas and boosted prices at key delivery point Henry Hub by more than 50 percent in the quarter, propping up profit at both companies, analysts said.

Both Conoco and Exxon have increased investment in North American shale fields that produce crude oil and natural gas liquids. On Wednesday, Royal Dutch Shell reported better-than-expected quarterly results that were also boosted by gas earnings.

Jeff Sheets, chief financial officer of Conoco, said the company was unlikely to see a similar benefit from natural gas prices in the current quarter because markets had returned to a

more normal state.

"It was a very unusual quarter because of weather. What you saw in our results is that we had the ability to supply some of the markets where prices were higher than supply based on Henry Hub," Sheets said.

Conoco also said it plans to ship the first of six cargoes of liquefied natural gas (LNG) from its Kenai plant in Alaska this month since renewing its export license in April.

The companies appear



A view of the Exxon Mobil refinery in Baytown, Texas on 15 Sept, 2008. — REUTERS

to have had better luck in US shale plays than BP PLC, which on Tuesday reported a 24 percent drop in

quarterly profit and wrote off \$521 million as it scrapped a shale project in the Utica basin.—Reuters

Japan's March job availability improves for 16 months in row

TOKYO, 2 May — Japan's job availability improved in March for the 16th straight month, while the jobless rate was flat at 3.6 percent from the previous month, as a recovery in corporate profits prodded companies to boost employment, government data showed on Friday.

The ratio of employment offers to seekers climbed to 1.07 in the reporting month from 1.05 in February, which means 107 positions were available for every 100 job seekers, according to the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare.

The number of unemployed people rose a seasonally adjusted 1.3 percent from February to 2.36 million, as those quitting jobs voluntarily climbed 1.1 percent to 910,000, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications said in a preliminary report.

The number of people holding jobs, meanwhile, rose 0.2 percent to 63.46 million, preventing the jobless rate from worsening in March, a ministry official told reporters at a briefing. The country's job market "has continued picking up as firms have become willing to hire more workers on the back of economic recovery," the official said.

Kyodo News

US city health officials want tighter restrictions on e-cigarettes



A customer puffs on an e-cigarette at the Henley Vaporium in New York City on 18 Dec, 2013.— REUTERS

WASHINGTON, 2 May — A group of urban health officials on Thursday urged the Food and Drug Administration to go beyond the regulations it proposed last week for e-cigarettes and treat them like regular cigarettes.

In an open letter to FDA Commissioner Margaret Hamburg, the Big Cities Health Coalition (BCHC) noted that the FDA has nothing in its proposed regulations that would govern the advertising of e-cigarettes, which it said often targets the youth market. The FDA did propose banning sales of e-cigarettes to those under the age of 18. The e-cigarette industry, estimated at \$2 billion and growing, did not object loudly to last week's proposed FDA rules, which many health officials found too loose.

According to the BCHC, there were "gaps" in the rules that need to be filled. "We urge you follow our lead and use your full authority to apply all current tobacco regulations to e-cigarettes," public health officials representing 11 of the biggest US cities said in their letter. "The FDA must move quickly to address the growing concern about youth use beyond setting a minimum age requirement to

purchase e-cigarettes."

Battery-powered e-cigarettes contain a cartridge that is filled with a nicotine-laced liquid, which is vapourized and then inhaled. Advocates say they are safer than standard cigarettes because they do not produce lung-destroying tar.

But the BCHC said e-cigarettes also deliver dangerous chemicals and carcinogens, adding that the level of nicotine indicated on e-cigarette labels is not always correct. The federal government has restricted traditional cigarette advertising, including banning television ads, but there are no such limitations in the FDA's proposed e-cigarette rules.

The BCHC said big tobacco companies, such as Reynolds American Inc, Lorillard Inc and Altria Group Inc, are boosting their advertising budgets, which could be risky for teenagers. "E-cigarette advertisements regularly employ youth-oriented marketing strategies that the tobacco industry used decades ago such as celebrity endorsements and messages that associate smoking e-cigarettes with themes like freedom, rebelliousness and glamour," the coalition said.—Reuters

Geomagnetic storms may influence risk of stroke

NEW YORK, 2 May — More strokes happen when geomagnetic storms are afoot, according to a new review of stroke literature—although it's not clear what protective measures anyone could take, researchers said.

Geomagnetic storms happen when the Earth's magnetic field is disturbed by solar winds or coronal mass ejections, which throw out powerful magnetic fields from the sun. Among more than 11,000 people who had a stroke, the event was almost 20 percent more likely to happen on days with geomagnetic storms, researchers in New Zealand found.

"The results were a big surprise to us," said lead author Dr Valery L Feigin

of the National Institute for Stroke and Applied Neurosciences at the School of Rehabilitation and Occupation Studies at Auckland University of Technology. "What we were particularly surprised with was the size and consistency of the effect of geomagnetic storms on the risk of stroke occurrence, suggesting that geomagnetic storms are significant risk factors for stroke," Feigin told Reuters Health by email.

The storms can last hours to days, and when strong enough can disrupt satellites and push the aurora borealis much further south than usual, as happened this winter over the United Kingdom. The electromagnetic upheaval also

makes magnetic compasses behave erratically and in 1989, a geomagnetic storm disrupted the Quebec power grid, causing a blackout in the province that lasted nine hours. Researchers aren't sure, however, why the storms would be linked to stroke risk. The review cites six large stroke studies including a total of more than 11,000 patients that took place between 1981 and 2004 in Europe, Australia and New Zealand.

Feigin and his colleagues considered the dates of each participant's first stroke alongside a record of geomagnetic activity from the same time period from the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.—Reuters

Benefits of volunteering stem from personality

NEW YORK, 2 May — Volunteerism has been linked to better mental and physical health, but those effects may come from the personality traits that lead one to volunteer in the first place, not the work itself, US researchers say.

The results call into question the practice of encouraging people to do volunteer work for their own good, but also suggest approaches to encouraging those without a typical volunteer personality to find ways of contributing.

The bottom line, said senior study author Thomas Oltmanns, a psychologist at Washington University in St Louis, is that "when people are considering volunteering, there are obvious benefits associated, including to society — people volunteer for many other reasons than just helping themselves."

It's well known that people with certain traits

are more likely to volunteer. But "those characteristics are also by themselves associated with better health," Oltmanns told Reuters Health.

In the past, researchers who linked apparent health benefits to volunteer work did not factor in the personality traits that go along with the urge to volunteer, Oltmanns' team points out in the *Journals of Gerontology: Series B*.

To tease apart the health effects of those personality traits and the volunteering itself, the researchers used data from the St Louis Personality and Aging Network, a study of 1,630 adults between the ages of 55 and 64 in the St Louis community.

Participants answered a questionnaire that included information about whether they currently volunteered, if so, how long they had been doing it and how many



hours per week they spent volunteering.

The team also assessed personality traits based on the questionnaire, and used a 36-item survey to gauge aspects of mental and physical health and functioning.

Analyzing these data, the study team found that volunteering was linked to better health. But when personality traits were taken into account, the link disap-

peared. The health benefits were all explained by the personality traits, not the volunteering.

Regardless of whether they volunteered, people who were more outgoing had better mental health. And those who were less "neurotic"—meaning anxious, guilty and envious—had better physical functioning and mental health.

Reuters

After bombing in west, China angered by US criticism in terror report



Passengers rest on their luggage outside the South Railway Station, where three people were killed and 79 wounded in Wednesday's bomb and knife attack, in Urumqi, Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous region, on 2 May, 2014.—REUTERS

URUMQI, 2 May — China's foreign ministry has reacted angrily to US criticism of the level of co-operation from Beijing on

fighting terrorism, after an apparent suicide bombing in the country's far west pointed to a possible escalation of unrest there.

The Chinese government has blamed religious extremists for carrying out a bomb and knife attack at a train station in Urumqi,

regional capital of Xinjiang, on Wednesday evening that killed one bystander and wounded 79.

Security was heavy on Friday in Urumqi, scene of deadly riots five years ago between Muslim Uighurs and ethnic Han Chinese in which almost 200 were killed.

The train station was bustling, with hundreds of migrant workers arriving from around China for seasonal work. Many sat on their bags in the station plaza waiting for trains to other parts of the region.

Units of armed police carrying assault rifles and sharpened black metal poles with hand grips marched in file around the station grounds. Black police vans and armoured troop transports were parked in front of the station's entrance.

Resource-rich and strategically located Xinjiang, on the borders of central Asia, has for years been beset by violence blamed by the Chinese government on Islamist militants and separatists, but suicide attacks have been extremely rare.

"China falls victim of terrorism, and always firmly opposes terrorism in any form and terrorist acts conducted or backed by any person under any name," the foreign ministry said in a statement late on Thursday.

Beijing is unhappy at the US State Department's 2013 country reports on terrorism, published last month, which said China's cooperation on fighting terrorism "remained marginal" and that the Chinese provided scarce evidence to prove terrorist involvement in incidents in Xinjiang.

"On the issue of fighting terrorism, to make irresponsible remarks towards other countries and adopting double standards will not help international cooperation on counter-terrorism," The foreign ministry said.

Xinjiang's regional government said on its official news website on Thursday that the Urumqi attack had been carried out by two men who had "long been influenced by extremist religious thought and participated in extremist religious activities".

Both were killed in the blast, it said. It identified one of them as Sedirdin Sawut, a 39-year-old man from Xayar county in Xinjiang's Aksu region. The man is a member of the Muslim Uighur minority, judging by his name.

Reuters

Cambodia, Mongolia establish bilateral consultations

PHNOM PENH, 2 May — Cambodia and Mongolia on Friday signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on the establishment of bilateral consultations, aimed at bolstering bilateral ties and cooperation, a Cambodian official said. The deal was inked between Long Visalo, Secretary of State of the Cambodian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Damba Gankhuyag, deputy foreign minister of Mongolia.

"The MoU is very important to pave the way for the two countries to increase cooperation in bilateral, regional and international frameworks," Koy Kuong, a spokesman for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, told reporters after the signing ceremony. "Under the deal, both sides also can exchange information and opinions on bilateral, regional and international issues."

He said it was the second document after the two countries signed an agreement on visa exemption for diplomatic and official passport holders in 2012.

Both sides also agreed to strengthen cooperation in economics, trade, investment and tourism.

Cambodia and Mongolia established diplomatic relations in 1961.—Xinhua



People walk in dust in Taiyuan, capital of north China's Shanxi Province, on 1 May, 2014. A cold current hitting Shanxi Province swept sand and dust into Taiyuan on 1 May, 2014. —XINHUA

New Zealand, Australia join forces in fighting livestock diseases

WELLINGTON, 2 May — Australia and New Zealand have agreed to collaborate in the event of an outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease (FMD), which could devastate their livestock industries. A coordinated response was agreed under a memorandum of understanding signed on Friday in Melbourne by Australian Minister for Agriculture Barnaby Joyce and New Zealand Minister for Primary Industries Nathan Guy.

Greater collaboration would improve readiness and capacity to cope with an outbreak of FMD or any

other significant exotic animal disease, Guy said in a statement from his office.

"We will work together in fields such as sharing intelligence on risk, collaborating on training opportunities, sharing scarce skills in the event of an outbreak and influencing international policy in the area of disease management," said Guy.

"It is well known that an outbreak of FMD would cause significant economic and social damage with the closure of many international markets for animal products and control measures having huge

impacts on tourism, food chain businesses, farming families, rural business and communities."

The MoU would also help to ensure that an international reserve of veterinary specialists and other skilled personnel could be activated quickly.

"Exercise simulations and participation in activities also ensures there is a mutual understanding of how systems work in the other country, which means that staff can rapidly integrate into the other country's systems in the event they are needed," Guy said.

Xinhua

Japan to provide food radiation check to Taiwan beginning in June

TAIPEI, 2 May — Japan will provide documentation of radiation checks on food products exported to Taiwan beginning next month, the island's health authorities said on Friday.

While Japan has been providing such documentation to other countries since the Fukushima nuclear crisis in 2011, it has never supplied such information to Taiwan.

After months of negotiations, Japan finally agreed to begin providing the documentation to Tai-

wan in June under a three-month trial programme.

Fang Shao-wei, a senior technical specialist at the Food and Drug Administration, told *Kyodo News* that both sides will discuss after the three-month period whether to extend the trial programme or officially implement it.

During the trial period, Japan will provide Taiwan with radiation checks of 11 categories of food products and Taiwan will continue to apply random checks on the products.

Kyodo News

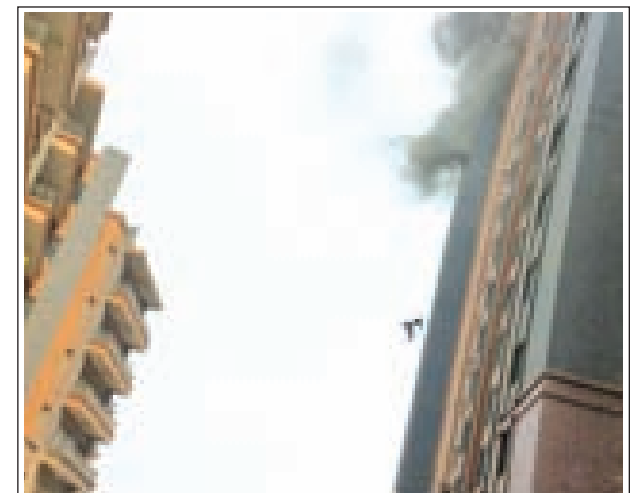


Photo taken by a local resident shows two firefighters falling down from a building in Shanghai, east China, on 1 May, 2014. The two firefighters fell from the 13th floor of a residential building when they were putting out a fire on Thursday afternoon. The two young men, both in their 20s, died despite rescue efforts.

XINHUA

GENERAL

South Africa's Implats says most miners want to return to work

JOHANNESBURG, 2 May — South African platinum producer Implats Platinum said on Friday that two-thirds of its striking workforce had indicated by text messages and phone calls that they wanted to accept the company's latest wage offer and end a 14-week strike. Implats spokesman Johan Theron told *Reuters* that workers who were unable to send texts because they have no money for air time were making use of telephones at mine recruitment offices.

"We will have a totally clear picture next week," he said. The strike by the Association of Mineworkers and Construction Union (AMCU) has also hit Anglo American Platinum and Lonmin, taking out 40 percent of global production of the precious metal.

Asked for response to Implats' claim, AMCU General Secretary Jeffrey Mphahlele declined to comment. The trio of companies last week said



Miners, who are on strike, wait for suspended ANC Youth League President Julius Malema to address them outside the Implats platinum mine in Rustenburg, 120 km (75 miles) northwest of Johannesburg, on 28 Feb 2012.—REUTERS

they would take their latest wage offer directly to the roughly 70,000 striking miners after wage talks collapsed, setting the stage for

a dramatic showdown between capital and labour on the platinum belt. Initially AMCU demanded an immediate increase of the ba-

sic wage - net salary before allowances such as housing — for entry-level workers to 12,500 rand (\$1,200) a month, well over double

current levels. It has since said it would accept annual increases that would reach this goal in three or four years.—*Reuters*

Toronto Mayor Ford takes leave to deal with alcohol problem

TORONTO, 2 May — Toronto Mayor Rob Ford flew to the United States in a private plane on Thursday, a TV network said, a day after he said he would take a leave of absence from his job and his re-election campaign to seek treatment for an alcohol problem. *Global News* reported that it had confirmed Chicago as Ford's destination but did not cite any sources. It said it was unclear whether he was staying in Chicago or if he was receiving help.

Ford's decision to take a leave of absence followed months of denials that he has a substance abuse problem and nearly a year after media reports surfaced that he appeared in a video smoking crack cocaine.

His departure followed a *Globe and Mail* report on



Toronto Mayor Rob Ford leaves his home in Toronto, Ontario on 1 May, 2014 in this still image taken from video provided by the CBC.—REUTERS

Wednesday that it had seen a video shot last week that showed Ford using what appeared to be drugs.

On Thursday morning, TV cameras showed Ford, 44, leaving his house and getting into a car driven by another person. Earlier, a large suitcase was seen being taken out of the house and being put into a

separate car.

Ford did not talk to reporters, but late on Wednesday he released a statement admitting that he has a problem with alcohol and saying that he would seek help to deal with it immediately. The statement did not specify where he planned to go or how long he'd be away.—*Reuters*

Putin urges immediate national dialogue within Ukraine

MOSCOW, 2 May — President Vladimir Putin called on Thursday for an immediate "extensive national dialogue" in Ukraine, amid rising tension in that country's east and southeast.

"Putin emphasized that it was imperative today to withdraw all military units from the southeastern regions (of Ukraine) and stop the violence," the Kremlin Press service said, citing a telephone conversation between Putin and German Chancellor Angela Merkel.

Merkel asked Russia to provide assistance in the release of military

observers from a number of European countries, including Germany, who were detained in the southeast of Ukraine, it said.

The two leaders also reiterated the importance of making the most of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe's mediation potential in all parts of Ukraine.

The conversation came a day after Putin and British Prime Minister David Cameron agreed, in another telephone call, that the political confrontation in Ukraine could be overcome exclusively by peaceful means.

Xinhua

Mongolia intends to become ASEAN's dialogue partner, EAS member

PHNOM PENH, 2 May — Visiting deputy foreign minister of Mongolia Damba Gankhuyag said on Friday that Mongolia has a purpose to become an ASEAN's dialogue partner and a member of the East Asian Summit (EAS).

Damba Gankhuyag unveiled the plan during a meeting with Cambodian deputy prime minister and foreign minister Hor Namhong, according to Koy Kuong, a spokesman for the Cambodian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Hor Namhong said Cambodia welcomed Mongolia's intention to seek co-operation with ASEAN and EAS and recommended the country to submit documents to Myanmar, the current chair of ASEAN.

Founded in 1967, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) group Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.

Currently, the bloc has established dialogue partnerships with ten parties: Australia, Canada, China, the European Union, India, Japan, New Zealand, South Korea, Russia, and the United States.

For EAS, it is a forum held annually by leaders of 18 countries in the East Asian region.

Earlier in the day, Damba Gankhuyag signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on the establishment of bilateral consultations with his Cambodian counterpart Long Visalo, aiming to promote bilateral, regional, and international cooperation between the two countries.

Xinhua

Philippines to give US forces access to up to five military bases

MANILA, 2 May — Up to five Philippine military bases will be made available for US forces to rotate aircraft, ships, equipment and troops, Manila's chief negotiator of a new security pact said on Friday, as the Philippines looks to counter China's rising power in the region.

A new 10-year military agreement, which also covers storage of equipment for maritime security and humanitarian

assistance, was signed with the United States last week, hours before President Barack Obama arrived for a two-day visit to Manila.

"Right now, the discussions would be ranging from three to five Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) bases," said Pio Lorenzo Batino, a defence undersecretary and head of the negotiating panel, told a news conference. "That's not final." He said the army's jungle training base

in Fort Magsaysay, north of Manila, was "ideal location" for the United States because the two oldest allies in the region regularly hold joint exercises there.

Military sources familiar with the discussions said the United States has also requested access to three former US bases — Clark airfield, Subic bay, Poro Point — and Camp Aguinaldo, the military general headquarters in Manila.

The United States is

also considering whether to seek access to four civil airports — Palawan, Cebu, General Santos, and Laoag — as well as Batanes airfield for refuelling and emergency servicing, the sources said. There are also nearby bases in Cebu and Palawan.

Defence and military officials said the new Enhanced Defence Cooperation Agreement (EDCA) will boost the Philippines' defence capabilities.

Reuters

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The Boston Symphony Orchestra (BSO) performs at the National Center for the Performing Arts (NCPA) in Beijing, capital of China, on 1 May, 2014. The Boston Symphony Orchestra (BSO), the first American orchestra that visited China in 1979 after the two countries established diplomatic ties, made its long-awaited return to the country on Thursday. The BSO is an American orchestra based in Boston, Massachusetts. It is one of the country's five major symphony orchestras commonly referred to as the "Big Five".—XINHUA

Israeli filmmaker Assi Dayan, son of defence minister Moshe, dies aged 68



JERUSALEM, 2 May — Celebrated Israeli actor and director Assi Dayan, whose father Moshe Dayan became internationally known as Israel's eye patch-wearing defence minister during two Middle East wars, died on Thursday at the age of 68, his family announced.

Dayan, who was plagued by substance abuse during his career and had a history of heart trouble, was found dead in his Tel Aviv home. No cause of death was immediately given.

The actor had a strained relationship with his late father, an army general. Moshe Dayan served as defence minister in the 1967 war in which Israel captured the West Bank, East Jerusalem, the Gaza Strip, Golan Heights and the Sinai desert, and in the 1973 conflict with Egypt and Syria.

Reuters

Amitabh Bachchan Inaugurates Indian Film Festival of Melbourne

MELBOURNE, 2 May — With Sholay 3D as its opening film, the Indian Film Festival of Melbourne (IFFM) was launched here today by Bollywood megastar Amitabh Bachchan in the presence of Victorian Minister for Tourism and Major events Louise Asher and the festival director Mitu Bhowmick Lange.

Announcing the launch of the 11-day long festival at a jam packed press briefing, Mr Bachchan said, "I am delighted that Melbourne is hosting this festival. I am very honoured." The 71-year-old actor thanked the Victorian government for conferring him with an International Screen Icon Award which would be formally given tomorrow at a gala event.

"Indeed I am honoured that they have decided to give me this award. I just feel that I am the least accomplished to receive such a recognition but this is

your kindness, affection and grace," Mr Bachchan said.

He said cinema was a great medium, which transcended beyond colour, caste or religion. "We enjoy the same product, laugh at the same jokes and sing the same songs. We enjoy the same emotions," he said, adding that there were very few institutions left in the world that were able to bring such integration.

"It is wonderful to see that Australian government has decided to use this medium in bringing the two cultures, communities together and building strong bonds of friendship. Not just in the field of commerce but in our culture, in our exchange of students and personalities," Mr Bachchan said.

Mr Bachchan also revealed that he was visiting Melbourne city for the first time but assured that it was surely not the last one.



Big B said he was delighted that Melbourne was hosting the festival.—PTI

Louise Asher also extended her thanks to the Bollywood icon for his visit as the guest of honour of the state. "We are honoured to have you as a guest of honour. He is the undisputed patriarch of Indian cinema. He was once described as one man industry and is adored, as you can see, by billions of fans worldwide," she said.

The star studded festival will be showcasing over 40 films, including two from Pakistan, till 11 May.—PTI

Hrithik-Sussanne's Kids to be in Sussanne's Custody

MUMBAI, 2 May — The final hearing of Hrithik Roshan and Sussanne Khan divorce is slated to take place on 31 October while the custody of their kids Hridaan and Hrehaan is given to Sussanne.

Hrithik Roshan flew down from Florida to Mumbai late on Monday night. On Wednesday morning at around 10 30 am, he and wife Sussanne Khan came to the Bandra family court where they filed for divorce. The couple, whose companionship spans a period of 17 years, was married for 13 years, and they recently (December 2013) went their separate ways. It has emerged that another hearing has been scheduled for six months from now.

When contacted, lawyer Dipesh Mehta divulged a few details. He said,

"I am representing both Hrithik and Sussanne; they have filed for divorce by mutual consent. The counsellor has submitted the report and the next hearing will take place on 31 October. The custody of their kids, Hrehaan and Hridaan, has been awarded to Sussanne."

With the couple filing for divorce, rumours about their getting back together have been put to rest. Says a source close to the couple, "As their friends, we support their decision, but we had hoped that things would end differently. The kids will now be with Sussanne and Hrithik did not object to this. In fact, no allegations have been made by either party. The divorce is expected to come through by October end."

PTI



Hrithik and Sussanne with sons Hrehaan and Hridaan in happier times.—PTI

New Michael Jackson song to debut at iHeartRadio awards

LOS ANGELES, 2 May — The first single from late singer Michael Jackson's posthumous album will premiere at the iHeartRadio Awards on Thursday, ahead of the record release later this month.

"Love Never Felt So Good," originally written and recorded by Jackson in 1983, is the debut single for "Xscape," released on 13 May by Epic Records in partnership with Jackson's estate. The song will be available for purchase starting at midnight Friday.

The album will feature eight previously unreleased songs from Jackson that were recorded between 1983 and 1999.

Singer Justin Timberlake revealed he is featured on "Love Never Felt So Good" in an Instagram



Michael Jackson waves to the crowd, numbering a few thousand, gathered in front of the Sydney Opera House in this 17 Nov, 1996 file photo.

REUTERS

post on Thursday. It is not known if he will perform the song at the awards show.

Jackson, known as the 'King of Pop' and one of the most influential artists in music, having sold 1 billion records world-

wide, died in 2009 at age 50 in Los Angeles from an overdose of the anaesthetic propofol. The powerful drug was given to him by his personal physician while he was rehearsing for a series of 50 comeback concerts in London.

The inaugural fan-voted iHeartRadio awards, held at the Shrine Auditorium on Thursday and broadcast on NBC, kicked off with energetic performances from rapper Pitbull, country music singer Luke Bryan and British band Bastille.

Five artists — Timberlake, Imagine Dragons, Macklemore & Ryan Lewis, Maroon 5 and Rihanna — will contend for Artist of the Year, the top award of the night.

Reuters

GENERAL

Ukraine attacks rebel city, helicopter shot down



A pro-Russian man leans on a tree with a rifle and rocket launcher near him at a checkpoint near the town of Slaviansk, east Ukraine on 1 May, 2014.—REUTERS

MOSCOW/DONETSK, 2 May — Ukrainian forces attacked the rebel-held city of Slaviansk before dawn on Friday and pro-Russia separatists shot down at least one attack helicopter, killing a pilot, in a sharp escalation of the conflict.

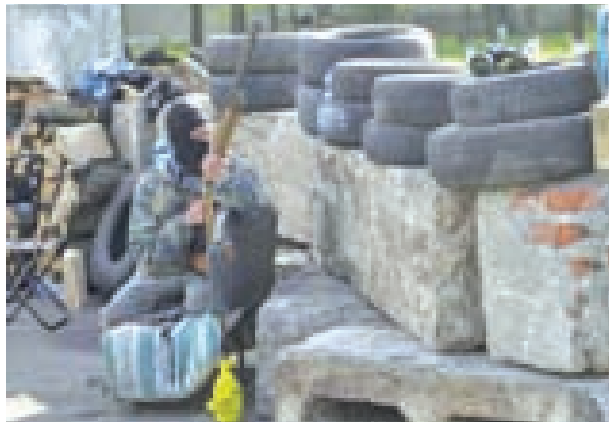
Describing the use of anti-aircraft missiles as proof of the presence of Russian special forces in the town that has become the military stronghold of the pro-Moscow movement, Ukrainian officials said Slaviansk was “tightly surrounded” and called on separatist leaders to release hostages and surrender.

Reuters journalists in the city of 130,000 heard shooting from shortly after 4 am (0100 GMT) and saw a military helicopter open fire. Ukrainian troops could be seen in armoured personnel carriers in a southern suburb.

The SBU security service said one military Mi-24 helicopter gunship

had been shot down, killing one airman while a second had been taken prisoner by the rebels. It said a second Mi-24, which normally would have a crew of two, was flying in tandem and had to make a forced landing. A third helicopter, carrying medics, was hit and a medic wounded.

Vyacheslav Ponomaryov, the self-declared mayor of the town, was quoted by Russia’s Interfax news agency as saying two



A pro-Russian armed man guards a checkpoint near the town of Slaviansk, east Ukraine on 1 May, 2014.

REUTERS

helicopters had been shot down and one pilot had been detained.

The SBU said one helicopter was hit by shoulder-launched anti-aircraft missiles - evidence, it said, that “trained, highly qualified foreign military specialists” were operating in the area “and not local civilians, as the Russian govern-

ment says, armed only with guns taken from hunting stores”.

Russia denies involvement but has massed troops on the border and threatened to intervene to protect the Russian-speaking majority in eastern Ukraine from what it calls an illegitimate, Western-backed government in



Members of the Ukrainian security services stand near an armoured personnel carrier at a checkpoint near the town of Slaviansk, east Ukraine on 1 May, 2014.

REUTERS

Kiev. Alarmed Western powers believe President Vladimir Putin is set on asserting Moscow’s influence over its former Soviet neighbours.

Armed groups seeking union with Russia have seized a number of government buildings in towns in eastern Ukraine. The action in Slaviansk appeared to mark the heaviest military response by Kiev since it tightened a cordon around the city a week ago.

The militants in Slaviansk are holding a number of local people and seven foreign military observers, four of them German, from the European security agency the OSCE.

Reuters

MYANMAR TV

(3-5-2014, Saturday)

6:00 am

1. Paritta by Venerable Mingun Sayadaw

6:20 am

2. Physical Exercises

7:00 am

3. News / Weather Report

7:40 am

4. Hyper Sports

8:00 am

5. News/ International News

9:25 am

6. President’s Capacity Award Ceremony (Live Broadcast)

12:00 pm

7. News/International News/Weather Report

12:25 pm

8. Round Up of The Week’ TV Local News

1:45 pm

9. India Drama Series

2:15 pm

10. Documentary

4:20 pm

11. University of Distance Education (TV Lectures) First Year (Botany)

5:00 pm

12. News

5:30 pm

13. Game for Children

6:00 pm

14. News/ Weather Report

6:20 pm

15. MRTV’s Youth Programme

7:00 pm

16. News

8:00 pm

17. News/International News/Weather Report

8:35 pm

18. President’s Capacity Award Ceremony (Broadcast)

MYANMAR INTERNATIONAL

(3-5-14 07:00am~ 4-5-14 07:00am) MST

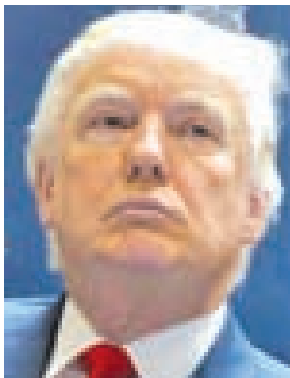
- * Local News
- * Great Shwedagon — The Exhibition Hall of The Great Chronicle of Buddha
- * World News
- * A Person with Faith
- * Local News
- * Glorious Mrauk U & Its Pagoda Festival
- * World News
- * Distinguished Myanmar Ladies “Kalayar Moe”
- * Local News
- * MONASTERY Yot Son Kyaung (Sa-Le)
- * World News
- * The Storytellers
- * Local News
- * Bamboo Fashion in Style
- * World News
- * Kyaukseeyoe: Bamboo Guns
- * Local News
- * A Day Life of Kayan Padaung Tribe
- * World News
- * A Girl Guide
- * Local News
- * A Way of Life: Karate-do
- * World News
- * Aesthetic Chinlone
- * Local News
- * Taking an Oath for Life
- * World News
- * Strolling Along A Memory Link - U Pein Bridge
- * Local News
- * Shop Shop Shop - Bogyoke Market
- * World News
- * Tea Leaves

Trump awarded first major with 2022 PGA Championship

NEW YORK, 2 May — Two days after acquiring the iconic British Open venue Turnberry, American billionaire Donald Trump was awarded his first major on Thursday with the announcement of the site of the 2022 PGA Championship.

The last of the year’s four majors, the PGA Championship will be staged at Trump National Golf Club in Bedminster, New Jersey in 2022, the PGA of America said in a statement.

“When you get acknowledged to have one of the majors, any one of the majors, but having the PGA is a very, very big deal,” Trump said on a



Real estate developer Donald Trump attends a news conference with the PGA in New York on 1 May, 2014.

REUTERS

conference call. “It’s very important to me.

“Many of you know the tremendous success we’ve had at Trump

National Bedminster. It’s a special place, it’s a special location and I have no doubt that it will be one of your great championships. It’s an honor that we are working together.”

Trump National in Bedminster joins an impressive list of future PGA Championship venues, with this year’s edition to be played at Valhalla Golf Club Louisville, Kentucky.

The 2015 PGA Championship will be held at Whistling Straits with Baltusrol following in 2016, Quail Hollow Club (2017), Bellerive Country Club (2018) and Bethpage Black (2019). The 2020 and 2021 venues have yet to be decided.—Reuters

Pogba accuses Manchester United of showing disrespect

LONDON, 2 May— French midfielder Paul Pogba has accused former club Manchester United of showing “disrespect” by sidelining him and making him train alone during a contract dispute before he moved to Juventus.

“They left me out because they said I wanted to leave. That is disrespect,” Pogba, who left United in July 2012, told the BBC on Thursday.

“Maybe they didn’t think they were making a mistake.”

When Pogba left United, then-manager Alex Ferguson had said he was “quite happy” to offload the player who the Scot accused of not “showing us

any respect at all.”

Pogba, 21, made just seven substitute appearances for United before heading to Italy.

“Manchester United is a big club but you have to think about yourself,” Pogba added.

“You have to play. The coach told me there would be space to play, but

I wasn’t playing.

“I was training alone for one week. They told me to go in the gym. I said ‘I am not an athlete, I am a footballer.’”

Since his move to Italy, Pogba helped Juventus win the Serie A title in 2013, a feat they are poised to repeat again this season.

Reuters



Juventus’ Paul Pogba

Kyaw Ko Ko, Nay Lin Tun lead Myanmar's 2-1 in tune-up win over Singapore Lions XII



Kyaw Ko Ko tries to pass Singaporean player in the tune-up match.

PHOTO: SOE NYUNT

YANGON, 2 May—Myanmar's national team, with goals from Kyaw Ko Ko and Nay Lin Tun on Friday, beat Singapore Lions XII 2-1 in a tune-up friendly ahead of the AFC Challenge Cup.

Serbian Avramovic, new coach of Myanmar's national side, brought the first victory to his team despite little time for

preparation and the win should boost confidence before the Challenge Cup.

Myanmar, deploying its top stars including Yan Paing, Khin Maung Lwin, Kyaw Ko Ko, Thiha Sithu and Zaw Min Tun, took the lead in the 34th minutes through Kyaw Ko Ko.

Just two minutes later, Gabriel snatched an equaliser for Singapore,

but that was the last time the visitors found the back of the Myanmar net.

In the second half, Myanmar stepped up its attacks and speeded up the game to control much of the play.

On 87 minutes, Myanmar's tenacity play was duly rewarded when Nay Lin Tun potted the winner.—Nyi Myat Thawda

Lots drawn for Ooredoo Cup knock-out stage

Lots were drawn for second-leg matches of the Ooredoo Cup knock-out stage at the office of the Myanmar Football Federation on Friday morning.

MFF vice-president U Tin Aung spoke on the occasion and Myanmar National League's officer in charge U Ye Myo Hein explained the draw plan.

The matches will take place 7-9 May.

On 7 May, Hantawady will play Mawrawady at Padoma Sport Field and Myawady plays GFA in Salin.

On 8 May, Dagon plays Chin United in Salin and Rakhine plays Sourthern at Padoma.

On 9 May, Horizon plays U-19 at Padoma.

Po Thaw Zin



Photo shows Ooredoo Cup 2014.—PHOTO:SOE NYUNT

Chelsea coach Faria handed six-match stadium ban

LONDON, 2 May — Chelsea coach Rui Faria has been handed a six-match stadium ban and a 30,000-pound fine after admitting misconduct charges, the FA said in a statement on Thursday.

Faria was sent to the stands during Chelsea's 2-1 Premier League defeat by Sunderland on 19 April.

Sunderland's victory came courtesy of a contentious penalty decision that sparked a furious touchline reaction from Faria who was charged with using "abusive and/or insulting words towards the fourth

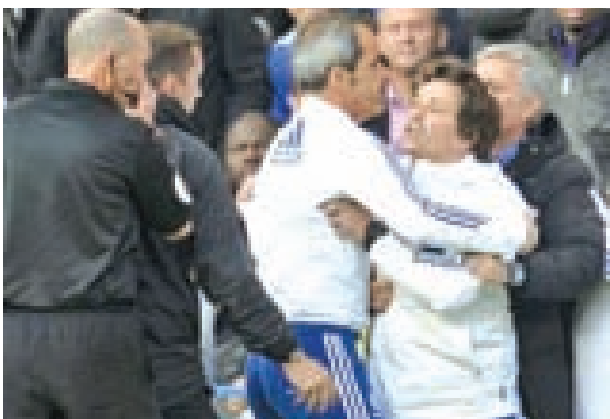
official" as well as "improper conduct".

Faria was also warned as to his future conduct.

Chelsea manager Jose Mourinho was also charged with misconduct during the same match, but requested a personal hearing.

Mourinho sarcastically congratulated referee Mike Dean and Mike Riley — the head of the referees' governing body — after the loss to relegation-threatened opponents which ended the Portuguese coach's 77-game unbeaten league record at Stamford Bridge.

Reuters



Chelsea's manager Jose Mourinho (R) holds back assistant coach Rui Faria (2nd R) after he was sent off by referee Mike Dean (L) during their English Premier League soccer match against Sunderland at Stamford Bridge in London, on 19 April, 2014.—REUTERS

Unbeaten Mayweather says Maidana no pushover

LAS VEGAS, 2 May — All the signs indicate that five-division world champion Floyd Mayweather Jr. will comfortably maintain his unbeaten record when he faces Argentina's Marcos Maidana on Saturday, though the American is not expecting a "pushover."

Mayweather, who has a 45-0 record with 26 knockouts, is an overwhelming 11-1 favourite for the WBC/WBA welterweight title unification bout which will be staged at the MGM Grand Garden Arena in Las Vegas.

Not only is the experienced American widely regarded as one of the best defensive fighters of all time but he is a natural welterweight whereas many critics believe that Maidana moved up too quickly from the 130-pound level to the 147-pound division.

"Everybody thinks he's just going to be a



WBC welterweight champion Floyd Mayweather Jr (L) of the US laughs with Mayweather Promotions CEO Leonard Ellerbe during a news conference at the MGM Grand Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas, Nevada, on 30 April, 2014.—REUTERS

pushover, but I don't think so," Mayweather, 37, told reporters while preparing for Saturday's showdown. "That's why I'm training hard and I'm pushing myself to the limit every day.

"If he brings his best, maybe he will be the first guy that actually makes me dig in my bag of tricks and pull out my 'A' game.

"Hopefully he will make me bring out my 'A' game because my whole career all I had to use was a 'D' and 'C' game to beat every guy."

Maidana, who won his most recent bout in December with a unanimous decision against the heavily favoured American Adrien Broner to claim the

WBA welterweight title, is known for his all-round skill and blistering power.

Asked what he thought the Argentine slugger did best in the ring, Mayweather replied: "Well, he punches extremely hard if he has an 80 percent knock-out ratio.

"That's obviously his best attribute, but a lot of times when a guy's swinging a lot of big shots and they're not landing, you get fatigued like that.

"I may be the hardest puncher he ever fought. He hasn't been hit by me yet, so we'll just have to see if he's the hardest puncher."

Mayweather, who outboxed Saul Canelo Alvarez in his most recent bout in September to take the Mexican's WBA and WBC super elterweight titles, has repeatedly spoken about the need for patience against Maidana.

Reuters

Ronaldinho's Atletico Mineiro eliminated from Copa

BELO HORIZONTE, 2 May — Defending champions Atletico Mineiro were eliminated from the Copa Libertadores on Thursday after a late Jefferson Duque goal gave Atletico Nacional a 2-1 aggregate victory in their round-of-16 tie.

Duque struck from

close range in the 88th minute at the Mineiro stadium to ensure the Colombian team's passage to the quarterfinals of South America's premier club tournament.

Atletico Mineiro midfielder Fernandinho had leveled the tie in the first

half by firing in a low drive after Emerson Conceicao's assist.

Two-time FIFA World Player of the Year Ronaldinho was unable to exert any meaningful impact on the match in a performance that will all but quash his already-slim hopes of a

berth in Brazil's World Cup squad.

The result continues Atletico Nacional's impressive 2014 form. The Medellin outfit, whose only Copa Libertadores triumph came in 1989, are also top of Colombia's national league.—Xinhua