THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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UEC briefs US Ambassador, USAID on plans for 2015 vote

Nay Pyi Taw, 17 March—The United States ambassador to Myanmar and a representative from USAID received a briefing on preparations and voting procedures for the 2015 general election during a meeting Tuesday with Union Election Commission Chairman U Tin Aye.

In his meeting with Mr Jonathan Nicolas Stivers, Assistant Administrator for USAID Asia Bureau, and US Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Derek Mitchell, U Tin Aye explained the history of Myanmar's elections, current procedures, and plans to ensure free and fair voting this year, including arrangements to invite international observers.

The UEC chairman also replied to queries raised by the Assistant Administrator from USAID Asia Bureau on measures to respond to potential disasters during the election, as well as disputes that could break out after. Their discussions also covered cooperation between UEC and USAID to ensure a successful election.

MNA

Peace talks on nationwide ceasefire agreement resume

Yangon, 17 March—The meeting on a nationwide ceasefire agreement resumed between the Union Peacemaking Working Committee and the Nationwide Ceasefire Coordination Team at the Myanmar Peace Centre here on Tuesday, according to officials.

The seventh meeting is expected to mainly focus on military-related affairs.

Union Minister U Aung Min, also the UPWC's Vice Chairman, described the meeting as a historic move in the peace process, pledging their utmost efforts to accomplish peace.

Union Peacemaking Working Committee and the Nationwide Ceasefire Coordination Team meet as a historic move at the Myanmar Peace Centre.—MNA

U Naing Han Tha, Leader of the NCCT, a coalition of 16 armed ethnic groups, said his team had prepared a draft ceasefire deal through repeated negotiations among its members. He stressed that following a nationwide ceasefire, a political dialogue that allows the participation of all ethnic armed groups will promise a lasting peace in the country. The use of force will be disastrous to all nationalities and leave the country behind in terms of development, while also sowing seeds of hatred among ethnic groups, he warned, urging all stakeholders to reach an agreement as quickly as possible.

The meeting will continue at the same venue tomorrow.

MNA

Livestock ministry opens applications to run farms, factories through JV

Nay Pyi Taw, 17 March—The Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Rural Development has invited registered local and foreign companies to submit expressions of interest to run its farms and factories through the joint venture system.

Thirty-one farms and factories in total under the Livestock Breeding and Veterinary Department of the ministry will be tendered for running through the joint venture system with the aim of operating them economically, the ministry said Monday.

The factories include those for animal pharmaceuticals, feedstuff and pork processing, while the farms include those for chickens, ducks and pigs.

The ministry said the EOI form is available at its website and has urged those interested to contact the ministry in Nay Pyi Taw by 28 March, 2015.

GNLM

Designer hits right note with conference logo

Nay Pyi Taw, 17 March—With Myanmar set to host an Asia-Pacific radio industry summit in May, organisers invited designers to submit prospective logos for the event, with the winning entry to appear on signage and promotional material.

Out of 32 entries, Maung Aung Kyaw Khin's design was picked as the emblem for Radio Asia Conference 2015 and Radio Song Festival 2015, to be staged by Myanmar Radio and Television, under the Ministry of Information, in cooperation with Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union (ABU). For his design, Maung Aung Kyaw Khin, son of U Aung Kyaw Nyunt, incorporated Myanmar's traditional harp and a musical note.—*MNA*

MoT launches probe into deadly ferry sinking, to inspect all state-owned vessels

By *Aye Min Soe*

Nay Pyi Taw, 17 March —The Ministry of Transport has launched an investigation into the 13 March capsizing of a ferry which left more than 60 dead and will inspect state-owned vessels across the country in response to the tragedy.

A team led by U Tun Lwin Oo, the Director-General of the Department of Water Resources and Improvement of River Systems of the Transport Ministry, started the investigation Monday and will release the finding on Wednesday, according to the ministry.

The official death toll of the tragedy reached 61 Tuesday as divers found two more bodies from the sunken ship, according to Rakhine State Police Force.

The vessel Aung Ta Gun-3 was old and overloaded when it capsized, said U Nyan Tun Aung, Union Minister for Transport.

The ship was one of six, Aung Ta Gon-1 to 6,

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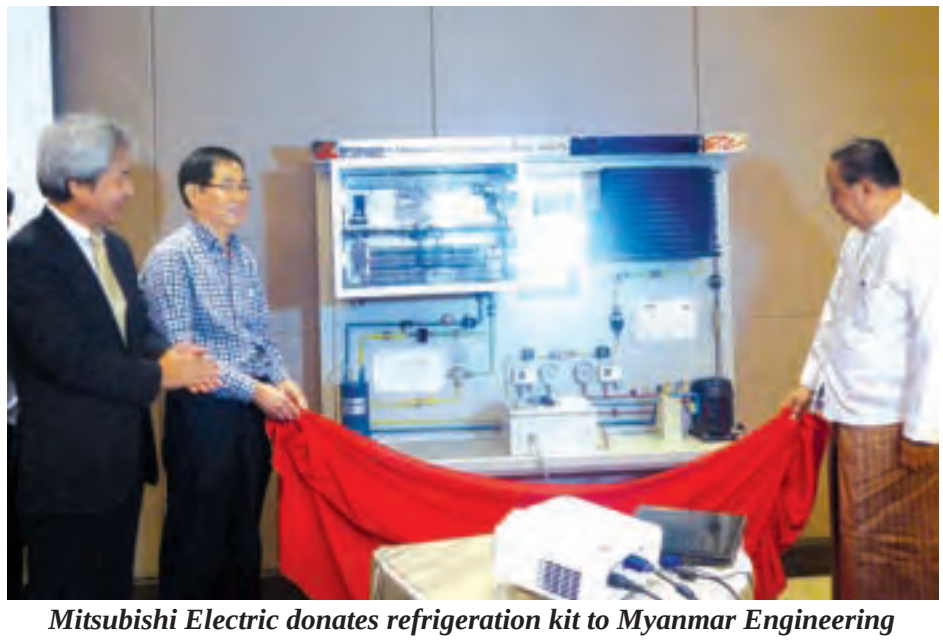
Mitsubishi Electric inks deal on technical training

By *Khaing Thanda Lwin*

Yangon, 17 March—Japanese electronics giant Mitsubishi Electric signed a deal Tuesday with its local distributor and the Myanmar Engineering Society to provide training for technicians on air conditioning and refrigeration systems.



Mitsubishi Electric donates refrigeration kit to Myanmar Engineering Society at signing ceremony.—Photo: Khaing Thanda Lwin

"The main aim of the two-year memorandum of understanding is to fulfil the country's needs by supporting human resource capacity-building programmes," said U Khin Maung Myat of Peace Myanmar Electronic Co., the country's main distributor of Mitsubishi Electric products.

"Through PME, we aim to provide not only theoretical lessons but also hands-on courses regularly on air conditioning topics ranging from air conditioning fundamentals to advanced courses on platforms provided by MES," said Mr Susumu Oshibe, deputy managing director of Mitsubishi Electric.

The courses should equip participants with adequate knowledge to manage the most advanced

(See page 3)

UEC defends its proposed budget for general election

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw

NAY PYI TAW, 17 March — The 2015 General Election is a national duty and the proposed budget for the Union Election Commission should be considered in this light, a UEC member told representatives at the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw session on Tuesday.

One representative of the house said the K 5,700.811 million for reception under the budget is enough to build 126 rural healthcare centres, calling for it to be cut.

At the session, Union Election Commission member U Win Ko explained that the proposed budget of the commission includes K 2.5 million for reception costs and K 5,698.311 million for costs of meals for volunteers for voting booths, as well as sub-commission chairmen and secretaries of sub-commissions, who do not receive any salaries or allowances.

As there will be 46,489 voting booths in the entire country in 2015 General Election, cutting the proposed budget should be considered in light of the national duty of holding the general election, he added.

Union Minister for Information U Ye Htut said that money the ministry earned is the net profits of the ministry from newspapers, advertisements and other general earnings, after deducting production costs, management costs and commercial taxes. The union minister added that general earnings of the News and Periodicals Enterprise, which reaches K 100 million every year, comes from newspapers and advertisements, while costs for assets are divided into yearly expenditure, which is paid as annual expenditure to the government.

MNA

Member of UEC U Win Ko. MNA

Union Information Minister U Ye Htut. MNA

Foreign debts to be settled by the state according to their terms and conditions: Union Minister for Finance

NAY PYI TAW, 17 March _ Union Minister for Finance U Win Shein said that individuals in the country are not necessary to settle the international loans and the state will settle the loans by itself according to their terms and conditions at the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw session on Tuesday.

Foreign loans are taken only after considering the interests and economic development of the nation and what is more important is the most effective of the foreign loans, according to the union minister. He also defended the budgets for Ministry of Livestock, Fishery and Rural Development and the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation, which amount to 3 percent and 4 percent of the national budget.

A representative pointed out that the two ministries that are working for 70 percent of the population of the country asked for only a few percent of the national budget showed that the national budget failed to place emphasis on the interests of the majority of the people.

However, the union minister said that budgets of other ministries include expenditures for the 70 percent of the people, pointing out that the budgets of the cooperative ministry and the ministry of industry include expenditures for farm machinery and fertilizers.

Concerning with the foreign loans, the union minister said that there is a difference between the calculation of foreign loans between the government of Myanmar and the International Monetary Fund, which does not include foreign loans in the earnings of the government but the government of Myanmar includes foreign loans in its earnings.—*MNA*

Amyotha Hluttaw

Home Affairs sees no need to share heavy workload

NAY PYI TAW, 17 March — The deputy minister of Home Affairs rebuffed a proposal to reduce the ministry's heavy workload put before the Amyotha Hluttaw on Tuesday.

Saying the ministry does not see the need to share it responsibilities, Maj-Gen Kyaw Zan Myint explained that all of its departments work together under close supervision of regional governments and the Nay Pyi Taw council.

He said the ministry, as a law enforcement body, continues to implement its goals in line with guidelines and policies laid down by the government.

Deputy Minister Brig-Gen Kyaw Zan Myint.—MNA

U Paul Htan Htai of Chin State Constituency 3. —MNA

He added the brigades and departments under the ministry work together to carry out measures for national security, rule of law and order, control of narcotic drugs, regional development activities and public services in all parts of the country.—*MNA*

Amyotha Hluttaw hears NNER input on education amendment bill

Debate on the national education amendment bill in progress.—MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 17 March — The Amyotha Hluttaw on Tuesday continued its debate on the national education amendment bill, with a local education network contributing its views.

U Khin Maung Yi, Chairman of the Bill Committee, expressed his belief that suggestions and proposals made by the National Network for Education Reform would be of great value to the bill.

Drafting bills needs to dovetail with the Constitution and other existing laws including international conventions, the chairman said, adding care should be taken to ensure they are practical and beneficial for the country and the people.

NNER sent 16 representatives to parliament to discuss the bill at the debate, which was also attended by media, according to officials.—*MNA*

Pyithu Hluttaw

Land plots untenanted subject to fines, confiscation: Pyithu Hluttaw

NAY PYI TAW, 17 March — Owners of unoccupied plots of land in Yangon Region industrial zones face fines or having their land confiscated, the secretary of the Industrial Development Committee told the Pyithu Hluttaw on Tuesday.

Responding to a question about the process for reclaiming such plots, he said the city has 24 industrial zones with over 10,000 land plots, of which 2,339 are still untenanted.

"Legal action ranges from fines to surrender of the plots," he said.

Regarding a question of whether region and state governments have the rights to sell unlicensed vehicles with court clearances by tender, the Ministry of National Planning and Economic Development said the Ministry of Commerce will designate floor prices for such vehicles to be sold by open tender to ensure compatible prices of officially imported vehicles.

Region and state governments are required to seek approval from the central government to put unlicensed vehicles with court clearances to tender, according to NPED.

The Ministry of Industry responded to a question with respect to the registration of small and medium enterprises and the availability of loans, saying that different ministries undertake registration of different industries according to the law. SMEs are to register at the Ministry of Industry, microenterprises at the Ministry of Cooperative, rice and bean mills at the Ministry of Commerce, fishery products at the Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Rural Development, and tourism industries at the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism.

Commercial hubs like Yangon Region, Mandalay Region, Ayeyawady Region, Sagaing Region and Shan State receive loans of K2 billion each while loans of K1b go to each of the remaining regions, states and council areas.

The Small and Medium Industrial Development Bank disburses loans to enterprises after the scrutiny of their assets by authorities.—*MNA*

Myanmar, USAID seek ways for Myanmar's development

NAY PYI TAW, 17 March—Mr Jonathan Nicolas Stivers, Assistant Administrator from USAID Asia Bureau paid a courtesy call on U Wunna Maung Lwin, Union Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar on 17 March. During the meeting, matters on potential cooperation between Myanmar and USAID for socioeconomic development of Myanmar were discussed.

MNA

Germany's KI Pharma eyes investing in Myanmar's pharmaceutical industry

NAY PYI TAW, 17 March—The head of German drug-maker KI Pharma Allianc GmbH Co. paid a visit to Union Minister for Industry U Maung Myint on 16 March, with an eye to investing in Myanmar's pharmaceutical industry.

If it has an opportunity to cooperate with the Ministry of Industry, the company will manufacture good quality medicines, Managing Director Joerg Klippert told the minister during his courtesy call.

The Union Minister said cooperation will benefit both the ministry and Myanmar citizens.—*MNA*

Workshop on International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

NAY PYI TAW, 17 March—The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, Her Britannic Majesty's Embassy in Yangon and the Irish Centre for Human Rights jointly organized a workshop on the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) on 16th and 17th March 2015 in Nay Pyi Taw.

Officials from Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Union Supreme Court, Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Religious Affairs, Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security, Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement, the Union Attorney-General's Office and Myanmar National Human Rights Commission and the Consultant from the Irish Centre for Human Rights participated in the workshop.

At the workshop, articles of the Convenant and the member states' implementation processes were discussed.—*MNA*

Energy ministry to store diesel for future use

NAY PYI TAW, 17 March—With oil prices dropping on the world market, the Ministry of Energy is taking measures to import diesel for future use.

The MT SemuaSejati recently brought a load of diesel for local use to the port of the No. 1 Oil Refinery in Thanlyin recently.

The ministry is also exploring new gas wells in Maubin (South) gas field, about 1.5 miles south of Maubin.

Gas has been produced from Well No. 1 of the gas field since April 2007, with the number wells increased to 12 by December 2014.

Three of the wells produce six million cubic feet of gas every day. Well No. 5 produces 4.3 million cubic feet of gas every day.

The gas field currently produces 11.823 cubic feet of gas every day and efforts are under way to explore more new gas wells at the field.

The ministry is striving to increase oil and natural gas exploration to meet energy needs and supply CNG to public transport systems in Yangon Region, the Nyaungdon liquefied gas refinery and urea chemical fertilizer factories in Hmawby and Pathein.—*MNA*

Researchers find rare bird species in Chin Hills

By *Aye Min Soe*

NAY PYI TAW, 17 March — A research team in Chin State recently observed a number of rare bird species including the dark-rumped swift, which is threatened by habitat loss.

A team comprising researchers from the Ministry of Environmental Conservation and Forestry, the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), and the National University of Singapore spotted eight dark-rumped swift (Apus acuticauda) at the Bontala Waterfall in Matupi, Chin State, during their survey from 22 to 27 February, according to MECF.

In other significant sightings, the groups spotted the rare collar dove, which can be found only in the tropical zone, and the black eagle.

Parakeet, barbet and hill myna are mostly found in the area between Bagan and Kanpatlat, a member of the team said.

According to records, Myanmar is home to 1,056 bird species, comprising 36.4 per cent of the 2,900 species in Southeast Asia, or 11 per cent of the 9,600 species of the world.

During the survey, the team recorded 251 bird species and took blood samples of 59 species to conduct DNA tests to determine whether there has been mixing between separate populations in Rakhine and Chin states. — *GNLM*

Black Eagle.

30 released following arrests at protest: Home Affairs

Maung Wai Lin Han is handed over to his uncle on 17 March.
MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 17 March—The Ministry of Home Affairs said Tuesday it has released a number of students who were detained for protesting against the national education law.

The ministry said it was doing so out of empathy for the parents of the students and out of leniency, so the students can continue their studies. Between March 12 and March 14, the ministry handed over 29 people to their parents including 19 male students, 8 female students and two reporters.

On 17 March, the ministry handed over Maung Wai Lin Han, a third-year student from Hanthada University, to his uncle.

MNA

MoT launches...

(from page 1)

which were operating in Rakhine State after being bought from China in 1996 and 1997, he said, adding all should be replaced due to their age.

Meanwhile, the ministry also formed a team led by the managing director to the Myanma Shipyards to inspect its vessels across the country, giving priority to inspecting the remaining eight vessels operating in Rakhine State.

The state-owned passenger ferry was carrying 214 passengers and crew when it capsized around 7.15 pm Friday about 60 miles southeast of the town of Myaybon, Rakhine State.

The vessel, carrying a load of 129 tons, was heading to Sittway after leaving the town of Kyaukphyu, according to its owner, the Ministry of Transport's Inland Water Transport agency. Water flooded the ship from its bow due to severe weather, with crew and passengers pumping water out of the ship before it sank, according to survivors. — *GNLM*

Mitsubishi Electric...

(from page 1)

heating ventilation air conditioning (HVAC) systems, he added.

Under the MoU, the world's leading air conditioning manufacturer on Tuesday donated a refrigeration kit to MES for training purposes, promising to give continued technical support.

U Win Khaing, President of MES, said, "The society sees the air conditioning and refrigeration business increasing in Myanmar due to the government reform policies in 2011, which attracted many investments."

Mitsubishi Electric is a leading manufacturer of energy efficient air conditioning equipment. It has been selling products and services focused in the power sector for many years in Myanmar.

Founded in 1994, Peace Myanmar Electronic Co. imports and distributes HVAC products and parts.

The Myanmar Engineering Society was established in 1995 with the aim of furthering the professional development of Myanmar engineers and technicians.—*GNLM*

Drugs seized in Laukkai area.
MYAWADY

Government troops take strategic rebels' hilly bases

NAY PYI TAW, 17 March— Government troops shelled rebel bases on hills in a village in Laukai on 16 March, followed by heavy fighting, officials said.

The army recaptured some strategic hills, forcing Kokant rebels to make a withdrawal to the north and the northeast.

Following a tipoff in the afternoon, the government forces carried out a raid on a building in an area near Laukai, seizing narcotic drugs worth around K115 million.

On Tuesday morning, clashes broke out between security forces and rebels in three separate places.

The rebels left three bodies wearing uniforms of Myanmar Nationalities Democratic Alliance Army (MNDAA), two small arms and ammunitions, while the army suffered three deaths, with its four members wounded.—*Myawady*

Royal buildings completed to preserve Myanmar ancient heritage

MANDALAY, 17 March — A merit-sharing for meritorious deeds for construction of religious edifices was held at the hall of Mandalay Region government on 16 March, with Chief Minister U Ye Myint in attendance.

Well-wisher Dr U Kyaw Win explained the construction of three magnificent buildings of Royal Mandalay City and religious edifices.

Royal buildings of the palace were constructed in 1221 Myanmar Era (1860 A.D.) and destroyed in World War II. Governments in successive eras have repaired the Atumashi monastery. Now, well-wisher Dr U Kyaw Win has repaired and rebuilt all of the royal buildings with their original designs.

Tin Maung (Mandalay)

Region Chief Minister on inspection tour of industrial city

MYINGYAN, 17 March — Mandalay Region Chief Minister U Ye Myint made trips to Hsimeekhon Port at Ayeyawady River in Myingyan District where development tasks are gaining momentum.

He also visited Myotha Industrial City in Ngazun Township where he met local people from Natthadaw and Gyo village-tracts. At the meetings, the chief minister fulfilled the requirements of transport, electrification, water supply and health care services reported by local people.

Tin Maung (Mandalay)

Farmers in Taungtha Tsp start cultivation of summer paddy and crops

TAUNGTHA, 17 March — Taungtha Township plans to put 1,368 acres of land under summer paddy, 566 acres under summer sesame and 145 acres under pre-monsoon green gram in the 2014-15 cultivation season.

Depending on the supply of water to the farmlands, local farmers will grow Palethwe hybrid paddy and Shwemanaw paddy species in the township, according to the head of the Township Department of Agriculture, U Phone Maung.

The department has distributed 2,367 kilos of Palethwe paddy seeds to farmers. Local growers have cultivated 2,115 acres of summer sesame against the target of 566 acres, exceeding it by more than 1,500 acres.—*Kyaw Myo Naing (Taungtha)*

TODAY'S MYANMAR NEWS SITES

Farms to use wasp species to control pests

NAY PYI TAW, 17 March—The Crops Protection Branch of the Department of Agriculture introduced the use of Trichogramma wasps at paddy farms in Tegyigon Village, Zabuthiri Township, on 16 March, with an address by Union Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation U Myint Hlaing.

Director-General U Kyaw Win of the Department of Agriculture extended greetings.

Deputy Director Dr Kyin Kyin Win of the department explained that using Trichogramma species allows farmers to be less reliant on chemicals pesticides in protecting their crops.

Staff demonstrated the use of Trichogramma wasps, which attack insect eggs, around paddy plants.

Ko Pauk (Okkar Myay)

Singapore former leader Lee's health condition worsens: gov't

Singapore former leader Lee Kuan Yew

SINGAPORE, 17 March — Singapore's ailing former leader Lee Kuan Yew's condition has worsened, the government said on Tuesday.

The 91-year-old Lee's "condition has worsensed due to an infection. He is on antibiotics. The doctors are monitoring his condition," the Prime Minister's Office said in a statement.

Lee, regarded as the founding father of modern Singapore, has been supported by mechanical ventilation in the intensive care unit of the state-owned Singapore General Hospital since being admitted with severe pneumonia on 5 February.

He was Singapore's prime minister from 1959 until 1990 and has been credited for the small island state's transformation from a colonial backwater into Southeast Asia's wealthiest economy.

In his book "One Man's View of the World," published in 2013, Lee revealed that he had an "advance medical directive" signed by a lawyer friend and a doctor that gave instructions that if he has to be fed by a tube and that it is unlikely that he will ever be able to recover and walk about, "my doctors are to remove the tube and allow me to make a quick exit."

"There is an end to everything and I want mine to come as quickly and as painlessly as possible, not with me incapacitated, half in coma in bed and with a tube going into my nostrils and down to my stomach," he wrote.—*Kyodo News*

Thailand files charges against former commerce minister

BANGKOK, 17 March — Thailand's attorney general filed charges against a former commerce minister and 20 state officials and employees of private firms on Tuesday over alleged graft related to rice export deals with two Chinese firms, in a case that could see them sentenced to life in prison.

Boonsong Teriyapirom, a former commerce minister in the government of ousted Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra, and 20 others are accused of falsifying government-to-government rice deals between Thailand and China in 2013.

The Thai government said at the time it had sold 1.2 million tonnes of rice from its stockpiles to China to reduce stocks.

Thailand's anti-graft commission said the government-to-government rice deals announced by former commerce minister Boonsong had caused "huge losses" to the state and that the rice was sold locally and not exported, as claimed by the then-government.

"The attorney general submitted charges against Boonsong Teriyapirom and a total of 21 people. We present them as suspects for the Supreme Court's Criminal Division for Political Office Holders," said Kosolwat Intujanyong, deputy spokesman of the Office of the Attorney-General.

The court will decide next month whether to accept the case. If found guilty, Boonsong could face a maximum sentence of life in prison and a fine of 3.52 billion baht ($106.96 million).

The move comes as Thailand's Supreme Court is set to decide this week whether to accept a criminal case filed against former prime minister Yingluck over her role in a money-losing rice subsidy programme, a flagship policy of her administration.

If found guilty, she could face up to 10 years in jail.

Thailand's junta-appointed legislature in January banned Yingluck from office for five years after finding her guilty of corruption tied to the rice subsidy scheme.

The programme was criticized by exporters for distorting the market and dethroning Thailand as the world's biggest rice exporter. Yingluck has said the charges against her are politically-motivated and has defended the rice buying scheme.

Yingluck was removed from office in May, days before the military launched a coup that overthrew the remnants of her government. The army has said intervention was necessary to avoid further bloodshed after months of unrest including street protests aimed at ousting Yingluck.

The ruling junta, known as the National Council for Peace and Order, has said it has no plans to revive the costly rice subsidy scheme.—*Reuters*

Foreign ministers of Japan, China, S Korea to meet Saturday

TOKYO, 17 March — The foreign ministers of Japan, China and South Korea will meet on Saturday in Seoul for the first time in nearly three years, Japanese Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida said on Tuesday. Japan's relations with the two neighbouring countries continue to be strained over territorial rows as well as Tokyo's perception of history.

The ministers will discuss when the leaders of their countries can hold a trilateral summit, which has not been held since May 2012. Kishida, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi and South Korean Foreign Minister Yun Byung Se are also likely to discuss issues of common concern such as North Korea's nuclear and missile programmes. "I would like to discuss trilateral cooperation broadly and exchange views on regional and international affairs," Kishida told reporters. Kishida is also planning to hold bilateral talks with Wang and Yun on the sidelines of the three-way ministerial meeting, the first since April 2012.—*Kyodo News*

Ratings for Philippine leader plunge to record low after clash

President Benigno Aquino

MANILA, 17 March — Philippine President Benigno Aquino's approval and trust ratings have plunged to their lowest ever as public anger over the killing of 44 policemen in a clash with rebels in January hurt his popularity, a pollster said on Tuesday.

The president's poor ratings could have implications for a 2016 presidential election even though he will not be standing.

A police inquiry found Aquino responsible for a bungled mission against a top Malaysian bomb-maker on a southern island that sparked the 25 January clash and put at risk efforts to forge peace with the country's largest Muslim rebel group.

The president's spokesman has rejected the police findings saying Aquino was not part of a civilian agency chain of command and he had no responsibility for the botched mission.

A survey by independent pollster Pulse Asia, taken during the first week of March, showed Aquino's approval ratings dropped from 59 percent to 38 percent. His trust rating fell from 56 percent to 36 percent.

The previous poll was in November 2014. His highest trust ratings was 80 percent in October 2010.

"This was the largest decline in both approval and trust ratings in five years," Professor Ronald Holmes, president of Pulse Asia, told *Reuters*.

"This was the first time the president has failed to gain a majority rating, below the 50 percent level."

Holmes said the president's ratings were affected by the January clash in which at least 18 rebels were also killed.

Presidential communications head Herminio Coloma acknowledged the drop in Aquino's ratings over the bungled security operation.

"The president has repeatedly said that all successes and all failures of his administration land on his doorstep," Coloma told a news conference.—*Reuters*

Malaysia frees Anwar's daughter from night of detention over parliament comments

KUALA LUMPUR, 17 March — Malaysian police on Tuesday freed the daughter of jailed opposition leader Anwar Ibrahim after a night in detention over comments in parliament deemed "contemptuous" of the country's judiciary. Anwar, who long posed the greatest threat to Malaysia's long-ruling coalition, is serving a five-year prison term after the country's highest court last month rejected his appeal against a conviction for sodomy.

The ruling party's rising star in the mid-1990s before he fell out with then Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad, Anwar denied the charge that led to his second conviction for sodomy as a fabrication aimed at ending his political career.

Police released his daughter Nurul Izzah, an MP of the People's Justice Party, on bail, but may summon her anytime within the next month. She was not charged with sedition, a party representative said, clarifying earlier comments.

"My arrest is a blatant abuse of power by none other than the inspector-general of police, and I hold the prime minister, Najib Razak, responsible for allowing transgressions against parliamentarians," Nurul Izzah said after her release. Her detention had prompted the US State Department to remark that it was "deeply concerned", and that recent charges of sedition against government critics had raised serious concerns about freedom of expression, rule of law, and the independence of the judicial system in Malaysia.

Malaysia's Sedition Act, which dates from British colonial times, criminalizes speech with an undefined "seditious tendency." Critics have said the government has used the law to silence dissent, preventing open debate and discussion.

Police said Nurul Izzah's arrest was prompted by her "contemptuous remarks" last week, when she told parliament "those in the judiciary system had sold their souls to the devil", in a reference to Anwar's conviction.

The arrest also aimed to help police investigations into a rally this month in the capital, Kuala Lumpur, Inspector-General of Police Khalid Abu Bakar said in a statement. *Reuters*

Constitutional guarantees of criminal immunity for lawmakers do not cover the Sedition Act, Malaysian lawyers say.

"Parliamentary immunity does not extend to alleged offences under the Sedition Act," said one lawyer, Syahredzan Johan.

"But there's the more important argument that you need to detain her overnight, when all you wanted to do was record her statement."

Last November, Najib strengthened the law to protect the sanctity of Islam and Malaysia's traditional rulers, despite a 2012 pledge to repeal it.

The government says it is necessary to tackle inflammatory actions that could stir ethnic or religious tension in the multi-racial country.

Reuters

Nurul Izzah (R), daughter of imprisoned Malaysian opposition leader Anwar Ibrahim, leads a chant after she is released on bail from a police station in Kuala Lumpur on 17 March, 2015. —REUTERS

Church marks 150th anniversary of visit by hidden Christians

Masaru Matsuo, a descendant of hidden Christians, visits Oura Tenshudo Church, Japan's oldest existing Christian church, in the southwestern city of Nagasaki, on 17 March, 2015. His ancestors visited the church 150 years ago to tell a French priest that they shared his faith. He said he is proud of his ancestors for keeping their faith despite persecution. — KYODO NEWS

Gov't OKs bill to add flexibility to compulsory education

TOKYO, 17 March — The government endorsed a bill on Tuesday to revise the school education law to add flexibility to the nation's nine-year compulsory schooling system.

If the bill is enacted during the current Diet session through late June, the government will enforce the changes in April 2016 to allow nine-year "compulsory education schools" to be established.

Under the bill, which was adopted at the day's meeting of the Cabinet, such schools would be able to change curricula for their students and how school years are divided in accordance with local needs.

Currently the nation's nine-year compulsory education is usually divided into six years of elementary school and three years of junior high school.

The new nine-year schools are expected to address concerns that the current six-year, three-year division sometimes leads to bullying and truancy when children advance to junior high schools, and that such a division is out of synch with children's mental and physical growth, which is said to have quickened.

A new compulsory education school would be headed by one principal, and teachers would have to be certified to teach both at elementary and junior high schools, in principle.

Education minister Hakubun Shimomura told a Press conference on Tuesday that it is necessary to enact the changes to smoothly and effectively introduce the new system in a way that would meet the needs of children.

As of last May, 12 percent of municipalities in the country, or 211, were already running nine-year schools that combined elementary and junior high schools, according to the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology.

But such schools have needed special designations to divide their elementary and junior high school years differently beyond the scope of the ministry's curriculum guidelines.

Kyodo News

S Korea urges "neighbouring country" not to try to sway security policy

SEOUL, 17 March — South Korea urged a "neighbouring country" not to try to influence its security policy, apparently referring to China's expressions of concern over the possible US deployment of in the country of a land-based system that can shoot down ballistic missiles.

"A neighbouring country may have its own position on the deployment of the THAAD, but it should not try to wield influence on our defence and security policies," Defence Ministry spokesman Kim Min Seok told reporters.

Kim's remarks were made a day after visiting Chinese Assistant Foreign Minister Liu Jianchao reiterated Beijing's concerns over the Terminal High Altitude Area Defence system in a meeting with South Korean Deputy Foreign Minister for Political Affairs Lee Kyung Soo.

"It would be appreciated if (South Korea) treats the Chinese side's interest and concerns importantly," Liu said after meeting Lee.

China argues that deployment of the THAAD system would undermine the region's stability and strategic balance, while US officials maintain the system is purely defensive and its deployment in South Korea would be aimed at exclusively dealing with the threats posed by North Korea. Earlier Tuesday, visiting US Assistant Secretary of State Daniel Russel told reporters in Seoul when asked about the matter, "Well, I find it curious that a third country would presume to make strong representations about a security system that has not been put in place and that is still a matter of theory.

Russel, who arrived in Seoul on Monday for a two-day visit for consultations with South Korean officials on a broad range of issues, including North Korea, added, "I think it is for the Republic of Korea to decide what measures it will take." Citing a "significant threat" from North Korea's ballistic missile programme, he said US military authorities have a "responsibility" to consider systems to protect allies of the United States like South Korea.

The US plan to deploy THAAD in South Korea has sparked concerns among South Koreans that it would turn the country into a US frontline missile defence base, causing diplomatic friction with Beijing and forcing Seoul to bear the brunt of intensified China-US rivalry.

Kyodo News

Japan should follow prewar "world under 1 roof" concept

TOKYO, 17 March —A Liberal Democratic Party lawmaker proposed at a Diet committee Monday that Japan should act in line with a prewar and wartime government slogan used to justify its overseas expansion at the time.

Junko Mihara, a House of Councillors member from the ruling party, referred to the slogan "Hakko Ichiu" at a meeting of the upper house budgetary committee, saying it represents "values Japan has cherished since its founding." The term roughly translates as "all the world under one roof."

The 50-year-old actress-turned-politician brought up the slogan in the context of taxation on multinational corporations.

Mihara quoted from a book about the slogan written in 1938 that says world peace can be achieved when strong countries work for weak countries instead of exploiting them.

"I cannot help but think this is the way Japan should behave in the current world of global capitalism," she said.

Finance Minister Taro Aso, 74, told the meeting after he was asked by Mihara to comment on the slogan that it was one of the "mainstream" ideas before and during the war, but that he was "frankly surprised that someone in Ms Mihara's generation has that way of thinking."

Mihara also suggested that Prime Minister Shinzo Abe should propose a "political accord to the entire world" on economic and taxation systems under which nations could help each other "as one family based on the Hakko Ichiu concept." During the Sino-Japanese war and World War II, the Japanese government used the slogan to justify its emperor-centered policies and overseas expansion.

Junko Mihara, a House of Councillors member from the ruling Liberal Democratic Party, speaks at a meeting of the upper house budgetary committee in Tokyo on 16 March, 2015.
KYODO NEWS

Kyodo News

US Embassy received calls in Feb threatening to kill envoy Kennedy

Photo shows US Ambassador to Japan Caroline Kennedy. The US Embassy in Tokyo received several calls in February 2015 threatening to kill Kennedy, investigative sources said on 17 March, 2015.—KYODO NEWS

TOKYO, 17 March — The US Embassy in Tokyo received several calls in February threatening to kill Ambassador Caroline Kennedy, investigative sources said on Tuesday.

Tokyo police are investigating the calls, made by someone speaking English and in a male voice, as a suspected case of blackmail, according to the sources.

An embassy official declined to comment.

Investigative sources said there have also been calls threatening to kill the US Consul General in Naha, Okinawa Prefecture, Alfred Magleby.

Kennedy, the daughter of assassinated US President John F Kennedy, assumed the post of US ambassador to Japan in 2013, while Magleby has been in his position since 2012.

Kyodo News

Pakistan hangs 12 men in largest execution since moratorium lifted

ISLAMABAD, 17 March — Pakistan hanged 12 male convicts on Tuesday, an Interior Ministry spokesman said, the largest number of people executed on the same day since an unofficial moratorium on capital punishment was lifted in December. Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif lifted a de facto moratorium on capital punishment on 17 December, a day after Pakistani Taleban gunmen attacked a school and killed 132 students and nine teachers. The slaughter put pressure on the government to do more to tackle the Islamist insurgency.

Twenty-seven people have been hanged since then, most of them militants, but last week it emerged that officials had quietly widened the policy to include all prisoners on death row whose appeals had been rejected.

"They were not only terrorists, they included the other crimes, some of them were murderers and some did other heinous crimes," the ministry spokesman said of the 12 executed at various jails. The moratorium on executions had been in place since a democratic government took power from a military ruler in 2008. Human rights groups say many convictions in Pakistan are highly unreliable. Its antiquated criminal justice system barely functions, torture has often been used to extract confessions and police are rarely trained in investigation, rights officials say. There are more than 8,000 Pakistanis on death row. On Thursday, the government is due to execute Shafqat Hussain. His lawyers say he was 14 when he was arrested a decade ago for the kidnap and manslaughter of a child, and his conviction was based on a confession extracted after nine days of torture.—*Reuters*

Fighting rages near Donetsk airport despite Ukraine ceasefire

SPARTAK, (Ukrain), 17 March — Heavy machinegun and light artillery fire pounded a district of Donetsk, the biggest city of eastern Ukraine, on Monday and rebels said there had been no lull in the fighting since a February ceasefire.

The Spartak district, adjacent to the city's now-flattened airport, is one of several sites in eastern Ukraine to have seen continued hostilities between the rebels and Ukrainian government forces since last month's ceasefire, brokered by France and Germany in the Belarussian capital Minsk.

The ceasefire is broadly holding in the rest of the region.

"Not a single day has been quiet here since the deal. One of our guys got killed here today and we have lost nine in total since the deal," said one rebel fighter who gave his name as Roman and bore the nickname Gruzin, or 'the Georgian'.

A rebel crouches in front of a destroyed Ukranian army tank in the village of Spartak, on the outskirts of Donetsk on 16 March, 2015.—REUTERS

He commands some 120 members of the rebel Vostok (East) battalion in Spartak, an area where most houses and other infrastructure were destroyed during months of heavy fighting for control of the nearby Donetsk city airport.

The airport is now completely destroyed but its ruins lie in an area now controlled by the rebels.

Gruzin's men had two large anti-aircraft guns mounted on a truck and an armed personnel carrier in Spartak.

While the vast majority of Spartak residents fled long ago, several dozen desperate people are holding on, saying they don't want to leave their belongings behind or have nowhere to go.

"The war has been going on for a year here. We are used to it by now, though I guess we should not get used to it. We have a basement and we run there when the fighting gets intense," said 61-year-old resident Yelena.

She lives in a badly damaged house with her 14-year-old daughter Marina who has not been to school since last May.

Both sides in the conflict, in which more than 6,000 people have died since last April, have accused each another of violating the truce. Gunfire came from both sides of the line of contact in Spartak on Monday.

The Kiev government and its Western supporters accuse Moscow of deliberately driving the rebellion in eastern Ukraine by providing the rebels with arms and money and sending serving Russian troops across the border.

Moscow denies direct military participation in the conflict.

The rebels said on Monday they only opened fire when attacked by the Ukrainian troops, but said they did not expect the latest truce to hold for long and they threatened to capture more ground.

Ukraine's President Petro Poroshenko said during a visit to Berlin on Monday he wanted European Union leaders to make clear they would impose further economic sanctions against Russia if Moscow did not implement the Minsk ceasefire.—*Reuters*

Russel calls soured S Korea, Japan ties "strategic liability"

SEOUL, 17 March — US Assistant Secretary of State Daniel Russel on Tuesday urged Japan and South Korea to try to improve strained bilateral ties, calling the current tension between them a "strategic liability" for all three countries.

"We will work to support the improvement of bilateral relations between Japan and Korea because we are a friend of Korea and we are a friend of Japan, because tension between two friends constitutes a strategic liability to all of us, because the US sees a need for two major democracies, two major economies to fulfill every opportunity available for them in the 21st century," Russel told reporters.

Relations between the two Northeast Asian neighbours have deteriorated to their lowest level in many years due to a territorial dispute and differing perceptions of history stemming from Japan's 1910-1945 colonization of the Korean Peninsula.

Russel, who heads the State Department's Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, arrived in Seoul on Monday for a two-day visit to hold consultations with South Korean officials on a wide range of issues, including North Korea's nuclear and ballistic missile programmes.—*Kyodo News*

Britain's Prince Harry to quit armed forces after 10 years

LONDON, 17 March — Britain's Prince Harry announced on Tuesday he will leave the armed forces after a decade of service that included two tours of duty in Afghanistan.

Queen Elizabeth's 30-year-old grandson, the fourth-in-line to the throne, said he would quit the military in June following a four-week secondment with the Australian Defence Force.

"The experiences I have had over the last 10 years will stay with me for the rest of my life. For that I will always be hugely grateful," said Harry, calling it a "really tough decision".

"I am considering the options for the future and I am really excited about the possibilities."

Britain's Prince Harry

Known in the army as Captain Harry Wales, the prince started officer training at the Sandhurst military training college in 2005. He undertook his first tour of Afghanistan in late 2007, and then went on to train as an Apache attack helicopter pilot.

He went on a second Afghan tour as an Apache pilot between September 2012 and January 2013, but quit front-line military roles for a desk job last year.

Like his father and elder brother William, Harry has taken on more official duties as the 88-year-old queen scales back her workload.

His military role enhanced his popularity in Britain and helped overcome his earlier reputation as a royal wild child, despite a setback in 2012 when he was photographed partying naked and playing billiards in a private room in Las Vegas.

His office said Harry, who will drop to fifth in the line of succession with the birth of William's second child later this year, would carry out voluntary work in the summer to learn more about conservation work in sub-Saharan Africa.

He will then return to work at the Ministry of Defence on a voluntary basis on its Recovery Ability Programme, while "considering other longer term employment opportunities", and continue his involvement in the Invictus Games — an international sporting event for wounded service personnel.

"I am very pleased that his first taste of civilian life later this year will involve a new role in support of our injured servicemen and women," said General Nicholas Carter, Chief of Britain's General Staff.

"He has raised their profile through the care he has shown them and they admire him hugely," he said.—*Reuters*

British referendum on EU in 2015 unlikely, says PM Cameron

LONDON, 17 March — British Prime Minister David Cameron on Tuesday said there was only a "pretty slim" chance that he could bring forward to 2015 a referendum on the country's membership of the European Union which he wants to hold if he wins a national election in May.

Cameron has promised to renegotiate Britain's relationship with Europe on issues such as immigration and then hold a referendum by 2017, hoping to prevent a rise in Eurosceptic sentiment which has pushed some Conservative party voters towards the anti-EU UK Independence Party (UKIP).

UKIP leader Nigel Farage has said his party would do a deal to allow Cameron to form a government if, as expected, the election fails to produce a clear winner. But Farage said the price of such a deal would be a referendum before the end of the year.

Britain's Prime Minister David Cameron waits to greet Sri Lanka's President Maithripala Sirisena at Downing Street in London on 10 March, 2015.
REUTERS

In an interview on ITV's "Good Morning Britain" TV show, Cameron poured cold water on that prospect.

"The sooner that (EU) renegotiation can get done the better, but frankly the chances of doing that inside 2015 after an election in May are pretty slim," he said. He said he would not consider any deal making until after the election.

Reuters

PERSPECTIVES

Wednesday, 18 March, 2015

False friends worse than outright enemies

By *Aung Khin*

No one can live in isolation, no matter how strong they are. In a global community, all of us are interdependent. For instance, a conflict or natural disaster one side of the world has consequences on the other, with the ripples felt much more strongly by direct neighbours.

Whether near or far, it is better for people of the world to maintain a positive attitude towards others. Peace and prosperity of individuals, families or countries can contribute to the wellbeing of those around them. For those who are strong, whether people of organisations, there is a responsibility to give help to those in need.

Those who do not hold onto anger or grudges can be regarded as genuine friends. On the other hand, those who resort to threats or lose patience over small misunderstandings show they cannot be relied upon as friends. They are more likely looking only at what they can gain from a relationship.

Cunning so-called friends are more dangerous than outright enemies. The former lacks trustworthiness, despite smiling and shaking hands. They mask their greed with a benevolent smile. A Myanmar saying goes, "The real strength and power of cattle can be tested only when they can pull heavy loads out of the mire." Likewise, true friends can be identified only when someone is facing hardship or misfortune.

True friendship cannot be decided by money or smiles, or by races and colours. It might be more prudent to regard someone as a good friend only when they have shown their willingness to forgive and forget, and to lend a hand in a time of need.

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

Happiness: a Fundamental Right for All

Dr Aung Soe (Retired State Medical Superintendent)

Every planet citizen possesses the right of happiness and well being. Happiness encompasses all facets of human life, viz, physical joy, mental pleasure, emotional fulfillment, spiritual well-being and so forth. Nearly three years back, on 21st June 2012, 193 member nations of the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution to celebrate the International Day of Happiness, every year on 20th March.

If we analize carefully, may realize it is a wrong thought that wealth can provide absolute happiness, joy and pleasure. One may be very rich, but not happy if he is unhealthy, not safe, or always worrying he may lose his belongings and wealth.

Myanmar, it is said, was under mismanagement for more than five decades, resulting in a least developed country. Still a large piece of nation's population, ever proud of rich resources, is living without electricity and negative access to telephone communications. No doubt, authorities are struggling hard to overcome such handicaps and are gaining success. Gross national happiness, the qualitative measurement of well-being and happiness of a nation, originated in Bhutan, consists of seven measures, viz, economic wellness, environmental wellness, physical wellness, mental wellness, workplace wellness, social wellness and the last, but not the least, political wellness.

Sustainable development is the key factor for happiness and well-being, of course. Happiness is neither a frivocity nor a luxury. In fact, it is a deep-seated yearning shared by all members of the human family which should be available to all and denied to no one. To promote peace, justice, human rights, improve standards of life and social progress may act as guidelines for happiness.

Vivid international and national actions to ensure decent livelines, social inclusion, intercultural harmony, constructing institutions for good governance, action to evadicate proverty, to protect the environment are the bricks to build happiness.

One oversea example of happiness: Australia has topped the world as the happiest industrialized nation, according to a report by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

The OECD Better Life Index compares the well-being of 34 developed and emerging countries based on eleven categories including housing, income, jobs, education, life satisfication and work-life balance.

In an update launched at OECD Week in Paris, the Better Life Index found that 84 percent of Australians are satisfied with their lives—better than the OECD average of 80 percent.

Participants said they have more positive experiences, such as feelings of rest, pride in accomplishment and enjoyment, in an average day than negative ones.

Astrialians' happiness was even greater than that of Canada and Sweden, also known for high standard of living.

The survey also found that Australians are living longer, with life expectancy at almost 82 years—two years higher than the average.

Employment levels are also stronger—at 73 percent compared with an average of 66 percent for people aged 15 to 64.

Australia also performed well in the areas of civic engagement, with strong sense of community and high levels of civic participation, and health, having achieved remarkable progress in reducing the number of smokers in the population.

Let me mention a global success concerning health and happiness: Global life expectancy has risen by more than six years since 1990 thanks to falling dealth rates from cancer and heart disease in rich countries and better survival in poor countries from diarrhoea, tuberculosis and malaria.

In an analysis from the 2013 Global Burden of Disease (GBD) study, health researchers said, however, that while life expectancy is rising almost everywhere in the world, one notable exception is southern sub-Saharan Africa, where deaths from HIV/AIDS have erased some five years of life expectancy since 1990.

"The progress we are seeing against a variety of illnesses and injuries is good—even remarkable—but we can and must do even better," said Christopher Murray, a professor of global health at the University of Washington in the United States, who led the study. It was published in The Lancet medical journal.

Murray said a huge increase in collective action and funding given to potentially deadly infectious diseases such as diarrhoea, measles, tuberculosis, HIV and malaria has had a real impact, reducing death rantes and extending life expectancy.

May all possess happiness and joy.

Meeting held to discuss reforms in the draft Myanmar Companies Law

YANGON, 17 March — A consultation meeting to discuss the reforms in the draft Myanmar Companies Law, which the Directorate of Investment and Companies Administration (DICA) is preparing with the assistance of the Asian Development Bank (ADB), was held on 14 March 2015 at 9.00 am at the Chatrium Hotel, Ball Room-2, No. 40, Natmauk Street, Tamwe Township, in Yangon.

The meeting was attended by Daw Cho Cho Wynn, the Deputy Director-General of DICA, Mr. Winfried Wicklein, the ADB Country Director for Myanmar, legal experts from the ADB, officials from the Myanmar Government agencies including DICA, and over 100 representatives from the Myanmar Institute of Certified Public Accountants, UMFCCI, legal and accounting firms and other interested stakeholders. The participants discussed the proposed reforms in the draft Myanmar Companies Law and provided feedback on the draft law as part of the consultation process.

GNLM

Political parties apply for registration at UEC

NAY PYI TAW, 17 March — The People's Benefit Students' Democratic Party submitted an application Tuesday to register at the Union Election Commission.

The Union Election Commission scrutinizes and allows registration for political parties.

MNA

Public Announcement for remonstration

The People's Benefit Students' Democratic Party, headquartered at No. 336 (A) U Ponnya Street in No. 8 Ward, Hlaingthaya Township, Yangon Region, submitted an application for registration as a political party in accord with the Section 5 of the Political Parties Registration Law on 17 March, 2015. In their application they mention that they will use the name, flag and emblem as described hereunder.

In accord with Section 14 (d) of the Political Parties Registration Rules, it is hereby announced that those who want to remonstrate with the UEC about the party's name, flag and emblem may submit a complaint along with supporting evidence within seven days starting from issuance of this announcement.

Flag of The People's Benefit Students' Democratic Party

Emblem of The People's Benefit Students' Democratic Party

Union Election Commission

Mandalay university students get training programme in India

YANGON, 17 March — Twenty students from the University of Mandalay will attend a workshop-cum-training programme at IIM Bangalore, southern India, from Sunday, according to the report of the Times of India.

The programme was conducted by the Centre of Public Policy, with the hopes to expose the students to business strategies and practices in both domestic and international context.

The 20-day workshop will cover a comprehensive programme of pedagogy, visits to enterprises and meetings, as well as training on the aspects of entrepreneurship, management of small and medium enterprises, and sustaining and expanding the financial and human resources of an enterprise.

The third batch training for Mandalay students is aimed at enhancing India-Myanmar bilateral exchanges and contribute to Myanmar government's move to open its economy to foreign cooperation and investment in the private and public sector.

GNLM

Local cancer non-profit joins worldwide body in fight against disease

YANGON, 17 March— The Shwe Yaung Hnin Si Cancer Foundation this month became a full member of an international body that brings together hundreds of groups fighting the disease, the foundation revealed Saturday.

The non-profit group on 4 March gained full membership of the Geneva-based Union International Cancer Control, which connects some 800 organisations across 155 countries, said Dr Daw Yin Yin Tun, president of the foundation.

"We will have the opportunity to accelerate our cancer prevention activities in partnership with international organizations," Dr Daw Yin Yin Tun said.

According its website, UICC members help the fight against cancer by taking part in advocacy, key events and programmes.

Shwe Yaung Hnin Si Cancer Foundation was established in late 2013, aiming to help improve access to cancer treatment and care in the country.

"Plans are under way to conduct more health seminars as well as trainer teaching courses and workshops this year," foundation secretary Dr Moe Aung Kyaw Naing said.

The foundation is also providing financial assistance to low-income patients, he added.

"A public awareness campaign on cancer prevention will be conducted on the coming Sunday" in Bogale, a small city in Ayeyawady Region, Dr Daw Yin Yin Tun told the Global New Light of Myanmar in an interview Saturday.

During the health seminar in Bogale, free medical check-ups will be provided, with the foundation expecting around 200 people to attend, Dr Moe Aung Kyaw Naing said.

GNLM

Agriculturists share knowledge with farmers for cultivation of crops

TAUNGTHA, 17 March — The Department of Agriculture conducted professional development courses for staff to increase their knowledge of the agricultural sector.

At Taungtha Township Department of Agriculture, Head of Myingyan District Department U Myint Lin and officials gave lectures to staff on the important role of the agriculture sector.

A discussion on cultivation of summer paddy and other crops was held between agriculturists and local farmers from irrigated areas of Welaung and Hsindewa Dams.

Departmental officials focused on advancement of agricultural technology and use of quality crop species.

Authorities of Taungtha Township set a target to grow 1,368 acres of summer paddy in the 2014-15 cultivation season.

Kyaw Myo Naing (Taungtha)

Myanmar Clothing Bank to help street children in Yangon suburbs

YANGON, 17 March— The charitable organisation behind the Myanmar Clothing Bank is planning a donation drive for street children in Yangon's suburban areas, especially in North Oakkalapa Township, within the next two months, the group said.

"Apart from money, we collect people's unwanted items, especially clothes, to support the poor," said Moe Myint Oo, secretary of Association of 141 Plus Charity, urging well-wishers to also donate unused toys for the children.

"Toys are the friends of children and they can give them joy," he said at a press conference to introduce the Myanmar Clothing Bank to the media.

The association started the bank in 2014 with the aim of providing direct assistance to victims of natural disasters and wars, orphaned and street children, elderly and the needy.

As part of its first clothing drive, the bank distributed about 300 items to 160 children at a monastic education school in Yangon in January.

"For the convenience of donors, the organisation plans to host a website in April as well as to open branches of the bank in regions and states in the future," said U Win Kyawt Hmu of the association.

"We already collected clothes from locals in North Oakkalapa, Shwepoukkan and Alone townships, where there are few rich people. We are now making efforts to collects donations in downtown but we needs local volunteers," said the official.

Currently the body has 40 members and another 50 volunteers. It invites youths to take part in the charitable activities.

GNLM

Ten new schools in Rakhine State to admit students from both communities

NAY PYI TAW, 17 March — Construction of four schools in Sittway Township, four in Maungtaw Township, one in Thandwe Township and one in Kyauktaw Township, Rakhine State, were completed in February. These schools were funded US$1 million by India.

***Director General U Htway Hla of Border Areas and National Races Development Department delivers speech at school handing over ceremony.*—MNA**

A ceremony to hand over 10 schools were held at Gwahsonbyin Basic Education Post-Primary School and East Myoma BEPS in Maungtaw Township on 14 March.

Deputy Ambassador of India Mr YK Silas Thangal handed over documents related to the schools to officials. These one-storey school buildings were 120 feet long, 30 feet wide and 12 feet each, facilitated with school furniture for enabling children from both communities in the region to pursue education conveniently.

MNA

Syria monitor says government forces kill six in gas attack, military denies it

BEIRUT, 17 March — A group monitoring the Syrian civil war said on Tuesday government forces had carried out a poison gas attack that killed six people in the northwest, and medics posted videos of children suffering what they said was suffocation.

A Syrian military source described the report of an attack in the village of Sarmin in Idlib province as propaganda. "We confirm that we would not use this type of weapon, and we don't need to use it," the source said.

The Syrian government has previously denied accusations that it has used chemical weapons in the four-year-old war.

An army statement said many militants were killed in other areas of Idlib province overnight in clashes.

The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, which is based in Britain and tracks the conflict through a network of sources, said the six dead included a man, his wife and their three children. It cited medical sources as saying they died as a result of gas released from barrel bombs dropped on Monday evening and that the chemical used was likely chlorine.

Dozens more people were wounded in the attack, the Observatory said. *Reuters* could not independently verify the report.

The Idlib branch of the Syrian Civil Defence rescue organization posted seven videos on YouTube, some at nighttime and some in a medical centre.

Rebel fighters run to avoid snipers from the forces of Syria's President Bashar al-Assad in the Selma region of the Jabal al-Akrad area in Syria's northwestern Latakia Province on 15 March, 2015.—REUTERS

One video showed three children and a woman, all apparently unconscious, in a medical center. A voice off camera said the name of the village, Sarmin, and Monday's date.

"One of the infants, only a few months old," a male voice says, shaking, as he films a baby on a gurney with liquid around its mouth. Two more infants with limp bodies are brought in, one by a man wearing a gas mask and another carrying a young girl.

"She's still alive doctor," a man checking the girl says. "Doctor, doctor, she is still breathing."

The Syrian Civil Defence, also know as the "White Helmets" for the hard hats they wear, includes more than 2,000 humanitarian volunteers who work as first responders in a country where the medical infrastructure has broken down.

It operates in insurgent-held areas of the country.—*Reuters*

India's Modi deeply concerned about rape of nun; protests flare

NEW DELHI, 17 March — Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Tuesday he was "deeply concerned" about the rape of an elderly nun and the demolition of a church as protests for the better protection of women and religious minorities erupted across the country.

Modi has asked for an immediate report on the violence on the weekend, according to a statement. There were angry scenes in parliament as legislators demanded to know why the man accused of rape had not been arrested.Over the last few months, Modi has been criticised for being slow to condemn a series of attacks on Christian institutions, fuelling concern his Hindu nationalist government is failing to rein in Hindu zealots.

Outrage over the rape of the nun has reignited an angry debate about the safety of women.

"We all feel ashamed, never before could this have been imagined, we have never heard of such things," said Mohammed Salim, a member of the lower house of parliament. "And despite that, after 70 hours no arrests have been made." During a debate, members of parliament shouted: "We demand justice." Hundreds of protesters clashed with police in West Bengal state on Monday evening with the disturbance blocking the convoy of the state leader Mamata Banerjee for almost an hour.

Banerjee, a self-styled champion of the poor, was prevented from travelling along a motorway after she visited the nun in hospital. The crowd surrounded her car with protesters demanding to know why the man suspected of raping the nun had not been caught. Law and order in India is primarily the responsibility of state governments.

Police detained nine men after the attack on the 75-year-old nun in a convent school but no arrests have been made. A group of men broke into the school and stole some items. One of them then raped the nun.

Even after national soul searching caused by the gang rape and murder of a student in Delhi two years ago and tougher penalties for men who attack women, India is struggling to tame chauvinistic attitudes that leave women vulnerable to rape.

In the past, Banerjee and members of her Trinamool Congress party have attracted criticism for comments on rape deemed insensitive. Two years ago, Banerjee accused a rape victim of making up the incident and one of her ministers questioned why she was out late drinking at a night club.—*Reuters*

Iran nuclear talks intensify as sides face tough issues

LAUSANNE, (Switzerland), 17 March — Efforts to reach a political agreement on Iran's nuclear programme by the end of the month intensified on Tuesday as negotiations between the United States and Iran resumed, and Western officials warned that tough issues remained unresolved.

The US and Iranian delegations led by US Secretary of State John Kerry and Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif began another round of talks in the Swiss city of Lausanne after the Iranians returned overnight from Brussels where they had met European foreign ministers.

Senior European officials were expected in Lausanne later on Tuesday, with foreign ministers possibly joining them at the end of the week if talks advance.

A Western diplomat said "we're still not there yet" on reaching an end-March deadline for a framework agreement between Iran and six major powers — the United States, Britain, France, Germany, Russia and China.

"We'll see what happens the rest of the week but for now we're not there," a senior Western diplomat said. "The Americans had the same feeling in Lausanne."

A senior US official, speaking after several hours of talks on Monday, said Iran had "tough" choices to make.

"We are trying to get there but quite frankly we still do not know if we will be able to," the official told reporters on Monday. "Iran still has to make some very tough and necessary choices to address the significant concerns that remain about its nuclear programme."

The US official said the sides would work through the end of the month if needed to secure a deal.

Speaking to reporters in Brussels late on Monday, French Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius said progress had been made but "important points" were unresolved. German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier said a deal could not be struck "at any price".

With the Iranian new year holiday of Norouz approaching this weekend, officials close to the talks say it will be difficult to complete a political agreement this week. If it is not possible by the weekend, the talks could reconvene in the final days of March.

Zarif said all sides needed to keep talking this week to see what could be achieved.

"On some issues we are closer to a solution and based on this we can say solutions are within reach. At the same time, we are apart on some issues," he told the Iranian news agency *IRNA*.

The six world powers are trying to reach a political framework agreement with Iran by the end of the month that would curb Tehran's most sensitive nuclear activities for at least 10 years in exchange for the gradual easing of some sanctions.

The parties have set a 30 June deadline to finalise all the technical details of an accord. Western officials say privately that overcoming disagreements on some of the remaining sticking points would be very difficult.

Sticking points include the level of Iran's enrichment activities and how sanctions would be lifted.

Iran's Oil Minister Bijan Zanganeh said "unjust" Western sanctions should be lifted, the official *IRNA* news agency reported on Monday. He said Iran was ready to increase oil exports by up to 1 million bpd when sanctions are lifted and this would not have an impact on crude oil prices.

US and EU sanctions that came into force in 2012 prohibit the import, purchase and transport of Iranian petroleum products, crippling the major oil exporter's economy.

A senior Iranian official doubted whether a deal would be reached this week as there were gaps on some important issues, although the atmosphere at the talks was good.

European Union foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini told reporters in Brussels the talks had been helpful.

A European diplomatic source, however, said substantial gaps remained and it was not clear they could be resolved in the coming days. "The talks were lengthy and in-depth, but they did not enable us to narrow our differences," the source said after Zarif met his French, German and British counterparts.

The West suspects Teheran of wanting to create an atomic weapons capability. Teheran denies that and says its research is for purely peaceful purposes.—*Reuters*

US Secretary of State John Kerry (L) holds a meeting with Iran's Foreign Minister Javad Zarif (R) over Iran's nuclear program in Lausanne on 17 March, 2015. — REUTERS

Brent comes off 6-week low to rise above $54, but glut worries drag

SINGAPORE, 17 March — Brent crude rose above $54 a barrel in choppy trade on Tuesday, recovering some of the previous session's losses when it hit a six-week low, but concerns over a growing supply glut kept a lid on gains.

Prices on the other side of the Atlantic fell for a sixth session to just above a six-year low, keeping their discount to Brent at near $10, a trend that analysts say could deepen.

"The oil market is currently oversupplied, driven in part by the success of North American shale," Morgan Stanley said.

While the US rig count has dropped from 1,809 rigs a year ago to 1,125 last week, past cycles have shown there is "often a lag between when drilling stops and when oil supply stops growing", the bank said in a note.

Brent LCOc1, which fell to a session-low of $53.94, was trading at $54.02, up 8 cents, by 0629 GMT (0429 ET). The April contract that expired in the previous session closed down $1.23 after hitting $52.50 earlier in the day, its lowest since 2 February.

US crude CLc1, or West Texas Intermediate (WTI), was at $43.73 a barrel, down 15 cents and slightly above 6-year lows of $42.85 marked on Monday.

"We expect WTI to remain under pressure as inventories swell further as the seasonal maintenance period begins. We expect this to remain the case in the short term," ANZ bank said.

"There is a lot of trade on it. Traders would be quite happy to see the spread go out to $15-20," said Jonathan Barratt, chief investment officer at Sydney's Ayers Alliance.

"We have reached a real bifocal point for the market. We either enter a more bearish mood with a new low or it turns around and becomes a bit bullish," he said.

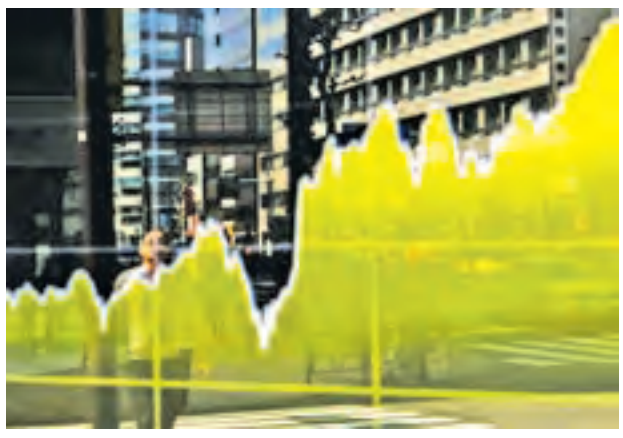
Reuters

Pumpjacks taken out of production temporarily stand idle at a Hess site while new wells are fracked near Williston, North Dakota on 12 Nov, 2014.
REUTERS

Asian shares rise on bets Fed may stay cautious

TOKYO, 17 March— Asian shares rose on Tuesday, following Wall Street's lead, as investors positioned for the possibility that weaker-than-expected US data will prompt the Federal Reserve to leave its options open this week on the timing of a future rate hike.

Crude oil remained under pressure from a global supply glut, after US crude CLc1 lost as much as 4 percent in the previous session to hit a six-year low. It was last down about 0.3 percent at $43.75 (30 pounds) a barrel. The Federal Open Market Committee is scheduled to begin its two-day policy meeting later on Tuesday, and many analysts had expected the central bank to drop the word "patient" from its formal statement on the timing of its first interest rate increase since 2006. Economists polled by *Reuters* split almost evenly on whether a rate increase will come in June or later in the year.



A pedestrian is reflected in an electronic board showing the graph of the recent fluctuations of Japan's Nikkei average outside a brokerage in Tokyo 13 March, 2015.
REUTERS

But downbeat data on US manufacturing, industrial output and housing on Monday offered the Fed a reason to toe a cautious line on policy. "We expect the Fed to drop the word 'patient' but at the same time it will say its policy will depend on economic data to keep its hand free so it can raise rates when it wants, whether it is June or September," said Shuji Shirota, the head of macro economics strategy at HSBC Securities in Tokyo.

MSCI's broadest index of Asia-Pacific shares outside Japan .MIAPJ0000PUS was up 0.7 percent, after all three major US stock indexes posted gains of over 1 percent on Monday.

Chinese shares .SSEC rose to near 7-year highs, extending gains on hopes that the Chinese government will loosen policy to bolster its slowing economy. Australian shares .AXJO rallied 1 percent after the Reserve Bank of Australia (RBA) left the door wide open for another interest rate cut. Minutes of its March policy meeting showed the central bank believed a pause this month was prudent following an easing in February.

Japan's Nikkei stock average .N225 was up 0.9 percent by the morning close, marking a fresh 15-year intraday high ahead of the Bank of Japan's policy decision announced during the market's midday break.

Reuters

Australian flu campaign targets high-risk Aboriginal children

SYDNEY, 17 March — Australian Aboriginal children will receive free flu shots this winter in an effort by the government to prevent unnecessary fatalities, Federal Health Minister Sussan Ley said on Tuesday.

Ley said that indigenous children were five times more likely to die from the flu than other Australian children. "Free access to the flu vaccine will mean this essential preventative health measure is now within the reach of the most at-risk indigenous children."

"Providing free flu vaccines to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in their formative years will help them to grow up healthy, happy and ready for school and be a positive step towards closing the gap in health outcomes," Ley said in a statement.—*Xinhua*

India bets on mobiles in battle on maternal, child deaths

NEW DELHI, 17 March — India is betting on cheap mobile phones to cut some of the world's highest rates of maternal and child deaths, as it rolls out a campaign of voice messages delivering health advice to pregnant women and mothers. Amid a scarcity of doctors and public hospitals, India is relying on its mobile telephone network, the second largest in the world with 950 million connections, to reach places where health workers rarely go. "It's a huge priority for us," health ministry official Manoj Jhalani told *Reuters*, adding that the service, advising on vaccinations and vitamin supplements, will launch in eight of the country's Hindi-speaking states by 15 August.

A ragpicker holds her mobile phone to show a picture she took at a dump yard on World Environment Day in New Delhi on 5 June, 2012. —REUTERS

"These are the most cost-effective health interventions," said Jhalani, the supervisor of the project, named 'Kilkari,' or "Baby's Gurgle", which will tailor its recorded messages to individual stages of pregnancy or the age of a newborn.

Poor sanitary conditions and stark poverty prevail in many villages in India, which recorded 50,000 maternal deaths in 2013, when 1.3 million children died before turning five.

Preventable hazards such as pneumonia, or poor nutrition, cause most deaths of mothers and babies. Many women give birth at home without access to clean water and toilets, while public medical clinics remain dilapidated and overcrowded. Over the last 18 months, almost 100,000 rural families have signed up for the voice message project, first piloted by the government of the impoverished, but resource-rich, eastern state of Bihar.

With India's health services starved for funds, the mobile phone messages are a cheaper way to spread basic tips on health.

Payment delays have led to months of disruption in the traditional system of home visits by health workers to encourage pregnant women to take medicine and follow safety measures.

The new project, backed by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the charity arm of British broadcaster BBC, will make use of a national database to track pregnant women.

Another service, Mobile Academy, will also use recorded messages to help train India's millions of health workers.

Health experts welcome the initiatives, but warn such mobile phone campaigns will not be enough to cut mortality rates unless India ramps up health services, particularly in rural areas.

"This (mobile services) will have a very marginal effect," said Dileep Mavalankar, director of the Indian Institute of Public Health in the western state of Gujarat, adding that the health system needed to be strengthened in remote areas.—*Reuters*

Operators opt to scrap 3 old nuclear reactors at Fukui plants

File photo taken May 2013 shows the Nos 1 and 2 reactors at the Mihama nuclear power station in the central Japan town of Mihama. Its operator Kansai Electric Power Co decided on 17 March, 2015, to decommission the two units, which have been operating for more than 40 years. — KYODO NEWS

TOKYO, 17 March — The operators of two nuclear power plants in Fukui Prefecture decided on Tuesday to scrap three old reactors, the industry's first response to a 2013 government regulation against reactors running for over 40 years amid public safety concerns in the wake of the Fukushima disaster.

Kansai Electric Power Co decided at a board meeting to decommission the Nos 1 and 2 reactors at its Mihama nuclear power plant, while Japan Atomic Power Co also decided to scrap the No 1 reactor at its nearby Tsuruga nuclear plant.

But the Osaka-based utility hopes to restart its other reactors that are around 40 years old — the No 3 Mihama reactor and Nos 1 and 2 at the Takahama plant elsewhere in Fukui — after asking the Nuclear Regulation Authority to begin screening the reactors for suitability.

Kansai Electric President Makoto Yagi explained the shutdown plan for the two Mihama reactors to Fukui Gov Issei Nishikawa the same day.

The regulation, brought in following the March 2011 nuclear accident at Tokyo Electric Power Co's Fukushima Daiichi plant, forbids nuclear reactors from operating for more than 40 years in principle, but they may be allowed to continue operation for a period of up to 20 more years if the operators make safety upgrades and pass the NRA's screening.

Kansai Electric had considered attempting to restart the two Mihama reactors, but judged that the costs of refitting them were not feasible given their relatively small output of 340 million and 500 million watts, respectively.

Two other utilities — Chugoku Electric Power Co and Kyushu Electric Power Co — are expected to make similar decisions at board meetings on Wednesday on their aging No 1 reactors at the Shimane plant in Shimane Prefecture and the Genkai plant in Saga Prefecture.

The four operators are expected to submit notifications of their decisions to the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry on Thursday.

Japan's government is considering moves toward restarting the country's nuclear power plants shuttered in the wake of the 2011 Fukushima disaster.

By picking off aging reactors and carrying out safety screening of newer ones before they are allowed to go back online, the government aims to reassure a Japanese public still wary of nuclear power's risks.

Kyodo News

Rescue teams reach cyclone stricken Vanuatu islands, official toll lowered

TANNA, 17 March — International aid agencies began emergency flights on Tuesday to some of the remote outer islands of Vanuatu, which they fear have been devastated by a monster cyclone that tore through the South Pacific island nation.

Disaster management officials and relief workers are still battling to get rescue teams on many of the islands that bore the brunt of Cyclone Pam's winds of more than 300 kph (185 mph) on Friday and Saturday.

The United Nations said the official death toll from the cyclone was 11, revising down its earlier figure of 24, but many officials anticipate that number will rise once they are able to more thoroughly inspect the outer islands of the scattered archipelago.

Some 3,300 people were left homeless after the category 5 storm destroyed homes, flattened buildings and washed away roads.

Helicopters are being used to land on higher ground on the islands after planes from Australia and New Zealand assessed the damage from the air but were unable to land in remote areas because of flooding.

"The aerial reconnaissance flights confirmed significant damage in the southern islands, particularly Tanna island, where it appears that more than 80 percent of houses and buildings have been partially or completely destroyed," Australian Foreign Minister Julie Bishop told reporters in Canberra.

A *Reuters* witness on Tanna, an island of 29,000 people about 200 km (125 miles) south of the capital, said the scene around the airport was of "total devastation", with every shred of green stripped from the trees.

Red Cross aid worker Peter Lawther said schools and concrete homes across Tanna had been destroyed.

"Shelter, along with water and food, remain a top priority, and we are working on getting help here as quickly as possible," Lawther said.

Reports from aid groups also said the main town on the island of Erromango, north of Tanna, had suffered similar destruction.

Reuters

Children stand in front of debris on a street near their homes after Cyclone Pam hit Port Vila, the capital city of the Pacific island nation of Vanuatu on 15 March, 2015. REUTERS

Pacific islands say financial support needed to reduce disaster risks

(From L) Aunese Makoi Simati, representative of Tuvalu to the United Nations, Tutai Tura, associate minister of foreign affairs and immigration from the Cook Islands, and Faamoetauloa Tumaalii, minister of natural resources and environment from Samoa, hold a Press conference during the UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Sendai, northeastern Japan on 17 March, 2015. KYODO NEWS

SENDAI, 17 March — Pacific Island nations said on Tuesday international financial support is necessary to protect the countries facing increasing threats from natural hazards, days after Super Cyclone Pam ravaged part of the region.

Speaking at a Press conference during the UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Sendai, Aunese Makoi Simati, representative of Tuvalu to the United Nations, said more financial aid is indispensable as his country has only a small budget to spend on preparing for new disasters.

According to Simati, the deadly cyclone last week affected nearly half of some 10,000 people in the country, although the focus has been on its larger Pacific neighbour Vanuatu that has been hit hard.

"When a disaster strikes...it's often quite a task to mobilize the help to remote islands" that lack various resources, he said.

Simati also mentioned that Tuvalu — a group of nine tiny islands — has been threatened by rising sea levels due to climate change.

"There is no higher ground and the islands are small...We don't have the luxury of defending ourselves," he said. But "We don't want to give a signal that we are giving up on our land. We want to live in Tuvalu."

Faamoetauloa Tumaalii, minister of natural resources and environment from Samoa, also said the Pacific nations "definitely" need financial support from the international community.

"We need development partners in order to institute various projects that can build our resilience against natural disasters. Without that support, it will take a long time to build that capacity," he said.

The five-day UN conference through Wednesday is expected to adopt a new action plan on disaster risk reduction for the next 15 years.

But negotiations have proven difficult on how much commitment developed countries should make in terms of aid for less developed economies, Japanese government officials said.

Kyodo News

ADVERTISEMENT & GENERAL

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Ministry of Energy
Myanma Petrochemical Enterprise

Title: Request for Letter of Expression of Interest (LOEI) for Joint Venture Project of No.3 Fertilizer Factory (Kyawzwa)

1. The Myanma Petrochemical Enterprise, Ministry of Energy of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar hereby announced an invitation to the experienced local and foreign companies in urea production, storage, distribution and marketing to submit the Letter of Expression of Interest (LOEI) for Joint Venture Project of No.3 Fertilizer Factory (Kyawzwa), Myanma Petrochemical Enterprise (MPE).
2. The required data for LOEI submission and information related to No.3 Fertilizer Factory are available in the Ministry of Energy website (http:// www.energy.gov.mm/index.php/en/information/announcement) and (www.facebook.com/MinistryOfEnergy.Myanmar) as well as the following address in person during the office hours.
   Director (Planning) Fax: - 067 411124
   Myanma Petrochemical Enterprise
   Email: MPEHO@mptmail.net.mm
   Building No 44, Nay Pyi Taw
   Email: mpeict@gmail.com
3. LOEI shall be submitted to following address in person not later than 12:00 noon at the date of 4.5.2015.
   Managing Director
   Myanma Petrochemical Enterprise
   Building No 44, Nay Pyi Taw
4. No submission of LOEI can be allowed by fax or email or express.
5. Only the qualified LOEI proposals will be invited to conduct the tender process.

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV WEST SCENT VOY NO (073N)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV WEST SCENT VOY NO (073N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 18.3.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.W.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claims Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.

No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.

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Corner of Maharbandoola Road & Thein Phyu Road,
Botahtaung Township, Yangon
The Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

Dated **18 March 2015** kpnw@kcyangon.com

WEATHER REPORT

BAY INFERENCE: Weather is generally fair in the Andaman Sea and Bay of Bengal.
FORECAST VALID UNTIL EVENING OF THE 18th March, 2015: Weather will be partly cloudy in Taninthayi Region and Kachin State and generally fair in the remaining Regions and States.
STATE OF THE SEA: Seas will be moderate in Myanmar waters.

Chinese envoy to N Korea Liu ends duty, returns to communist party

BEIJING, 17 March — Liu Hongcai completed his stint as Chinese ambassador to North Korea in February and has returned to a vice minister post at the International Department of the Central Committee of China's Communist Party, according to the department's website.

No successor to him has been announced yet. Liu is known as an expert on Japan who worked at the Chinese Embassy in Tokyo. He served in several positions in the International Department, including as a vice minister, before he took up Beijing's top envoy post in Pyongyang in March 2010.—*Kyodo News*

Toyo Tire urged to expedite checking safety of anti-quake equipment

TOKYO, 17 March — The Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism has urged Toyo Tire & Rubber Co to report by the end of this month findings of its safety check on substandard quake-absorbing building materials sold by a subsidiary of the Japanese tire maker, its minister Akihiro Ota said on Tuesday.

The ministry is expected to conduct on-site inspections at Toyo Tire's Akashi factory in Hyogo Prefecture, western Japan, later in the day, as the subsidiary manufactured and sold seismic isolation rubber that does not meet the government's standards.

"It is extremely regrettable that the misconduct has been found," Ota said at a Press conference. "This impairs trust in Japanese technical standards and it is unforgivable." Ota said the ministry has urged Toyo Tire to shorten the period of its safety checks from the currently scheduled one month and report the outcome of its safety examination by the end of this month.

So far, a total of 55 buildings have been found to have used the substandard quake-absorbing equipment sold by the subsidiary of Toyo Tire in Japan. The ministry on Tuesday unveiled the names of 15 of the buildings given their public nature, such as hospitals and fire department facilities.—*Kyodo News*

Hyogo gov, Sendai mayor attend disaster prevention symposium

Hyogo Gov Toshizo Ido (L) and Sendai Mayor Emiko Okuyama (R) flank Margareta Wahlstrom, UN Special Representative of the Secretary General for Disaster Risk Reduction, at a symposium on the creation of disaster-resistant cities in the northeastern Japan city of Sendai on 17 March, 2015. The event was part of a UN disaster reduction conference being held there. — KYODO NEWS

Yu Zhilin (R) and son Yu Lingyun pose for photos in front of giant transformers models in Hengyang County, central China's Hunan Province, on 14 March, 2015. Yu Zhilin and son Yu Lingyun, farmers of Caotian Village in Hengyang, began to make giant transformers models since 2007. It took them three years to complete the first several models. Yu has earned more than 1 million yuan (160,000 US dollars) this year by selling and renting these models.
XINHUA

Langkawi International Maritime and Aerospace Exhibition kicks off in Malaysia

LANGKAWI, (Malaysia,), 17 March — Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Tun Razak officially opened the five-day Langkawi International Maritime and Aerospace (LIMA) exhibition on Tuesday, with a ceremony fly past by the Royal Malaysian Air Force.

Najib said that Malaysia assumed the chairmanship of ASEAN early this year,"in keeping with this, the overriding theme of LIMA 2015 is on our vibrant region, with many of events focusing on how we can further work and prosper together."

Najib said LIMA 2015 was memorable because all 10 ASEAN defence ministers are attending the exhibition and the ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting (ADMM) was held for the first time in Langkawi two days ago. "We hope that the ASEAN aviation exhibitions, summits and business forums will lead to further cooperation and exchange between our peoples,"he added.

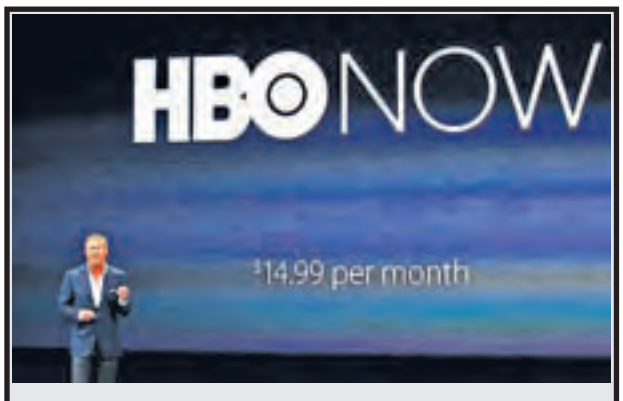
LIMA had grown over the years with 512 exhibitors this year compared with 433 in the last event in 2013.

There are 65 ships and 110 planes from 63 countries joining the event.

China Shipbuilding and Offshore International, China National Precision Machinery Import & Export Corporation and China Shipbuilding Trading also take part in the exhibition.

The Bayi Acrobatic Flying Team of China's airforce performed stunt show at the openning ceremony.

LIMA was first held in 1991 with over 100 exhibiting companies. As it stands today, Lima is one of the most influential exhibitions in southeast Asia.—*Xinhua*



Cablevision to offer HBO NOW to online customers

New York,17 March— Cable TV operator Cablevision Systems Inc said it would offer HBO's standalone streaming service, expected to premiere next month, to its Optimum Online internet customers.

Apple Inc said last week that HBO Now would be available on its devices.

HBO, Time Warner Inc's pay TV service, is expected to launch the new service in time for the fifth season of "Game of Thrones".

The much-awaited next season of the hugely popular series premieres on 12 April.

Cablevision did not disclose terms of the agreement and said it plans to provide pricing details for HBO NOW in the coming weeks.

The company's shares closed up 2 percent at $18.21 on the New York Stock Exchange on Monday.—*Reuters*

Thirty years on, stars revel in 'The Breakfast Club' legacy

Austin, 17 March— Thirty years after five misfits entered high school detention and defined the archetype for the modern teen movie, actresses Molly Ringwald and Ally Sheedy reflected on the unexpected impact of John Hughes's "The Breakfast Club."

"Nobody's really managed to make a movie, I think, as good as what this movie was for the time," said Ringwald, who became Hollywood's teen queen after the film was released in 1985.

"Until something comes along to replace it, I think it's firmly entrenched in movie classic history," she told *Reuters*.

(L-R) Actors Anthony Michael Hall, Molly Ringwald, Ally Sheedy, and Judd Nelson arrive for the Film Society of Lincoln Centre celebration of the 25th anniversary of The Breakfast Club and remembrance of filmmaker John Hughes in New York City on 20 Sept, 2010.— **Reuters**

Ringwald, 47, and Sheedy, 52, reunited on Monday for a screening to celebrate the movie's 30th anniversary at the annual South by Southwest (SXSW) festival in Austin, Texas, where the film, technology and music worlds converge.

"The Breakfast Club" saw Ringwald play the high school princess, Sheedy the resident "basket case", Judd Nelson as the criminal burnout, Emilio Estevez as the jock and Anthony Michael Hall as the nerd, who are forced together one Saturday in high school detention.

They initially clash and then slowly bond over their underlying commonalities, and the revelation that they are not defined solely by the box they are placed in.

The Universal Pictures film grossed $38 million at the US box office and became one of the biggest hits directed by Hughes.—*Reuters*

Cate Blanchett

Cate Blanchett 'besotted' with new adopted daughter

Melbourne, 17 March — Actress Cate Blanchett and her husband Andrew Upton are "besotted" with their new baby daughter Edith after adopting her from the US last week. The 45-year-old actress and her husband Andrew Upton, who already have three sons, adopted newborn Edith just over a week ago and are totally in love with the tiny bundle of joy, reported *Sydney Morning Herald.*

"There's a lot of children out there that don't have the good fortune of our biological children so it's lovely to welcome a little girl. We're besotted," she said during the Australian premiere of her new film "Cinderella".

The couple, who have been married since 1997, are planning to relocate to the US with Dashiell, 13, Roman, 10, gnatius, six, and little Edith once Upton's term as the artistic director at the Sydney Theatre Company wraps up at the end of the year.

"We're all looking forward to spending more time together in one place. We spent nine years living in England and we loved it. But now we'd like to try America.

"They have terrific [opportunities in] television there and Cate has a very strong film career there, too, obviously," Upton, 49, said.—*PTI*

SXSW fans see late Paul Walker's 'Furious 7' send-off

Austin, 17 March— Paul Walker's final appearance in the street-racing franchise "Fast & Furious" left a preview audience teary-eyed at the South by Southwest (SXSW) festival for the first public screening of the last film the actor made before he died in a car crash.

In the film, Vin Diesel's character says "those who are lost go on in the hearts of the living" and that was how it felt for many fans attending the midnight screening on Sunday.

"Furious 7", out in theatres on 3 April, is Walker's last appearance as law-enforcement officer Brian O'Connor. The 40-year-old died as a passenger in a one-car crash in Santa Clarita, California, in November 2013.

Before the screening, the film's producer Neal Moritz appealed to viewers not to reveal what becomes of Walker's character in the franchise, which has grossed more than $2 billion globally.

"We honestly lost a dear friend, brother, comrade, while we were making this movie," Moritz said. "When we decided we were going to continue this movie, we were determined to honour his legacy and our love for him."

Walker had completed most of his scenes before his death, but Comcast Corp-owned Universal Pictures was forced to put production on hold to figure out how to continue filming without him.

Walker's brothers stepped in for a few remaining scenes, which make a seamless transition in the completed film.

Walker's character Brian appears within the first 15 minutes as a settled family man, but he's restless for the underworld of crime, illegal street racing and heists led by Diesel's Dominic.

The plot, filled with one-liners, sees Diesel, Walker and co-stars Tyrese Gibson, Ludacris and Michelle Rodriguez take on a villain (Jason Statham) in cities across the world. Despite Walker's death, filmmakers did not shy away from the turbulent storyline of "Furious 7" in which his character, along with the rest of the cast, are thrown into high-octane, life-threatening situations.—*Reuters*

A man signs a large condolence card during an unofficial memorial event for "Fast & Furious" star Paul Walker in Santa Clarita, California on 8 Dec, 2013. **Reuters**

Hugh Jackman's 'Eddie The Eagle' to release in April 2016

Hollywood star Hugh Jackman's upcoming film "Eddie The Eagle", the biopic about Britain's lovably inept first Olympic ski jumper, is slated to release on 29 April, 2016.— **PTI**

Los Angeles, 17 March — Hollywood star Hugh Jackman's upcoming film "Eddie The Eagle", the biopic about Britain's lovably inept first Olympic ski jumper, is slated to release on 29 April, 2016.

Matthew Vaughn is producing the film, which just began production in the Alps, reported Deadline.

Taron Egerton will play Michael Edwards, who rose to fame as the very-last-place finisher in two events at the 1988 Winter Olympics in Calgary, but left as a scene-stealing poster boy for never-say-die underdogs everywhere.

Jackman will play his coach. The film is being directed by Dexter Fletcher from a script by Sean Macaulay. Jackman, 46, tweeted, "On the set of #EddieTheEagle with Dexter Fletcher and Matthew Vaughn. Awesome duo to work with!"

PTI

FIFA names six cities, seven stadiums for 2016 football

SAO PAULO, 17 March — Six cities and seven stadiums are to be used as football venues for the 2016 Olympics in Brazil, FIFA announced on Monday, but Sao Paulo club Corinthians have already threatened to pull their ground out unless they are paid for necessary alterations.

There will be two venues in the host city of Rio de Janeiro with matches held at the Olympic stadium and the Maracana, site of the 2014 World Cup final, FIFA said.

The other games are to take place at the Mineirao stadium in Belo Horizonte, the Mane Garrincha stadium in Brasilia, the Amazonia arena in Manaus, the Fonte Nova arena in Salvador and the Corinthians arena in Sao Paulo.

"The Olympic football tournaments will be a fantastic opportunity to revive the great atmosphere seen during the 2014 FIFA World Cup, not only in Rio de Janeiro but also in the other five cities," said Marco Polo Del Nero, chairman of the organising committee for the Games football.

"They did an excellent job in 2014 and now they can use the World Cup stadiums and infrastructure already in place to unite the country for a major event once more," he added in a news release.

Sixteen men's sides and 12 women's teams will play 58 matches between 3-20 August.

However, Andres Sanchez, former president of Corinthians and who is responsible for overseeing stadium management, said the club would not foot the bill for alterations.

"It's a great honour for Corinthians to have the Corinthians arena selected as the city's stadium for the 2016 Olympic Games," Sanchez said in a statement posted on their web site.

"However, we are once again replying to a request from the city of Sao Paulo and we need to know who will be responsible for paying.

"If we don't, the club will review the decision to host the Olympic (football)," Sanchez added.

The Corinthians arena hosted six matches in the 2014 World Cup, including the prestigious opening game and the semi-final between Argentina and the Netherlands.

However, it was one of the last to be ready and one of the most costly. Corinthians are in severe financial difficulties and although Sanchez has travelled the world seeking companies to pay for naming rights, no buyers have appeared.

Olympic gold is the only major title that Brazil have not won and the host nation are determined to end that run.

All the teams will be largely made up of youngsters but three players over 23 are permitted in each squad.

Barcelona forward Neymar has already confirmed that he plans to be one of Brazil's three over-age players.

Reuters

A view of the Joao Havelange Olympic Stadium, undergoing renovation to stage athletic competitions during the Rio 2016 Olympic Games, during the 2nd world press briefing for the games in Rio de Janeiro in this file photo taken on 6 Aug, 2014.—REUTERS

Nishikori rallies at BNP Paribas Open

INDIAN WALLS, 17 March — World No 5 Kei Nishikori rallied to beat Spain's Fernando Verdasco in three sets to reach the fourth round of the BNP Paribas Open on Monday.

No 5 seed Nishikori, who had lost his two previous meetings against the 31st-ranked Verdasco, dropped the tiebreak in the first set before going on to win 6-7 (6), 6-1, 6-4.

"I am very happy," said Nishikori "Verdasco was an opponent who some years ago I thought of as someone I couldn't beat. I was able to win because I've grown as a player. I struggled in a close match but I made efforts to concentrate."

The left-handed hitting Verdasco overpowered Nishikori with his powerful serves early, but the Japanese ace seized the momentum when his opponent began to tire from the second set.

"The quality of my game and my feeling for the ball got better," said Nishikori, who broke Verdasco in the first game of the final set. Both players held serve until match point when Nishikori hit a sizzling forehand down the right side for the victory.

Kyodo News

Japan's Kei Nishikori returns a shot during the third round of the BNP Paribas Open against Fernando Verdasco of Spain in Indian Wells, the United States, on 16 March, 2015. Nishikori beat Verdasco 6-7, 6-1, 6-4.—KYODO NEWS

Wanted: homes for wild animals as Mexico bans them from circuses

TIZAYUCA, 17 March — Mexico is searching for homes for at least 2,000 tigers, elephants, giraffes, zebras and other exotic beasts that will soon be banned from the country's circuses.

Circus owners are worried about the fate of their animals, which they say are too expensive to keep once the ban kicks in, while government and zoo officials are grappling with myriad difficulties in relocating animals raised to perform tricks under the big top. The prohibition does not take effect until 8 July, but many circuses have already shut down. The legislation stipulates that such animals should evolve in their natural habitat and aims to avoid animal cruelty that civil organizations have long lobbied against. "We are waiting for a response from the government about what will happen to our animals," said Armando Cedeno, president of the national association of circus owners and artists.

Cedeno estimates there are around 4,000 circus animals in Mexico, double the government's tally.

In Tizayuca, near Mexico City, 45-year-old animal tamer Bruno Raffo begins his work day at 7:30 am, tending to 13 tigers in his charge.

It costs 3,000 Mexican pesos ($194) daily just to feed the tigers, he said, and there are also his own salary and bills from specialized veterinarians for periodic check-ups.

Hundreds of circus workers have been laid off, but Raffo is sticking around, for now.

"I'm going to stay here with the animals to see what can be done," said Raffo, whose arms are laced with scratch marks from a lifetime working with the giant cats.

Several circus owners have properties in the area. Nearby, jaguars, zebras, horses, and camels languish in cages next to trailers filled with circus equipment.

An official from Profepa, the federal agency for environmental protection, said the government was evaluating which facilities can take the animals.

Reuters

mitv Myanmar International

(18-3-2015 07:00 am~ 19-3-2015 07:00 am) MST

* News
* Dhamma School
* Myanmar's Traditions and Culture: Golden Land
* News
* Natural Mineral Water
* A Visit To Today's Along-Daw-Katthapha
* News
* Entrepreneur: Dr Thant Thaw Kaung
* History And Mystery Behind The Caves
* News
* In Pursuit of a dream
* News
* Cruising To Precious Islands (Part-2)
* Will you feed the pigeons
* Today Myanmar "Myanmar Timber Exports"
* News
* Products of Myanmar — Craft Blacksmithing
* The Chef "Kyi Soe"
* News
* Insight Myanmar "Labour Laws and Policies"
* Myanmar Harpist
* News
* Myanmar Handicrafts
* News
* Life In Night …….. Art In Life (Ep-2) (Part-2)
* Wet Market in Yangon: Thirimingalar Market
* News
* A Real Dream of Accidental Gift
* Orchid Lover

MRTV News Channel in Brief

(18-3-2015, Wednesday)

6:00 am
- Paritta by Venerable Mingun Sayadaw

6:20 am
- Physical Exercise

7:00 am
- News/ Weather Report

7:35 am
- Documentary

8:00 am
- News / International News

8:35 am
- People's Talk

9:35 am
- Science and Technology Programme

10:35 am
- Documentary

11:35 am
- MRTV's Youth Programme

12:00 noon
- News / International News / Weather Report

12:35 pm
- Hluttaw Image

1:35 pm
- Cultural Show (Part-3)

2:35 pm
- Traditional Boxing

3:00 pm
- News / International News

3:45 pm
- Pyi Thu Ni Ti

4:35 pm
- University of Distance Education (TV Lectures) — Second Years (English)

5:00 pm
- News / Weather Report

6:30 pm
- Head Line News

7:35 pm
- Documentary

8:00 pm
- News / International News / Weather Report

9:00 pm
- News / International News / Weather Report
- Hluttaw Image
- Fine Arts-Boson of Dramatic Performance

MRTV Entertainment Channel

(18-3-2015, Wednesday)

6:00 am
- Mono Classical Songs

6:35 am
- Teleplay

7:15 am
- Fashion Show

7:25 am
- Cultural Show For Soldiers

7:50 am
- Myanmar Series

8:20 pm
- TV Drama Series

9:10 pm
- TV Drama Series

9:50 pm
- Musical Programme

10:00 pm
- Orchestra Concert Myanmar

10:15 pm
- Myanmar Movie

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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Wednesday, 18 March, 2015

China aims to strengthen national team, host World Cup

BEIJING, 17 March — China has set out its aim of hosting a World Cup and raising the competitiveness of the national team in a sweeping policy document that seeks to revitalise a sport damaged by match-fixing scandals and poor performances on the pitch.

China has worked since 2009 to promote grassroots football and crush illegal gambling syndicates but its football reform and development plan said, "Our football is still lagging, compared to the rapid development in Asia and the world."

The plan was approved last month at a meeting chaired by President Xi Jinping, an avid football enthusiast.

It said China's short-term goal was to "improve the environment and atmosphere" of the sport, and the country would focus on attracting younger players.

In the long term, it aims for mass participation in football, with the creation of an "advanced" league system in China, to help improve the international competitiveness of the national men's team.

It would also, "Proactively apply to host the World Cup" it said.

China reached the quarter-finals of the Asian Cup in Australia in January after winning all three of their group matches, a performance the country's anti-corruption watchdog called a direct result of a gambling crackdown.

*China players line up before the Asian Cup quarter-final soccer match between China and Australia at the Brisbane Stadium in Brisbane on 22 Jan, 2015.—*REUTERS

The campaign against football corruption has seen at least nine officials, four judges, 13 footballers or coaches and 17 club workers jailed or punished since 2009.

China's national team are now ranked 83rd in the world, the seventh-best in Asia. They have qualified for the final stages of a World Cup only once, in 2002.

China's plan shows its commitment to becoming a football powerhouse, but reform will not be easy, said Cameron Wilson, editor of Wild East Football, a website covering Chinese football.

"It shows they are deadly serious about it, but the problems inside Chinese football are deeply ingrained," he said.

Reuters

Sharapova and Bouchard win, Wozniacki exits

*Maria Sharapova (RUS) returns the ball during her match against Victoria Azarenka (BLR) at the BNP Paribas Open at the Indian Wells Tennis Garden in Indian Wells, CA, on 16 March, 2015.—*REUTERS

INDIAN WELLS, 17 March — Caroline Wozniacki became the biggest name to fall at the BNP Paribas Open on Monday when the fourth seed was ousted 6-4, 6-4 by Swiss teen Belinda Bencic on Monday.

Second seed Maria Sharapova won an absorbing baseline battle with long-time rival Victoria Azarenka 6-4, 6-3 in just under two hours while sixth-seed Eugenie Bouchard demolished American CoCo Vandeweghe 6-3, 6-2.

Wozniacki, champion at Indian Wells in 2011, had overwhelmed Bencic 6-0, 6-0 in their only previous meeting in Istanbul last year but it was a very different story at the California desert venue as the Dane struggled for consistency. "Honestly, it was two completely different matches," Wozniacki said after being broken twice in the opening set and once in the second at a sun-bathed Indian Wells Tennis Garden. "I went out there today and I didn't play well at all.

"She was steady. She took the ball early as normal, and she served pretty decently, but I didn't put three balls in play today. She only had to put balls back in my court."

Bencic, who celebrated her 18th birthday last week, was delighted to clinch her first victory over a top-five player.

"In Istanbul I had maybe too much respect and I was afraid, nervous," said the Swiss, who gave notice of her potential by reaching last year's US Open quarter-finals.

"Today I really had a good game plan. I did what I had to do."

Reuters

Hart facing renewed onslaught from in-form Suarez

Football - Liverpool v Manchester City - Barclays Premier League - Anfield - 1/3/15Manchester City's Joe Hart looks dejected Reuters.

MADRID, 17 March — Joe Hart is probably sick of the sight of Barcelona striker Luis Suarez and the Manchester City goalkeeper will need to improve his record against the Uruguayan if the English champions are to have any hope of reaching the Champions League quarter-finals.

Barca lead 2-1 from last month's first leg ahead of the showdown at the Nou Camp on Wednesday, when Suarez netted both goals, more evidence he is nearing top form after a stuttering start to his stint in Spain. The former Liverpool forward, who has scored 10 times since the turn of the year, also put two past Hart when Uruguay beat England 2-1 in Sao Paulo in June at the World Cup finals.

The 28-year-old was banned for four months for biting an opponent in Uruguay's subsequent game against Italy but since making his Barca debut at the end of October has slowly been getting back to his lethal best.

Linking up well with fellow South American forwards Lionel Messi and Neymar, Suarez has earned praise from Barca coach Luis Enrique for his work rate and it will be a huge challenge for city to thwart the fearsome trio on Wednesday.

Scoring goals has been City's main failure in recent weeks, however, and Saturday's 1-0 Premier League defeat at Burnley was their third reverse in four outings, during which they have managed to find the net only four times. It is a paltry return by City's standards, especially considering they rattled in nine goals in their previous two games in England's top flight.

"The issue for us at present is that we are not winning the games that we normally do, especially against teams we are expected to beat, and that is because we are not scoring goals," City coach Manuel Pellegrini said.—*Reuters*

Reading win replay to book FA Cup semi-final with Arsenal

LONDON, 17 March — Second-tier Reading booked an FA Cup semi-final meeting with holders Arsenal at Wembley after brushing aside 10-man Bradford City 3-0 in their replay on Monday.

After the first game failed to yield a goal, Reading roared into a 2-0 lead inside the opening 10 minutes at the Madejski stadium.

Hal Robson-Kanu headed home a corner after six minutes and three minutes later Garath McCleary scored with a deflected shot.

Bradford's Filipe Morais was shown a straight red card for a high challenge on Nathaniel Chalobah just past the hour and Reading made the game safe against their third-tier opponents when Jamie Mackie slammed in a third goal after 68 minutes. Bradford produced a massive upset to beat Premier League leaders Chelsea 4-2 at Stamford Bridge in the fourth round before knocking out top-flight Sunderland to reach the last eight.—*Reuters*

*Reading's Nathaniel Chalobah, Michael Hector and Jordan Obita celebrate their third goal during FA Cup Quarter Final Replay at the Madejski Stadium on 16 March, 2015.—*REUTERS

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