

President U Thein Sein sends messages of felicitations to Bangladesh

NAY PYI TAW, 26 March—U Thein Sein, President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, has sent messages of felicitations to His Excellency Mr. Md. Abdul Hamid, President of the People's Republic of Bangladesh and His Excellency Mrs. Sheikh Hasina, Prime Minister of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, on the occasion of the Independence Day of the People's Republic of Bangladesh which falls on 26 March 2015.

MNA

Myanmar, UN focus on successful implementation of UN's MDG

NAY PYI TAW, 25 March — Vice President Dr Sai Mauk Kham received a delegation led by Under-Secretary General of the United Nations and Executive Director of United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) Ms. Grete Faremo at the Credentials Hall of the Presidential Palace, here, on Wednesday to hold successful implementation of the UN Millennium Development Goals.

They also discussed enhancement of Myanmar's health sector, food

sufficiency, poverty alleviation and assistance for socio-economic development of farmers.

Also present at the call were deputy ministers U Thant Kyaw, Dr Win Myint and Daw Lei Lei Thein and officials.—MNA

Vice President Dr Sai Mauk Kham greets UN Under-Secretary General and Executive Director of UNOPS Ms. Grete Faremo.

MNA



Access to finance, greater transparency vital for Myanmar private sector: World Bank

By Ye Myint

YANGON, 25 March — Myanmar must make it easier for businesses to obtain financing in order to realise the massive potential of its private sector, the World Bank said in its inaugural report on the country's investment environment.

The Myanmar Investment Climate Assessment report, launched in Nay Pyi Taw on Tuesday, says access to finance is the top constraint for private enterprises in Myanmar, stressing the need to remove this obstacle and others to strengthen the country's private sector, encourage growth and create jobs.

Bank borrowing represented only one percent in financing fixed-asset investment costs, said the report based on interviews with more than 1,000 foreign and local non-agricultural businesses. According to the businesses interviewed in the report, 92 percent of firms have to rely on their own funds for business operations. A Yangon small business owner was quoted in the report saying it was difficult to secure loans.

"I want to borrow a

loan from a bank for business expansion, but it is not easy at all," said the business owner U Myint Lwin.

The report said productivity and efficiency could be improved by removing these barriers.

"Myanmar has the potential for enormous growth. To realise this potential it is essential to create space for entrepreneurship," said Kaushik Basu, the World Bank's Chief Economist and Senior Vice President.

He called on the government to play a role in (See page 3)

Vice President U Nyan Tun delivers speech at ceremony for MNES implementation

NAY PYI TAW, 25 March — Vice President U Nyan Tun delivered a speech at a ceremony to mark the implementation of the Myanmar National Export Strategy, here, on Wednesday.

Among those present at the Myanmar International Convention Centre (2) were U Win Aung, chairman of the Myanmar chamber of commerce, Ms

Petra Schill, regional director of the German government-operated enterprise GIZ, and World Bank regional director Mr Ulrich Zachau.

In his speech, the vice president said the government has prioritised seven sectors at the national level including electricity, supply of drinking water, sustainable development in agriculture, employment,

trade and investment, the financial sector, and tourism. A special taskforce has been formed to achieve desirable results in promotion of business and trade, he said. It has been seeking to ensure existing rules and regulations are in accord-

ance with international standards, while identifying areas where businesses can be most competitive, according to the vice president.

The foundation of the Myanmar national export (See page 3)

Towns in Chin State face water woes

By Pansy Moi

HAKHA, 25 March — Parts of Chin State are facing water shortages due to insufficient flows this summer from mountain springs that supply towns in hilly regions.

An area comprising 89,900 people across 13 towns requiring at least 1.7 million gallons of water per day is currently receiving only around 900,000 gallons, according to the Chin State Development Affairs Department.

Local people draw supplies from seven tanks filled with water from 51 mountain springs which

flow sufficiently during rainy season.

Some people in Haka are currently relying on tap water supplied from a local Government Technological College for only one hour per week.

To meet their shortfall, they pay K200 for a bucket from sellers but they are worried about the safety of the water, said local people in Haka.

When a power grid in Chin State is completed soon, local authorities will make arrangements to solve the current supply problem, said U Hta Lar Ha Ye, Deputy Director of Chin State DAD.—GNLM



Photo of the workplace of a small business in Myanmar. Lack of access to finance is a major barrier for Myanmar's private firms, according to the World Bank.—PHOTO: CREDIT TO WORLD BANK MYANMAR

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Pyithu Hluttaw

Unethical contractors will be charged: Education Ministry



Deputy Minister
U Soe Tint.—MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 25 March — Education ministry will take actions against contractors or inspectors if school facilities cannot be completed in right time or are found using low quality construction materials, U Thant Shin, Deputy Minister for Education, told Pyithu Hluttaw Wednesday.

In reply to the query of MP U Than Oo from Myawady Township constituency, the deputy minister said for breaching agreements in the contracts, the contractors will have to pay fines with daily basis depending on the sizes of schooling buildings, and inspector in-charge of quality will be prosecuted in accordance with provisions of civil service law.

U Thant Shin also said that the ministry is making promotion of teachers before each school season and transfer of teacher is allowed only after another teacher has been substituted, and all the schools open



Deputy Minister
U Thant Shin.—MNA

by May 15 every academic year.

Enquiring about possible construction of a bridge to link Yangon's Kyimyindine Township and Ayeywa village crossing Hline River, Deputy Minister for Construction U Soe Tint said the project includes in Maha Yangon Development Project (2040) which will be jointly implemented Yangon City Development Committee and Japan International Cooperation Agency.

He said feasible study has been made for the project and detail assessment are being carried out as the project will help develop more road networks for Yangon.

U Aye Mauk, an MP of Mahlaing Township constituency, submitted a proposal to discuss transfer of road networks among villages, townships and district to the Ministry of Construction.

MNA

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw approves three bills

NAY PYI TAW, 25 March — Pyidaungsu Hluttaw at its 33rd day session Wednesday approved allotment of K2,822.73222 million to one project of Ministry of Border Affairs, one of Ministry of Transport and two of Sagaing Region government.

The Hluttaw amended paragraphs and sub-paragraphs in the legal translation commission bill, the Myanmar Medical Council bill and the commercial tax bill in line with the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Law and Rules.

The joint bill committee read its findings on My-



Representatives of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw discuss allotment of fund to ministries and region government.

MNA

anmar Port Authority bill, and the Hluttaw invited nomination of MPs to discuss it.—MNA

Amyotha Hluttaw

MPs discuss wording changes in National Education amendment bill

NAY PYI TAW, 25 March — Representatives of Amyotha Hluttaw discussed on Wednesday changes of the words in the National Education Law and the amendment bill on this law.

U Nu, an MP of Yangon Region constituency 10, suggested the word preschool in Myanmar language should not be shortened in the law and fully defined the term of preschool that aims to nurture physical, mental and moral practices of the children before proceeding to learn higher levels.

He also urged substi-

tution of 'mother ethnic language' with 'individual ethnic language' in the bill, saying his support for the paragraphs that mention special programmes, teaching aids and methodologies for the disabled persons.

Defence Services personnel representatives Major Aung Ko Min suggested inserting the words 'all-round systematic thinking' to replace 'freedom of thinking' which he assumed the latter would lead to wrong thinking for the children.

U Ohn Tin, an MP of Rakhine State constituency 10, also discussed some changes of words

in the bill.

Later, members of Amyotha Hluttaw's Bill Committee and representatives who supported student protests against the National Education Law discussed details for the amendment bill.

MNA



MP U Nu of Yangon Region Constituency No 10.

MNA

Political parties apply for registration at UEC

NAY PYI TAW, 25 March — The Union Election Commission scrutinizes and allows applications of political parties to register. On Wednesday, Red Shan (Tailai) and Northern Shan Ethnic Solidarity Party and Guiding Star Party applied for registration of political parties at the UEC.

MNA

Public information for remonstrations

The Red Shan (Tailai) and Northern Shan Ethnic Solidarity Party headquartered at No. Dha-1/70-B, Gangaw Street between 40th and 41st streets and 67th and 68th streets in Mahamyaing Ward 1, Mahaaungmye Township, Mandalay Region, registered by the Union Election Commission as a political party under the Article 5 of the Political Parties Registration Law, submitted an application to use its ti-

tle, flag and logo as below on 25-3-2015.

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

Union Election Commission



Flag of Red Shan (Tailai) and Northern Shan Ethnic Solidarity Party



Emblem of Red Shan (Tailai) and Northern Shan Ethnic Solidarity Party

Public information for remonstrations

The Guiding Star Party headquartered at No. 1536, 6th street in Alinyang Ward 1, Bago, Bago Region, registered by the Union Election Commission as a political party under the Article 5 of the Political Parties Registration Law, submitted an application to use its title, flag and logo as below

on 25-3-2015.

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

Union Election Commission



Flag of Guiding Star Party



Emblem of Guiding Star Party

NATIONAL

MYANMAR GAZETTE

NAY PYI TAW, 25 March—The President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has appointed the following persons as heads of service organizations shown against each on probation from the date they assume charge of their duties.

Name	Appointment
(1) Col Nyein Chan Infantry Instructor Command and General Staff College	Director-General International and Inter- nal Affairs Department Ministry of Defence
(2) U Saw Naing Deputy Director-General Labour Department Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security	Director-General Labour Relations Department Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security

UEC chairman receives US professor and students

NAY PYI TAW, 25 March — Chairman U Tin Aye of Union Election Commission received Professor James Fearon and 23 students of international policy studies from Stanford University, the USA, at the UEC office on Wednesday.

At the meeting, the UEC chairman said that the role and responsibilities of the commission are the foundation for democratic transition and the commission successfully held elections in 2010 and 2012.

Political parties, civil society organizations, the media and international organizations are cooperating for the free and fair elections while rules are being amended for transparency of the election process, according to the chairman.

He said that the code of conduct for international observers has been developed and codes of conduct for political parties and the media are being drafted.

The professor and the students raised questions on challenges for 2015 general election, voter education, measures for transparency, campaigning and campaign funds, postponing elections, election monitoring, peace process and its impacts on elections, and the chairman and officials of the UEC re-

sponded to their queries.

In his concluding remarks, the chairman explained the election system, the voting system, collection of voters' list, measures taken for voter training and education by sub-commissions, political parties and CSOs.

Present at the meeting were Secretary U Tin Tun and commission members including U Myint Naing, U Aung Myint, Dr Daw Myint Kyi, U Nyunt Tin, U Win Kyi and U Win Ko.

MNA



Chairman U Tin Aye meets Professor James Fearon and party of international policy studies from Stanford University, USA.—MNA

Malaysia repatriates dozens of Myanmar illegal migrants

NAY PYI TAW, 25 March — Malaysia handed over 102 illegal migrants to Myanmar navy in the third week of this month.

Warship Maha Thiha Thura of Myanmar navy is now returning home,

carrying the immigrants, after taking part in the Langkawi International Maritime and Aerospace Exhibition 2015 (LIMA-2015) held in Langkawi Island from March 17 to 21.

These migrant work-

ers illegally entered Malaysia, and they were kept at detention centres as they have no certificate of identification to be able to return home. The vessel is due to arrive back home on March 29.

Myawady



Vice President U Nyan Tun delivers address at implementation of the Myanmar National Export Strategy.—MNA

Vice President U Nyan Tun delivers speech at...

(from page 1)

strategy, the roadmap for export competitiveness and expansion of export items, was laid down at the first Myanmar Development Cooperation Forum, the vice president added.

The vice president thanked the international bodies, government agencies and private organisations that helped develop a strategic report including the International Trade Centre, the BMZ and the

GIZ of Germany.

The vice president continued that the Myanmar Trade Development Committee has been formed to assess the implementation of the export strategy.

The vice president pointed out that it is an opportune time to implement the export strategy and urged all stakeholders including ministries and organizations to cooperate with one another along the process. In conclusion, the

vice president expressed his hope that national development including poverty reduction, rural development and inclusive growth can be achieved through the export strategy.

After the speech, Union Minister for Commerce U Win Myint explained the implementation of the export strategy and the heads of the international organizations extended their greetings. A memorandum of understanding between

the Ministry of Commerce and the International Trade Centre was signed at the ceremony and the vice president presented certificates of honour to the international organizations.

After the ceremony, the vice president posed for documentary photos with the attendees. —MNA

Union FM sends message of felicitations to Bangladesh

NAY PYI TAW, 26 March — On the occasion of the Independence Day of the People's Republic of Bangladesh which falls on 26 March 2015, U Wunna Maung Lwin, Union Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, has sent a message of felicitation to His Excellency Mr. Abdul Hassan Mahmud Ali, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of Bangladesh.—MNA



Sub-commissions, political parties discuss electoral process



NAY PYI TAW, 25 March— With the aim of holding a free and fair general election in 2015, Dekkhina District election sub-commission held a meeting of political party officials in the district.

Officials from the National Unity Party, Union Solidarity and Development Party, National League for Democracy and other parties discussed electoral tasks and asked questions of sub-commission officials.

Tun Tun Win (Pyinmana)

Solar power illuminates rural areas in Ottarathiri Tsp

NAY PYI TAW, 25 March — Moesway Village in Ottarathiri Township began receiving electricity Tuesday through solar power generation.

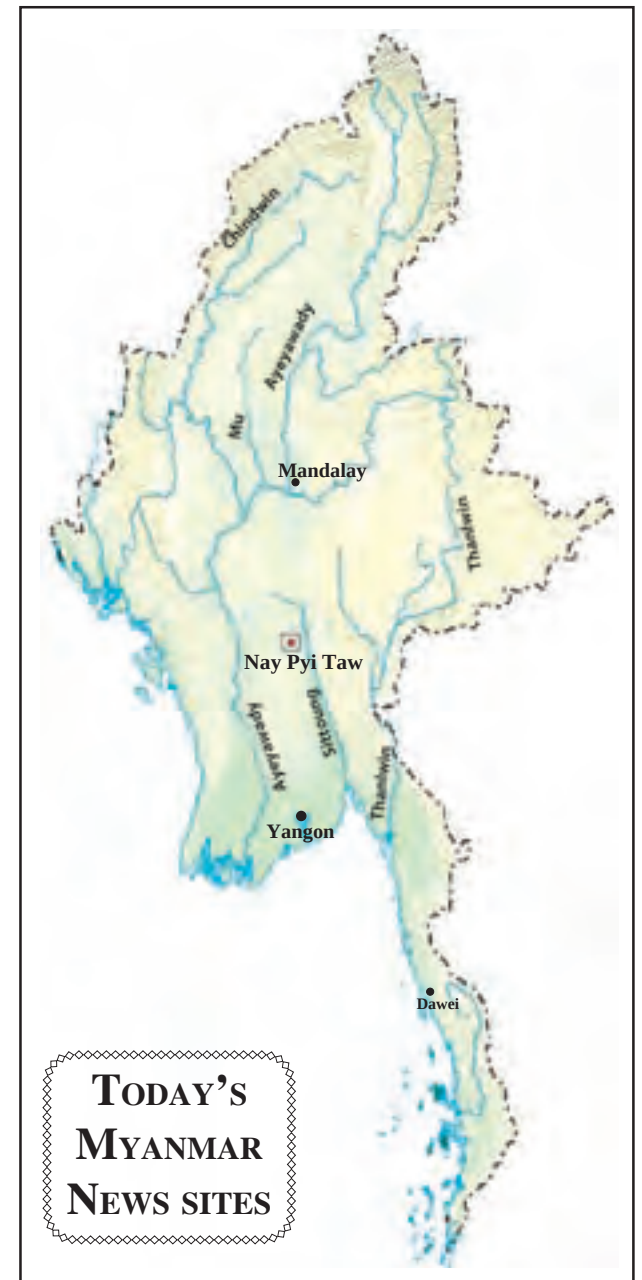
Deputy Chief Engineer U Than Tun Aung of Nay Pyi Taw Council Area and Township Administrator U Myat Soe explained the installation of power infrastructure and its importance for rural development.

The township administrator then handed over solar power equipment to a village official. Nay Pyi Taw Council member U Phone Zaw Han and officials launched supply of electricity in Moesway and Pantin villages.

Nay Pyi Taw Council spent K82.20 million on supply of electricity to

Moesway village-tract in the 2014-15 fiscal year. Innovative Consulting & Technological Services company installed solar panels and

related equipment at 315 houses in Moesway village, 82 houses in Pantin village and 132 houses in Gywaygyo village.—*Shwe Ye Yint*



Authorities issue warning about illegal hormone, drug sales

MANDALAY, 25 March — Work is under way to build housing for squatters under the guidance of the Mandalay Region government, according to the Mandalay City Development Committee.

The committee will construct the housing between No 8 water pumping station and the circular road in Aungmyethazan Township within seven months.

“Construction of houses is aimed at raising the living standard of squatters’ families who are now residing along the bank of Ayeyawady River and removing the squatters’ houses,” joint secretary U Thet Naing Tun of MCDC said.

“As Mandalay is a tourist destination, beautifying the banks of the Ayeyawady River will improve the image of the city.”

Upon completion, MCDC will give priority to families residing along the bank of the Ayeyawady River and squatters to hire the housing apartments. Hiring rates will be designated after completion of buildings.

Over 20 construction companies submitted proposals for the project to the committee. On 22 March, officials drove stakes for the construction project on a 5.5-acre land plot.

The project will involve construction of 14 six-storey buildings and six six-storey buildings with 1,440 apartments in total.

Min Htet Aung (Mandalay Sub-printing House)



YANGON, 25 March — Local authorities met drug store owners in Dala Township on 20 March and warned them about illegal sales of sex hormones and prohibited drugs.

Township Administrator U Ye Win and Commander of Township Police Force Police Major Ye Myint said action will be taken against those who illegally sell sex hormones and related drugs.

Police Captain Khin

Maung Lwin explained the laws and penalties concerning sales of prohibited drugs, while Township medical officer U Hsan Thura Aung spoke about the dangers of the drugs.

The talk was also attended by Yangon Region Hluttaw representative U Htay Shein, Head of Township Development Affairs Committee U Khin Zaw Aung and officials.

Khin Zaw (Mingalar)

Children show skills in contest



MANDALAY, 25 March — Children from pre-primary schools under supervision of Township Maternal and Child Welfare Association joined the first skill contest at the Mandalay Education College hall on Tuesday.

Children from pre-primary schools in townships of Mandalay District and departments concerned participated in presentation of Thingyan songs and dances.

Patron of Mandalay Region MCWSC Daw Myat Ngwe and officials presented gifts to the children.

Tin Maung (Mandalay)

LOCAL NEWS

Winners in religious examinations honoured in Dawei



DAWEI, 25 March — A ceremony to honour Buddhist monks and nuns who passed religious examinations in 2014 took place at Sasana Beikman hall in Dawei, Taninthayi Region, on Tuesday.

Dawei District's deputy commissioner U Thein Aung offered donations to the monks and nuns.

Two monks and three nuns passed the Dhammacariya examination, while another 15 monks and nuns passed examinations at various levels in the 2014 academic year.

Po Shwe Thun (Dawei)

Construction and water supply contribute to development of rural areas



DAWEI, 25 March — In commemoration of the 70th anniversary of the Armed Forces Day, which falls on 27 March 2015, an inter-village concrete road was commissioned into service in conjunction with the launching of water pipelines linking Thayet Hnakhwa and Ottu villages in Thayetchaung Township, Taninthayi Region, on Tuesday morning.

F22 Sunny Company Ltd spent K124.82 million allotted by township authorities on construction of a two-mile-long concrete road as of October 2014.

Kanaung Asia Com-

pany laid 10,600 feet of water pipelines worth some K19.749 million in Ottu village.

More than 5,500 local people will directly benefit from the new road and supply of potable water.

According to the statistics, Thayetchaung Township has spent K975 million on road construction, K834 million on a 635-foot-long concrete bridge, K115 million on sinking 16 wells, K90 million on rural power supply and K8.6 million on construction of toilets in 2014-15 FY.

Po Shwe Thun (Dawei)

Golden umbrella installed at pagoda in Dala Tsp

YANGON, 25 March — A religious umbrella was hoisted atop Thabbyinnyu pagoda in Kyansittha Ward, Dala Township, on Monday, with enshrinement of venerable Buddhist monks.

Well-wisher U Khin Win, wife Daw Nyunt Kyi and family contributed K300 million together with donations from local residents for renovation of the pagoda.

The pagoda is 75 feet high and is encircled by 24 smaller pagodas.

The board of trustees has designated 22nd March for the Buddha Pujaniya ceremony every year.

Khin Zaw (Mingalar)



Thabeikkyin Township receives 25-bed hospital



MANDALAY, 25 March — A new 25-bed hospital opened in Thabeikkyin, Mandalay Region, will greatly improve medical services in the area, Union Minister for Health Dr Than Aung told local residents at an opening ceremony on 23 March. Mandalay Region Minister for Social Affairs Dr Win Hlaing and officials cut a ribbon to open the hospital which was built using K645.5 million allotted by the government.

The union minister in the evening visited Central Women's Hospital, the 500-bed children's hospital and the Mandalay General Hospital, where he met specialists and nurses.

Thiha Ko Ko (Mandalay)

Journalists discuss compiling election handbook

MANDALAY, 25 March — Journalist attended a workshop to compile an election handbook for Myanmar reporters at the Mandalay Region Chambers of Commerce and Industry in Chanayethazan Township on 23 March.

on 23 March.

The workshop, jointly organized by the Myanmar Press Council (Interim) and international media assistance group, was attended by vice chairman of the council U Ko Ko (Sethmu

Tekkatho), secretary U Kyaw Min Swe and executive U Zaw Thet Htwe.

Secretary U Kyaw Min Swe and township reporters in four groups discussed media guidelines.

They focused on public information on elections, responsibility for announcements of political parties and candidates, and the release of election results.

Chairman of Mandalay Region Election Sub-commission U Aung Htut and vice chairman of the council U Ko Ko (Sethmu Tekkatho) reviewed the discussions.

Maung Pyi Thu (Mandalay)



MPT extends its promotions until further notice

YANGON, 25 March — MPT has decided to extend its SweThahar plan and packages after March in response to customer demand.

SweThahar customers can continue to enjoy high speed Internet with a 50% discount, at only 7.5K/MB. They will still be able to get even better rates by purchasing the Internet packages at discounted prices: 400MB at 2,800Ks, 1GB at 6,500Ks and 5GB at 25,000Ks.

The telecom operator now allows all SweThahar users to call 3 MPT mobile numbers for 25k/min, without limitation in the promotion period, and without any subscription fees. To enjoy these competitive rates, customers just have to register their favorite numbers by sending an SMS to 1332, mentioning ADD followed by the phone number. Those who have already used this promotion, previously limited to only 30 days, can do so again.

To receive the promotion rates, it is necessary to be on SweThahar. Those who have already subscribed to SweThahar will simply continue getting discounted rates. For the others, they simply need to send "SWE" to 1332. Subscription to the SweThahar plan is free and it is possible to unsubscribe at any point in time.

For more information, visit www.mpt.com.mm or www.facebook.com/mptofficialpage.—GNLM

Thousands line Singapore's streets to pay respect to Lee Kuan Yew

SINGAPORE, 25 March — Thousands of people lined Singapore's streets on Wednesday as a gun carriage took the casket of Lee Kuan Yew, the founding father of modern Singapore, to Parliament House for public viewing.

Lee died on Monday, aged 91.

Chants of "Lee Kuan Yew" rang out from the crowd as the carriage entered the colonnaded Parliament House in the heart of the city-state's business district, where his body will lie in state until Saturday. The funeral is on Sunday.

The casket, wrapped in the Singaporean flag, was brought from the Istana palace, where the

Singapore prime minister's office is located and the Lee family held a private wake for the last two days. Bagpipers played "Auld Lang Syne" as the procession set off.

Lee, Singapore's first Prime Minister, is credited with transforming the city-state from a British colonial outpost into one of the world's wealthiest nations on a per capita basis with a strong, pervasive role for the state and little patience for dissent.

"Many people found he was a bit stern. But in order to lead, you have to be a little stern," said Mariam Mohammed, 52, who was in the line outside Parliament House with her family. The queue



People watch as a gun carriage conveys the body of the late first Prime Minister of Singapore Lee Kuan Yew, from the Istana to the Parliament House, where he will lie in state until Saturday in Singapore on 25 March, 2015. —REUTERS

of people waiting to enter stretched for about 2 km (over a mile), across a bridge on the nearby Singapore River and into the

Boat Quay area.

A florist at the closest subway stop was offering free flowers to people on their way to the viewing.

"This is the last opportunity," Mohammed said. "I would love to have met him in person to thank him personally. But I hope he knows we are grateful for what he has done."

The hour-long procession from the Istana to Parliament House was organized with Singapore's customary attention to detail. Information about road closures was detailed through social media and the Land Transport Authority's website, with minimal disruptions to traffic outside the procession area.

Soldiers wearing white shirts and black arm-bands were managing the crowd — keeping the line in order and passing out

bottled water. Portable toilets were also put in place.

Hundreds of people came out of their offices to watch live television coverage of the procession on a giant screen set up in a square in the central business district.

"I think it's important for my son to understand the country's history, the history of somebody who started the country and brought it to today," said Nadim van der Ros, a 37-year-old businessman and husband of a popular singer. He and his two-and-a-half year old son had been in line outside parliament for an hour.

"We will talk about it when he is older and can understand it."—Reuters

Indonesian tycoon sues government to stop key opposition party defecting to president

JAKARTA, 25 March — Indonesian tycoon Aburizal Bakrie is suing the government in a bid to keep control of the country's biggest opposition party and prevent it defecting to President Joko Widodo's minority coalition.

The opposition Golkar party controls 14 percent of parliamentary seats and would give Joko's coalition control of over half the parliament, easing fears of political gridlock in Southeast Asia's largest economy.

Bakrie, the patriarch of the sprawling family-owned Bakrie Group conglomerate, has filed a legal challenge

against last week's ministerial decree that gave the Golkar chairmanship to a rival faction sympathetic to the president.

"We have lodged a complaint against the Ministry of Law and Human Rights, whose decision in favour of the other faction is contrary to the principles of good governance," Bakrie's lawyer Yusril Mahendra told Reuters.

He added that Bakrie should remain the chairman of Golkar, which backed losing presidential candidate Prabowo Subianto in last year's election, until a verdict was announced.

A law ministry spokesman said the government, which intervened after being asked by Golkar to resolve months of political infighting, would see the legal process through.

He declined to say when the ministerial decree would come into effect.

Agung Laksono, who is set to replace Bakrie if he loses his lawsuit, told local media last week the party planned to join Widodo's coalition without expecting cabinet seats in return.

Vice President Jusuf Kalla told Reuters last week the government was planning a cabinet reshuffle in

the next month, but declined to comment on whether Golkar would be included in the new line-up.

Analysts say Widodo will face pressure to include Golkar, the political vehicle of former authoritarian ruler Suharto, in any new cabinet.

"Jokowi already has patrons to deal with in his coalition and the addition of Golkar would mean another patron and he has to balance power between them," said political analyst Tobias Basuki, using the president's nickname.

"It could potentially create new problems for (Widodo)."—Reuters

China invites Abe to WWII commemoration in Beijing

TOKYO, 25 March — China has invited Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe to attend a ceremony in Beijing in September to mark the 70th anniversary of the end of World War II, a Japanese government source said on Wednesday.

Since the ceremony on China's 3 September "victory against Japan" day is slated to include a military parade, Abe is cautious about attending it, the source said.

Beijing has contacted "all relevant countries" to gauge their leaders' interest in attending the event, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying said on Tuesday at a regular press briefing, without clarifying whether Japan was included.

Japan formally surrendered on 2 September, 1945 to the Allied powers



Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe

with a signing ceremony aboard the US battleship Missouri in Tokyo Bay.

At a Press conference on Wednesday in Tokyo Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga declined to comment on whether Abe received an invitation.

"It is extremely important to show a stance to tackle common challenges faced by the international community in a future-oriented manner...We have conveyed Japan's views on such events," said the top government spokesman.

Kyodo News

Thai PM Prayuth warns media, says has power to execute reporters

BANGKOK, 25 March — Thai junta leader Prayuth Chan-ocha lashed out at journalists on Wednesday, saying he would "probably just execute" those who did "not report the truth", in the latest outburst aimed at Thailand's media.

Last month Prayuth said he had the power to shut down news outlets. On Wednesday, he took an even harsher line.

"We'll probably just execute them," said Prayuth, without a trace of a smile, when asked by reporters how the government would deal with those that do not adhere to the official line.

"You don't have to support the government, but you should report the truth," the former army chief said, telling reporters to write

in a way that bolsters national reconciliation in the kingdom. Prayuth, who is also prime minister, heads the ruling junta or National Council for Peace and Order. He toppled the government of Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra in a coup last May, that followed months of protests aimed at ousting Yingluck.

Known for his abrupt manner and impulsive remarks, Prayuth launched a crack down on dissenters after seizing power in May. He has said Thailand is not ready to lift martial law, which gives the army sweeping powers, including for arrest and detention.

In January the junta forced a German foundation to cancel a forum on press freedom saying Thailand



Thailand's Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha

was at a sensitive juncture. Since taking power, the junta has made full use of martial law, which also bans all political gatherings.

Prayuth was particularly critical of the Thai-language *Matichon* daily newspaper, accusing the paper of siding with ousted former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra and his allies.

"Don't think I don't know that your writing is pro the previous administration," he told a *Matichon* reporter shortly before boarding a plane to Brunei. "The previous Interior Ministry bought many advertising spaces from you."

Since the army toppled Thaksin, Yingluck's brother, in a previous coup in 2006, Thailand has been sharply divided. Thaksin support comes largely from the rural and urban working class, but traditional establishment in the capital and the south loathe Thaksin and accuse him of nepotism, cronyism and republican leanings, accusations he denies.

Shortly after taking power Prayuth launched a year-long road map aimed at reconciling Thais.—Reuters

Two Indian Navy officers missing after aircraft crash

NEW DELHI, 25 March — Two Indian Navy officers have gone missing after a surveillance aircraft they were on crashed into the sea off the coast of Karnataka, navy officials said on Wednesday.

The pilot of the ill-fated aircraft was reportedly rescued by local fishermen, and a search is on to find the two missing.

Indian Navy spokes-

man Capt DK Sharma said in New Delhi on Wednesday morning that the aircraft was on a routine training sortie when it suddenly crashed into the sea the previous night.

While some debris has been found, the main wreck has yet to be located and is presumed to have sunk to the seabed, *The Times of India* daily quoted sources as saying.

Kyodo News

WORLD

Japan's largest helicopter destroyer Izumo goes into service

TOKYO, 25 March — Japan's Maritime Self-Defence Force commissioned its largest ever helicopter-carrying destroyer *Izumo* on Wednesday, as it strengthens its maritime defence around the nation's southwestern remote islands.

The 19,500-ton destroyer, measuring 248 metres in length and 38 metres in width, allows five helicopters to take off and land simultaneously. It can also load MV-22 Osprey transport aircraft to be purchased by the Ground Self-Defence Force.

A ceremony was held at Japan Marine United

Corp's factory in Yokohama, Kanagawa Prefecture to celebrate the commissioning of the destroyer, built at a cost of around 120 billion yen (\$1 billion).

The MSDF has smaller destroyers *Hyuga* and *Ise* in service, both with a standard displacement of 13,950 tons. But *Izumo*'s deck is about 50 metres longer than the other two, and the destroyer can provide fuel to other ships. Another *Izumo*-type destroyer is expected to go into service in 2017.

Japan is aiming to strengthen the integrated operations of its air, ground, and maritime forces,

with *Izumo* likely to serve as a command center with its highly advanced communication functions in times of emergencies and natural disasters.

Izumo joined the fleet at a time Japan and China are seeking to avoid unwanted clashes at sea by launching a crisis management mechanism.

Chinese patrol ships have repeatedly entered territorial waters around the Japanese-administered Senkaku Islands in the East China Sea. China also claims the uninhabited islets.

Under the pacifist Constitution, Japan has taken



Photo taken on 25 March, 2015, from a Kyodo News helicopter shows the Japanese Maritime Self-Defence Force's largest ever helicopter-carrying destroyer, the *Izumo*, at the port of Yokohama. The 19,500-ton destroyer, measuring 248 metres in length and 38 metres in width, allows five helicopters to take off and land simultaneously.

KYODO NEWS

the view that it cannot possess aircraft carriers.

The MSDF does not

regard the newest destroyer *Izumo* as an aircraft vessel, given that its flight deck

does not allow for warplanes to take off and land.

Kyodo News

Investigators seek clues into why jet ploughed into French mountainside



Rescue helicopters from the French Securite Civile and the Air Force are seen in front of the French Alps during a rescue operation near to the crash site of an Airbus A320, near Seyne-les-Alpes on 24 March, 2015. —REUTERS

SEYNE-LES-ALPES, (France) 25 March — French investigators will sift through wreckage on Wednesday for clues into why a German Airbus jet ploughed into an Alpine mountainside, killing all 150 people on board including 16 schoolchildren returning from an exchange trip to Spain.

The A320 jet operated by Lufthansa's (LHAG.DE) Germanwings budget airline was obliterated when it went down in a rugged area of ravines on Tuesday while flying over France en route

to Duesseldorf from Barcelona. No distress call was received from the aircraft, but France said one of the two "black box" flight recorders had been recovered from the site 2,000 metres (6,000 feet) above sea level. A person familiar with the recovery effort told *Reuters* that this was the cockpit voice recorder. Investigators will also need the other black box which records flight data, information that is essential for probing air accidents.

Civil aviation investigators from France's Bu-

reau d'Enquetes et d'Analyses (BEA) are expected to hold a news conference on Wednesday afternoon.

In Washington, the White House said the crash did not appear to have been caused by a terrorist attack. Lufthansa said it was working on the assumption that the tragedy had been an accident, adding that any other theory would be speculation. French President Francois Hollande will visit the area about 100 km (65 miles) north of the Riviera city of Nice on Wednesday along with German Chan-

cellor Angela Merkel and Spanish Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy.

Germanwings believed 67 Germans had been on the flight and Spain's deputy prime minister said 45 passengers had Spanish names. One Belgian was also aboard. Australian Foreign Minister Julie Bishop confirmed two Australian citizens had died, a mother and her adult son from the state of Victoria.

British Foreign Secretary Philip Hammond said in a statement that it was likely some British nationals were on board the flight. He said checks were still being made on passenger information.

Also among the victims were 16 teenagers and two teachers from the Joseph-Koenig-Gymnasium high school in the town of Haltern am See in northwest Germany.

They were on their way home after a week-long Spanish exchange programme near Barcelona. It was a reciprocal visit after 12 Spanish students spent a week at their school in December.

Reuters

S Koreans visit joint industrial zone in North to survey health care

SEOUL, 25 March — A group of South Korean public health experts on Wednesday crossed the border and entered North Korea for a day-trip to a joint industrial zone in Kaesong to check the health care conditions there, South Korea's Unification Ministry spokesman said.

Among the nine-member group, whose visit to the North has been approved by both Koreas, are some members of the Presidential Committee for Unification Preparation, Lim Byeong Cheol said during a Press briefing.

"The purpose of their visit is to survey public health care and draw plans to offer aid," Lim said. They will return to South Korea later Wednesday.

Lim said he was not aware whether North Korea knew that some visitors belong to the national unification committee.

He said the committee members in the group are on a subcommittee on social and cultural affairs in North Korea.

The joint industrial zone, launched in 2004 with a combination of the North's cheap labour and the South's capital and technology, is the key source of revenue for North Korea.

Earlier this month, North Korea denounced South Korea for alleged plans to unify the two Koreas through absorption, accused the presidential committee of looking into absorption as an option and demanded the disbandment of the committee.

The North's reaction came after Chung Jong Wook, a vice chairman of the committee, was quoted as saying by a local daily, "There are many road maps on the process to reunification, and our committee has a team dedicated to non-consensual unification or unification of the system."

North Korea has shown fierce opposition to the idea of unification through absorption by the South or one that follows a collapse of the North Korean regime.

Kyodo News

Bangladesh constructs hundreds of new disaster resilient structures in cyclone prone districts

DHAKA, 25 March — Bangladesh has been constructing hundreds of new disaster resilient structures in the country's cyclone prone coastal districts in collaboration with the World Bank.

The World Bank has been supporting the Bangladeshi government through a project to restore the livelihoods of people affected by the Cyclone Sidr (2007) and Cyclone Alia (2009), and to build long-term disaster preparedness.

The Emergency 2007 Cyclone Recovery and Restoration Project (ECRRP) has been constructing new

cyclone shelters, repairing existing shelters and building shelter access roads in cyclone prone areas.

The Washington-based lender in a statement on Wednesday, ECRRP has also been repairing embankments, making peoples' lives and livelihoods safer and more resilient.

In addition, the project has provided agricultural support to farmers through the provision of improved seeds, agricultural tools, livestock, fish fingerlings, household silos and hands on training on the use of such technology, it said. The project is also supporting the preparation of the

first phase of a fifteen year government programme for disaster risk reduction, it added.

According to the statement, ECRRP has already constructed 136 new multipurpose disaster shelters that double up as primary schools during non-emergency situations. Sixty-five more new shelters will be completed by June 2015.

The target is to construct a total of 330 new shelters by the end of 2017. The project has completed the rehabilitation of 241 existing shelters, out of a target of 460 shelters to be repaired by 2017, it said.—Xinhua

PERSPECTIVES

Thursday, 26 March, 2015

Each coin has two faces

By Aung Khin

These days, there are few communities existing in isolation from global changes and modern, mainstream life. Within a single community, it is impossible for an individual to exist in total isolation. Their actions will always impact others, whether directly or indirectly.

The interrelated people in a community feel the effects from other actions of others. As with the heat emitted from a fire or the cool temperature of ice, it is impossible to completely ignore these effects.

When one face of a coin is disfigured, it affects the value of the entire coin, even if the opposite face remains undamaged. When one man uses a position of power to insult or attacks another, he may be criticised for his abusive actions.

Therefore every action should be carried out wisely. Think twice before doing anything rash. For example, accidents may occur when road users or drivers show reckless disregard for their own safety.

People sometimes act impulsively, with negative results. Trying to solve a problem overnight

may make things worse. Urgency, lack of pre-meditation and lack of perseverance signify a lack of self-control.

The faces of a coin may be opposites, but they are both part of the same whole. If the damage to one side is bad enough, it will render the entire coin unusable.

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Bribery and Corruption

U Khin Maung (A retired diplomat)

Bribery and corruption are, in my views two sides of the same coin. Bribery and corruption, these two facts or ideas are very much correlative, that is to say, they are closely related to or depend on another fact or idea. For example, a bribe-giver, as an accomplice, aids and abets a corrupt officials to commit corruption and the corrupt officials expects or demands and take a bribe from a person, in return for a favouritism, the act of unfairly treating him better than others.

And now, the question is, what does it tend to corrupt? On this point, I believe, I can't do any better, than to quote what the scholars have said. They are reproduced and likely see below:

"Power tends to cor-

rupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely" "Lord Acton" Historical essays.

"The greater the power, the greater dangerous the abuse," "Edmund Burke", in a speech delivered to the House of Commons, U.K

"Corruption is a global shame and a sin against good manners and character, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, UNSG.

So, in support of all these scholarly views, I, as a lay-man, would like to say that, corruption is, without a shadow of a doubt, a crime, a shame and a sin. In a much better definition, Professor Syed Hussein Alatas has pointed out that "the association of corruption and crime is a well-known phenomenon"

Corruption; does it mean only bribe-taking? Well, I don't think so, I am

afraid. From the legal point of view, corruption also means maladministration of justice mismanagement of affairs, prejudice, bias, and wrong-doing etc. And mismanagement, in a sense, means, failure to do something that ought to be done and committing an act, which ought not to be done. Well now, before tackling, what factors bring about prejudice and bias, I think, we should see their meanings, Prejudice means an unreasonable dislike of or preference for a person, group or custom etc. And, bias means a strong feeling in favour of or against one group of people or one side in an argument. In our culture, there are four kinds of prejudice and bias. Prejudice and bias, first, arising from emotional issue, or wish, second, arising from anger, third, arising from fear, and fourth, arising from ignorance.

Under the old adminis-

tration system, we, B.C.S-Burma civil service personnel, were entrusted and honoured with magisterial powers, by virtue of our posts and by virtue of experience and expertise. While I was serving as a subdivisional officer, I was empowered and entrusted with special magisterial powers. Our superior officers, such as, the district magistrates and the district and sessions judges frequently advised and, I would like to say, taught and guided all the subordinate judges and magistrates, not to meet or talk exclusively with a client or a party to a dispute, in his or her chamber, or in any place privately. Our superior judges and magistrates explained to all of us that the other client or the other party might misunderstand us. We were taught and guided that a magistrate or a judge should bear in mind that "it is not enough that justice is done but justice

must be seen to have been done". And to win the hearts and minds of the people we were serving a judge or a magistrate should always go on learning, so as to be entitled to be addressed as "the learned judge", "the learned magistrate". Learning, in this context, means laws, supreme court's instructions, Supreme Court's rulings must be read and studied in earnest, and also learning anything that is worth it for the improvement and expansion of legal education. After all, no educative process, legal or whatsoever, is ever the end; it is always the beginning of more education, more learning, more living".

I think, we have already had a law, entitled "suppression of bribery and corruption act, and our successive governments have suppressed and treated it as

a shame, sin, crime and evil. And, as living laws are necessary in this, living world, I am sure, our authorities concerned have already taken necessary actions to review and revise of if necessary, to amend that "suppression of bribery and corruption act." so as to be in line with the changing world.

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The Author is a retired Department Director-General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Knowledge and Wisdom

Tin Shein
CEO, MICPA

Before we start to talk about knowledge and wisdom, it will be necessary for us to have a clear idea of what they are all about. To my way of thinking, knowledge is what we all know about things, physical and spiritual, either by learning, experience or research. The Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English defines knowledge as the information, skills, and understanding you have gained through learning or experience. Wisdom may be defined as a high mental capacity to weigh all pros and cons of any matter or issue without any partiality, on which an

intelligent and wise decision or judgment can be found.

Knowledge itself may be classified into three kinds: general knowledge and scientific knowledge. General knowledge is the information we have acquired about general matters through education or experience to enable us to carry on the day-to-day business of living. Of course, general knowledge may comprise knowledge concerning professions, such as law, accounting, medicine, computing, engineering, etc. This kind of specialized knowledge may be gained by undergoing respective courses of study at the universities and other higher-learning institutes. To my way of thinking, all

this knowledge is geared to providing us with the means of making our livelihood comfortably throughout our lives. It will also save us much of the trouble of struggling the hard way against many odds to maintain a decent standard of living. It need not be overemphasized that it is most important for young men in the first period of their life to try their best to acquire the kind of professional knowledge that will equip them to land good high-paying jobs, thereby enabling them to enjoy high standards of living when they enter the second period of their life spanning from the age of 25 to 50 years.

On the other hand, there is scientific knowledge which is the understanding we have developed about specific matters or

nature through enquiry by scientific means or through research. Therefore, it is obvious that it takes greater efforts and more time to acquire scientific knowledge than general knowledge which we can easily pick up while going about our daily business or reading all the books under the sun on various subjects. There is no doubt that scientific knowledge is of far greater importance to us than general knowledge. The reason why is not far to seek. Scientific knowledge has enabled us to enjoy higher living standards than our forefathers of by-gone days. The modern facilities we now possess in the way of motorcars, commercial jet planes, high-speed trains, ships, and a wide range of consumer goods would never be possible without scientific

knowledge. Unless we had had these modern facilities, we would have never risen above the level of stone-age people, struggling hard for our living by hunting and fishing. It would be very difficult to travel from one country to another across the vast expenses of the oceans. Even if it were possible, it would have taken months to cross the oceans by ship, instead of hours we now spend to travel by air to other countries around the world. Also advances in medical sciences have wiped out or minimized the dangers of killer diseases like malaria, plague, cancer, heart disease, etc. Thanks to these scientific advances in medicine, our present life span has been stretched to as long as 75 years of age on the average.

But here a note of cau-

tion needs to be struck. Don't praise scientific knowledge sky high. Why? Because it has its own negative side. As we all know, it has created a wide range of terrible destructive weapons to the detriment of the human race. To top it all, over the years scientists have developed the ultimate weapons of mass destruction—the hydrogen and neutron bombs—which can wipe out the whole human race off the surface of the earth, and under the shadow of which all mankind has now to live fearfully. Aside from those terrible mega bombs, all sorts of conventional arms have been developed by the armaments industries of the advanced countries and they find their way into the hands of racial or religious groups who are in (See page 9)

Vice-Senior General Soe Win views dressed rehearsal of military parade



Vice-Senior General Soe Win views life boat to be displayed at 70th Anniversary Armed Forces Day parade.—MYAWADY

NAY PYI TAW, 25 March — Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Soe Win inspected dressed rehearsal of military columns at the parade for the 70th Anniversary of Armed Forces Day at Nay Pyi Taw Parade Ground, here, on Wednesday.

The vice-senior gen-

eral and party viewed participation of military servicemen from five columns in the dressed rehearsal parade led by Parade Commander Brig-Gen Phone Myat.—Myawady

MRTV (News Channel), Myanmar Radio to broadcast Armed Forces Day parade live

NAY PYI TAW, 25 March — MRTV (News Channel) and Myanmar Radio will broadcast live the ceremony to mark the 70th Anniversary of Armed Forces Day and parade of military columns from

the Nay Pyi Taw parade ground as of 5 am on 27 March.

GNLM

13th Senior ASEAN Officials Responsible for Information Meeting held in Ngwehsaung

NAY PYI TAW, 25 March — The 13th Senior ASEAN Officials Responsible for Information Meeting-13th SOMRI was held at Ngwehsaung Yacht Club and Resort in Ayeyawady Region on Wednesday.

Present at the meeting were Union Minister for Information U Ye Htut, Ayeyawady Region Security and Border Affairs Minister Col Maung Maung Win, Region Development Affairs Minister U Kyaw Win Nang, senior information officials from ASEAN countries and delegates and guests.

The meeting commenced with the ASEAN Anthem before saluting the late first Singapore Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew, one of the founding leaders of the ASEAN.

Then, Union Minister for Information U Ye Htut delivered an opening speech and posed for documentary photos with the senior information officials from ASEAN countries.

The meeting focused on Post-2015 Vision of the ASEAN Community, the draft for 2025 Vision of the ASEAN Community, time-

frame for strategic plans between 2016 and 2025 and the ASEAN Communication Master Plan.

In the afternoon, the COCI report and other reports of information sub-committee and three working groups were submitted at the meeting. Participants also discussed ASEAN COCI reform, ASEAN-China Cooperation through Information and Media and cooperation with ASEAN plus 3 countries.

The meeting continues tomorrow.—MNA



The plenary session 3 of 13th Senior ASEAN Officials Responsible for Information Meeting in progress.—MNA

Sepak Takraw tournament aims to unearth new talent

By Khaing Thanda Lwin

YANGON, 25 March — The Myanmar Sepak Takraw Federation is holding a week-long tournament from 30 March with the aim of finding the country's next crop of professional players, the governing body's general secretary U Kyaw Zin Moe said Wednesday.

The federation is organising the Sepak Takraw 4TV Cup in cooperation with the Ministry of Sports and media entertainment

company Forever Group.

The tournament includes two categories—men's open and men's novice. U Kyaw Zin Moe said athletes with no international competition experience may participate in the open class, while teams comprised of players under 16 should enter the novice class.

The winning team in the open class will be awarded K700,000 and the

novice winner K500,000, advisor U Zaw Thet Htwe of For Sports Channels said, with group matches and round-robin matches to be held at the Myanmar Sepak Takraw Federation's courts.

Plans are underway to hold Sepak Takraw matches each year, aiming to develop athletes for both national and international levels, he said.

Teams wishing to enter must send applications to the federation's office in

Thuwunna Township by 27 March.

U Zaw Thet Htwe said, "We expect over 100 teams to register within the remaining days".

Some 50 teams have already registered to participate in the tournament.

Played throughout Southeast Asia, Sepak Takraw is one of the most popular sports in Myanmar. The sport uses a rattan ball, with players using their feet, knees, chest, and head to control the ball.—GNLM

Access to finance, greater . . .

(from page 1)

providing an efficient regulatory system, while encouraging and facilitating individual creativity.

The report also noted that consistent implementation of laws and regulations, as well as improving transparency and disclosure are equally important to the reform process. "The government is fully committed to engaging the business community in shaping business-friendly laws and regulations through regular and coordinated public-private

dialogues," said U Tin Nang Thein, Union Minister at the President's Office.

The report is helpful in identifying and prioritizing a common set of issues encountering the private sector, the Union minister added.

Supported by the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID), the World Bank Group compiled the report in close collaboration with the Myanmar's Ministry of National Planning and Economic Development.

GNLM

Knowledge and Wisdom...

(from page 8)

conflicts with one another through the arms merchants, who are out to exploit for their own economic benefit the unstable situations of the regions where armed or racial conflicts are being waged relentlessly every day. All these are the outcome of the pursuit of scien-

tific knowledge.

It won't be wrong to say that there has been a tremendous increase in knowledge, especially in the field of science, down through the centuries. However, no such parallel increase in wisdom has been observed. The reason why is not far to seek. Think of the past two

World Wars mankind has gone through as well as small wars being fought one nation against another, to say nothing of armed clashes between one racial group and another all over the world. If only mankind had possessed enough wisdom and applied it appropriately, the world wars and armed clashes and conflicts that have brought nothing but

much misery and suffering to the people could have been avoided, thereby saving millions of lives and properties. Now wisdom has a crucial role to play in this turbulent world. It is up to us to use wisdom intelligently to make decisions on whether what scientific knowledge has created should be used or not be used in the interests of man-

kind. If we make a wrong decision, the consequences will be too terrible. If some lunatics were to use the hydrogen bomb for some political or religious purpose, our civilization that has been built up down through the ages would have been wiped off from the surface of this earth in a very short time, leaving nothing behind, men or animals alive.

Do we really want to have such a thing to happen to us? Of course, we don't. Last but not least, I would like to remind you of one of our Myanmar sayings in this regard: "Fate governs the ever-changing patterns of our fortune, while longevity of life depends on wisdom." What a beautiful Myanmar saying for us to keep in mind and practice it in life!

Obama slows withdrawal of US troops in Afghanistan



US President Barack Obama (R) and Afghanistan President Ashraf Ghani address a joint news conference in the East Room of the White House in Washington on 24 March, 2015.

REUTERS

WASHINGTON, 25 March — President Barack Obama on Tuesday granted Afghan requests to slow the drawdown of US troops from Afghanistan and said he would maintain a force of 9,800 through the end of 2015 while sticking to a 2017 exit plan.

Capping a day of VIP treatment for Afghan President Ashraf Ghani at the White House, Obama said the US force would be kept at its current strength to train and assist Afghan forces, who took over responsibility for the fight against Taliban and other Islamic militants at the start of the year. Obama said the pace of the US troop reduction in 2016 would be established later this year and the goal remained to consolidate US forces in the country in a presence at the Kabul embassy at the end of 2016.

Under a previous plan US forces were to have been cut to about half of the current level of just under 10,000 by the end of 2015, but US officials said improved relations with Afghan leaders contributed to a revision of the plan.

"It was my assessment as commander in chief that it made sense for us to provide a few extra months for us to be able to help on things like logistics," Obama said during a joint news conference with Ghani at the White House.

"The date for us to have completed our drawdown will not change," he said. "Providing this additional timeframe during this fighting season for us to be able to help the Afghan security forces succeed is well worth it." A senior US official told *Reuters* last week the US military bases in Kandahar and Jalalabad were likely to remain open beyond the end of 2015.

Since arriving on Sunday, Ghani has been feted by the Obama administration and is due to address Congress on Wednesday. The welcome contrasts sharply with frosty relations that developed between Washington and Ghani's predecessor Hamid Karzai.

Ghani has repeatedly expressed gratitude to the American military and at the White House spoke about meeting the widow of Major General Harold Greene, the highest-ranking US officer killed during the 13 years Americans fought in Afghanistan. "The 2,215 Americans that have died, must not die in vain. They must leave behind a legacy of a stable Afghanistan," Ghani said.—*Reuters*

EU, Cuba to speed up talks, seek deal by end of 2015

HAVANA, 25 March — The European Union and Cuba agreed to speed up the pace of talks on improving bilateral relations, hoping to reach the basics of a deal by the end of 2015, EU foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini said on Tuesday.

The EU and Cuba began negotiations in April last year to rewrite their bilateral political agreement, part of a deepening of ties since the 28-nation bloc lifted diplomatic sanctions in 2008.

But they only managed three meetings in 11 months, prompting the Europeans to suggest a quicker pace, which the Cubans agreed to, Mogherini told reporters in Havana after meeting with Cuban President Raul Castro and other high-ranking officials.

She called the pace of progress "slow" but said it was gaining "political momentum."

"We decided today to speed up the rhythm of our negotiations, hopefully to manage to finalise the framework of our dialogue and agreement by the end



The European Union's Foreign Policy Chief, Federica Mogherini, speaks at a news conference in Havana on 24 March, 2015.

REUTERS

of this year," Mogherini told reporters.

Cuban Foreign Minister Bruno Rodriguez is due to visit Mogherini in Brussels on 22 April. Like Mogherini's trip to Havana, that meeting will fall outside of formal negotiations. Between now and then they will also see each other at the Summit of the Americas set for 10-11 April in Panama, to which both Cuba and the EU are invited for the first time. In addition, Cuban officials will attend a summit of European and Latin American leaders scheduled for June in Brussels.

With so many chances

to talk inside and outside the formal negotiations, European officials said they were hopeful of a deal by year-end, though Cuba had not committed to that goal. Mogherini declined to assess blame for the pace, attributing part of the delay to her taking office in November.

In the meantime Cuba began its sudden engagement with the United States, as the former adversaries announced in December they would restore diplomatic relations.

The United States and Cuba quickly arranged high-level meetings in Havana and Washington, while EU-Cuba talks were postponed twice.

Though not as severe as the open conflict between the United States and Cuba, Europe's relations with the Caribbean island have been strained through the years.

A year ago the EU agreed to replace its Cuba policy known as the common position, which placed a priority on democratic reforms and improved human rights in Cuba.—*Reuters*

Hungary reaches deal on Russian nuclear fuel supply with Euratom

BUDAPEST, 25 March — Hungary has reached an agreement with the Euratom Supply Agency (ESA) regarding Russia's planned supply of nuclear fuel for the country's Paks power plant, the prime minister's chief of staff, Janos Lazar, told national news agency *MTI* late on Tuesday.

The European Commission will also soon approve the fuel agreement, Lazar said after talks in Brussels with the EU's Commissioner for Climate and Energy, Miguel Arias Canete. Under the agree-



A general view of the Paks nuclear power plant reactor unit number four building in Paks, 120 km (75 miles) east of Budapest on 21 March, 2011.—REUTERS

ment, Russia will supply fuel for the plant for the first 10 years, Lazar said.

Last year, Hungary selected Russia's Rosatom to build two nuclear power blocks of 1,200 megawatts each at its Paks power plant, financed partly by a favourably priced Russian loan worth 10 billion euros.

"Hungary had accepted the concerns of the European Commission, and we will settle the fuel supply deal for the Paks nuclear plant based on the Finnish model," Lazar was cited by *MTI* as saying.

Lazar said the solution was also acceptable to Russia. Under the original deal signed with Moscow in January 2014, Russia would have supplied fuel for the new reactors in Paks for 20 years. The Fennovoima reactor in northern Finland, which will be supplied and fueled by Rosatom, is expected to begin output in 2024. Fennovoima will acquire the nuclear fuel from TVEL, which belongs to the Rosatom Group.

The deal with Russia signed drew criticism that Hungary was pulling closer

to Russia at a time when the European Union was putting pressure on Moscow to defuse a deepening conflict with Ukraine.

The Euratom Supply Agency charged with nuclear fuel supply across the EU had sought changes to the Paks supply deal, asking that players other than Russians be allowed to ship fuel to the plant in the future, the Hungarian government said this month.

The EU is also examining whether the Paks project meets European Union rules on state aid.—*Reuters*

Radicals burn flags of NATO, USA, EU and Kosovo

BELGRADE, 25 March — Supporters of the opposition Serbian Radical Party (SRS) staged a protest in front of the destroyed building of the General Staff of the Serbian Armed Forces in downtown Belgrade on Tuesday to mark the 16th anniversary of the 1999 NATO bombing and on this occasion, they set on fire the flags of NATO, EU and independent Kosovo unilaterally pro-

claimed by ethnic Albanians. SRS leader Vojislav Seselj stated that radicals have gathered on Tuesday to express their refusal to reconcile with criminal members of the NATO and other countries which took part in the bombing of Serbia and say no to Serbia's EU accession and the incumbent regime.

He underscored that Serbia will not join the NATO and called on SRS members to throw stones,

eggs and rotten tomatoes at NATO soldiers wherever and whenever they meet them. Seselj said that the goal of SRS is to liberate Kosovo and Republic of Srpska Krajina, preserve Republika Srpska and restore Montenegro to a united Serbian state.

SRS deputy leader Nemanja Sarovic said that the only exit for Serbia lies in a radical change of policy and a U-turn to Russia.

Tanjug

Supporters of the opposition Serbian Radical Party burn flags of NATO, USA, EU and Kosovo in front of the destroyed building of the General Staff of the Serbian Armed Forces in downtown Belgrade on 24 March, 2015.

TANJUG



Saudi Arabia building up military near Yemen border

WASHINGTON, 25 March — Saudi Arabia is moving heavy military equipment including artillery to areas near its border with Yemen, US officials said on Tuesday, raising the risk that the Middle East's top oil power will be drawn into the worsening Yemeni conflict.

The buildup follows a southward advance by Iranian-backed Houthi Shi'ite militants who took control of the capital Sanaa in September and seized the central city of Taiz at the weekend as they move closer to the new southern base of US-supported President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi.

The slide towards war in Yemen has made the country a crucial front in Saudi Arabia's region-wide rivalry with Iran, which Riyadh accuses of sowing sectarian strife through its support for the Houthis.

The conflict risks spiraling into a proxy war with Shi'ite Iran backing the Houthis, whose leaders adhere to the Zaydi sect of Shi'ite Islam, and Saudi Arabia and the other regional Sunni Muslim monarchies backing Hadi.

The armour and artillery being moved by Saudi Arabia could be used for offensive or defensive purposes, two US government sources said. Two other US officials said the build-up



Tanks perform during Saudi security forces' Abdullah's Sword military drill in Hafar Al-Batin, near the border with Kuwait on 29 April, 2014.—REUTERS

appeared to be defensive.

One US government source described the size of the Saudi buildup on Yemen's border as "significant" and said the Saudis could be preparing air strikes to defend Hadi if the Houthis attack his refuge in the southern seaport of Aden.

Another US official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said Washington had acquired intelligence about the Saudi build-up. But there was no immediate word on the precise location near the border or the exact size of the force deployed.

Hadi, who supported Washington's campaign of deadly drone strikes on a powerful al-Qaeda branch based in Yemen, has been

holed up in Aden with his loyalist forces since he fled Sanaa in February. On Tuesday, forces loyal to Hadi drove Houthi fighters from two towns they had seized hours earlier, residents said, apparently checking an advance by the Shi'ite fighters towards Aden.

Saudi Arabia faces the risk of the turmoil spilling across its porous 1,800 km (1,100 mile)-long border with Yemen and into its Shi'ite Eastern Province where the kingdom's richest oil deposits lie.

"The Saudis are just really deeply concerned about what they see as an Iranian stronghold in a failed state along their border," US Ambassador to

Yemen Matthew Tueller told *Reuters* on Monday at a conference hosted by the National US-Arab Chamber of Commerce in Washington.

But a former senior US official, speaking to *Reuters* on condition of anonymity, said the prospects for successful external intervention in Yemen appeared slim. He said Hadi's prospects appeared to be worsening and that for now he was "pretty well pinned down."

Riyadh hosted top-level talks with Gulf Arab neighbours on Saturday that backed Hadi as Yemen's legitimate president and offered "all efforts" to preserve the country's stability.

Saudi Foreign Minister Saud al-Faisal said on Monday Arab countries would take necessary measures to protect the region against "aggression" by the Houthi movement if a peaceful solution could not be found.

In March 2011, Saudi troops, along with those from the United Arab Emirates, entered neighbouring Bahrain after weeks of protests by that country's Shi'ite majority that Riyadh feared could lead to an expansion of Iran's influence.

A spokesman for the Saudi embassy in Washington did not immediately respond to a request for comment on any military movements.—*Reuters*

Islamic State releases Bangladeshi hostages in Libya oilfield attack

DHAKA, 25 March — Two Bangladeshi citizens, among a group of foreign workers taken hostage by the Islamic State militant group in an attack on a Libyan oilfield, have been released after more than two weeks, the foreign ministry said on Wednesday.

Foreigners have increasingly become targets in Libya's turmoil, where two rival governments are battling for control and Islamist extremists have grown in the chaos that followed Muammar Gaddafi's ouster four years ago.

Up to 10 foreign workers were missing after the attack on the Al-Ghani oilfield south of the city of Sirte, Czech and Libyan officials have said.

Helal Uddin and Mohammed Anwar Hossain were released on Tuesday evening and now staying overnight at Sirte hospital, about 700 kms (435 miles) from Tripoli, the foreign ministry said in a statement.

Western governments are backing UN negotiations to end the crisis in Libya, worried that the large North African state just across the Mediterranean from mainland Europe is becoming a haven for Islamist militants.

Libyan militants claiming loyalty to Islamic State in Iraq and Syria have been blamed for high-profile attacks this year involving foreigners, including an assault on a Tripoli hotel and the beheading of a group of Egyptian Christians.

Militants this month also stormed and damaged several Libyan oilfields around al-Ghani, forcing the government to declare force majeure, pull out workers and shut down production on 11 oilfields in the central Sirte basin.

UN-backed talks to form a unity government and a lasting ceasefire in Libya are continuing in Morocco. But both sides face internal splits over the negotiations and fighting between the two governments continues.

Reuters

Syrian rebels seize town in south

BEIRUT, 25 March — Insurgent groups fighting the Syrian government have seized control of a southern town near the border with Jordan after four days of battles, the Syrian Observatory for Human rights reported on Wednesday.

A Syrian military

source said there had been heavy fighting with armed groups in the town of Bosra al-Sham on Tuesday night. "We are investigating the facts in the field," the source said. The ancient city of Bosra is listed as a UNESCO world heritage site.

Reuters

Houthi forces attack air base near Aden

ADEN, 25 March — Houthi forces backed by allied army units attacked a big airbase about 60 km (37 miles) north of Aden on Wednesday, triggering heavy fighting with defenders loyal to President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi, security sources and residents said.

The fighting at the al-Anad facility was also reported by media affiliated with the Iranian-backed Houthi movement, which has taken over much of the north of the country in recent months and contests US-allied Hadi's legitimacy as head of state.

Reuters

Loyalists of former Yemen ruler reject foreign intervention

DUBAI, 25 March — Army officers loyal to former president Ali Abdullah Saleh, a powerful ally of Yemen's Houthi militia, strongly reject any foreign intervention to end the country's worsening conflict, a statement carried on a website affiliated to Saleh said.

Saleh is still highly influential in the military de-

spite having given up power in 2011 after mass protests against his rule, and troops loyal to him are believed to be backing Houthi forces fighting his successor President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi.

Hadi, a political foe of Saleh's, asked the UN Security Council on Tuesday to back military action by

"willing countries" to combat an advance by the Houthis, who seized the capital in September and become Yemen's de facto main power. "We express our total and utter rejection of any external interference in Yemeni affairs under any pretext and in any form and from any side," the so-called Higher Committee to Preserve the Armed Forces and Security said.

The statement by the Higher Committee added that all armed forces members "will confront with all their strength and heroism" any threat to Yemen's unity and territorial integrity.

Hadi, a former general seen by the Shi'ite Muslim Houthis as a pawn of Sunni Gulf Arab monarchies and the West, has been holed up in Aden since he fled the capital Sanaa in February.

Reuters



Militants loyal to Yemen's President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi patrol in the southern port city of Aden on 23 March, 2015.—REUTERS

High schoolers think outside the bowl with emergency toilet designs

SENDAI, (Japan), 25 March — Unique emergency toilets designed by groups of industrious high school girls are drawing praise as Japan looks for new ways to plan for its next major natural disaster.

The students have turned to the drawing board after being inspired by disaster preparedness lessons at school, and some of their ideas are being developed into real products.

Having learned how survivors of the March 2011 earthquake and tsunami disaster in northeastern Japan spent prolonged periods in evacuation centers far from the comforts of home, the students are acutely aware of the need to keep emergency toilet substitutes on hand at all times.

On 15 March in Sendai, Miyagi Prefecture, one group of budding designers handed out prototypes of their emergency toilet design. The city, which was hit hard in the 2011 disaster, was playing host to the UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction.

"It's small in size with a cute design, and if you keep it in your bag you can feel at ease," Ayaka Horinouchi, 17, a student at Tokyo's Meguro Seibi Gakuen High School said about the "improvised toilet from a girl's point of view" that she and a group of friends designed.

The students developed the impro-

vised toilet by combining existing products with permission from the manufacturers. An absorbent sheet in a plastic bag soaks up liquid waste, turning it into a gel, while an outer bag made of a deodorizing substance wraps around the inner bag to prevent bad smells from leaking out.

The girls got the idea for their design after feeling embarrassed at the prospect of having to use manholes as toilets if the flush toilets at their school are disabled in a disaster.

They were full of ideas at the development stage, debating whether to attach a light to the toilet, or a speaker playing a flushing sound, a courtesy feature in many women's toilets in Japan.

Fellow designer Shiori Uenami, 17, said she wants to keep coming up with ways to prepare for disasters while having fun doing it.

"There are ways we too can contribute," she said.

A pair of high school students from Tokushima Prefecture on the island of Shikoku have developed a cardboard toilet in the Western sitting style to help people with disabilities or elderly people who might have difficulty using Japanese-style squat toilets, often the only option available during a disaster.

Tokushima prefectural govern-

ment-run Awa High School students Hikari Abe and Keina Nijo, both 16, collaborated with a local manufacturer to create their design. Despite its cardboard construction making it light to carry, the toilet is strong enough to support an adult's weight while taking only about one minute to assemble.

In a disaster preparedness workshop at their school, Abe and Nijo had learned about the lack of sufficient toilets in evacuation centers following the March 2011 disaster, and the resulting impacts on evacuees' health.

Unsanitary conditions led to the spread of infectious diseases, while some evacuees suffered from dehydration after denying themselves drinks to avoid having to use the toilets.

"Shikoku could also be hit by an earthquake, and we hope (these toilets) could be useful then," Abe said.

Nonprofit research group Japan Toilet Labo's representative director Atsushi Kato welcomed the younger generation's contributions, saying further preparation is needed to provide sufficient toilets for use in disasters.

"Compared with water and food, toilets tend to be left out of disaster preparation measures, but they are a matter of human dignity and human life," Kato said.

Kyodo News



Photo taken on 15 March, 2015, in Sendai, northeastern Japan, shows high school students Hikari Abe (L) and Keina Nijo, with the Western-style cardboard toilet they developed. Unique emergency toilets designed by groups of industrious high school girls are drawing praise as Japan looks for new ways to plan for its next major natural disaster. —KYODO NEWS

US Senate will vote on sanctions bill if there is no Iran deal



US Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell

WASHINGTON, 25 March — Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell said on Tuesday the US Senate would vote on a bill to toughen sanctions on Iran if international negotiators miss a deadline at the end of this month for reaching a framework nuclear agreement.

"Another heavy dose of sanctions would be an appropriate remedy if there's no agreement at all," McConnell told a weekly news briefing.

If there is an agreement, he said lawmakers would move ahead on a bill that would require President Barack Obama to submit the deal for Congress' approval.

Obama has threatened to veto both bills.

Democrats in the Senate pushed to delay both meas-

ures until at least mid-April to give negotiations more breathing room. The United States and five other world powers suspended talks with Iran in Switzerland on Friday and will reconvene this week to try to break a deadlock over Teheran's atomic research programme.

Separately, Republican Senator Mark Kirk, a co-author of the sanctions bill, told reporters on Tuesday he would introduce legislation recommending new sanctions on Iran as an amendment to a budget resolution now being considered by the Senate.

There was no immediate word on when or if that amendment might come up for a vote.

The White House says any effort to ratchet up sanctions could endanger the delicate negotiations on an agreement in which Iran would curb its nuclear programme in exchange for relief from crippling economic sanctions.

But many members of Congress, particularly Republicans, worry that Obama is so eager for an agreement with Iran that the administration will give up too much in the talks.—Reuters

Australian students protest government's higher education bill

CANBERRA, 25 March — Thousands of Australian students took to city streets on Wednesday to protest against the federal government's proposed deregulation of higher education fees.

The National Union of Students (NUS) organized the marches across the country to highlight the impact of the controversial deregulation bill, and give voice to their fears that undergraduate degrees could soon cost upwards of six figures.

The legislation would

result in government funding to tertiary institutions being cut and the NUS fears universities would make up this funding shortfall by charging students more for their degrees.

The reforms have twice been rejected by the senate, but Education Minister Christopher Pyne has said he will "never give up" until the bill had been passed.

March organizers praised the 1000-strong crowd of students that gathered on Wednesday outside the State Library in

Victoria to march for fairer reforms, with thousands more marching across other cities, including Canberra, Sydney, Newcastle, Hobart, Adelaide, Perth and Brisbane.

The NUS is pushing for the abolition of deregulated fees on undergraduate degrees, a fairer student income support system and better funding for universities across the nation.

Under the proposed changes, the cap on the amount of money students can borrow under the Higher Education Contributions

Scheme (HECS) would be removed, and interest would be charged on the amount borrowed by the students.

The NUS is concerned some undergraduate degrees would take years to pay off, and the changes would burden students with massive debt before they secured a full time job.

With reduced government funding, universities fear they would have to increase class sizes, shed staff, close campuses and discontinue some courses.—Xinhua

Japanese food imported from nuclear disaster areas recalled in Taipei

TAIPEI, 25 March — Taiwanese health authorities have ordered a recall of all food products illegally imported from five Japanese prefectures affected by the 2011 earthquake and consequent nuclear disaster.

Food and Drug Administration Director General Chiang Yu-mei told reporters at the legislature that they ordered a recall of 294 food products illegally imported from the five prefectures after health investigators inspected over 3,000 questionable items.

Of the 294, 12 carried Chinese labels different from the actual place of

origin, while investigators need more time to determine the origin of the remaining 282 because the Japanese labels do not specify where they were manufactured.

Chiang said it will be up to the criminal investigators to determine whether it was Taiwanese importers or Japanese exporters who are at fault.

They also sent the questionable products to the Atomic Energy Commission for radiation examination. Regardless of the results, Chiang said it is still illegal to import food products from the five Japanese prefectures.

After the 2011 Fukushima nuclear disaster, Taipei banned food imports from Fukushima Prefecture and nearby Ibaraki, Gunma, Tochigi and Chiba prefectures, and has been conducting random radiation checks on 11 categories of imported foods.

The Food and Drug Administration announced in October last year that it was planning to introduce regulations requiring foods imported from Japan to carry prefecture-specific labels of origin, with some items needing to undergo radiation checks by Japanese authorities.

The drafted regula-

tions were expected to take effect as early as 1 January this year if no objections were filed within the 60-day window starting on 29 October.

However, the measure did not come into force in January due to Japan's concern.

Upset by what she called the FDA's inaction, Legislator Lin Shu-fen of the main opposition Democratic Progressive Party filed a motion at a legislative committee on Wednesday morning, demanding the FDA announce and implement the new regulations within two weeks.

Kyodo News

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

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MINISTRY OF ENERGY
MYANMA OIL AND GAS ENTERPRISE
(INVITATION FOR OPEN TENDER)
(5/2015)**

Open tenders are invited for supply of the following respective items in United States Dollars.

Sr.No	Tender No	Description	Remark
(1)	IFB-171(14-15)	Spares for Doosan Natural Gas Engine Ex Daewoo Gen ; Set (53) Items	US\$
(2)	IFB-172(14-15)	Metering System Up Grade at Kanbauk (GRS)	US\$
(3)	IFB-173(14-15)	24" Pipe Line System Up Grade at PLC (Daw Nyein)	US\$
(4)	IFB-174(14-15)	4" Dia Steel Line Pipe (5000)M	US\$
(5)	IFB-175(14-15)	4" Dia Steel Line Pipe (9000) M (3 LPE Coated)	US\$

Tender Closing Date & Time - 27-4-2015, 16:30 Hr

Tender Document shall be available during office hours commencing from 24th March, 2015 at the Finance Department, Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise, No(44) Complex, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar.

Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise
Ph . +95 67 - 411097 / 411206

Japan, Russia agree on higher salmon, trout quota for Japan

TOKYO, 25 March — Japan and Russia have agreed on a slightly higher quota than last year for Japanese fishermen of Russian salmon and trout within Japan's exclusive economic zone in 2015, the Fisheries Agency said on Wednesday.

Under the agreement reached in Moscow, Tokyo will pay Moscow anywhere between 264 million yen (\$2.2 million) and 300 million yen in cooperation fees, depending on the amount of actual catches. Some 252 million yen was paid to Russia last year.

Salmon and trout belong to the country with the river in which their predecessors laid eggs. Japan and Russia have accordingly set annual quotas of Russian salmon and trout for Japanese fishermen within Japan's exclusive zone.

Kyodo News

US drone strike kills 11 Pakistani Taliban in Afghanistan

DERA ISMAIL KHAN, (Pakistan), 25 March — A US drone strike killed 11 Pakistani Taliban militants in northeastern Afghanistan, including six or seven senior commanders, intelligence officials said on Wednesday, hours after a strike killed at least nine militants in the same area.

The drone attack, late on Tuesday, was in Kunar Province, near the site of fierce fighting on the Pakistani side of the border.

Fighter jets have been pounding positions in the Tirah Valley in Pakistan's Khyber region and the military says it has killed scores of militants. At least seven soldiers have also

been killed.

Earlier on Tuesday, a drone strike killed nine militants in the Nazyan area of Afghanistan's Nangarhar Province, to the south of Kunar. The intelligence officials said the nine belonged to the Pakistani Taliban and Lashkar-e-Islam, which announced an alliance with the Taliban earlier this month.

The Pakistani and Afghan Taliban share a similar jihadist ideology but operate as separate entities, with the Pakistani militants focused on toppling the state and establishing strict Islamic rule.

No one tracks drone strikes in Afghanistan —

many of them take place in remote regions and are not reported — but Taliban commanders say that fighters there have been being increasingly targeted since late last year.

The strikes come amid warming relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan, traditionally hostile neighbours who each accuse the other of harbouring insurgents to act as proxy forces.

Relations improved after Afghan President Ashraf Ghani was elected last year. Pakistan says it is supporting potential peace talks between the Afghan government and Afghan Taliban.

Reuters



Rescuers work at the site of a landslide, in Chosica, Peru, on 24 March, 2015. At least nine people were killed and four others are still missing in Peru after a massive landslide buried parts of a town amid heavy rains on Monday, authorities said on Tuesday. —XINHUA

Chilean police seize cocaine disguised as onions

SANTIAGO, 25 March — Chilean police on Tuesday seized a 33-kilo shipment of cocaine disguised as onions.

Alerted to a possible case of drug smuggling from Peru, Chile's Investigative Police and customs officials in the northern border city of Arica searched a refrigerated truck transport-

ing 1,350 mesh sacks of onions.

Buried under the cargo were three sacks containing 121 suspicious-looking large white onions wrapped in plastic. A closer inspection showed the "onions" were actually plastic-wrapped balls of cocaine dipped in mustard and covered with real onion

skin. The fake onions were "almost identical" to the real thing, *Chilean daily El Mercurio* Online reported.

Arica customs officials had to put the fake cargo through an X-ray machine, which detected a difference in density between the packed cocaine and the vegetable, the daily said.

Xinhua

WEATHER REPORT

FORECAST VALID UNTIL EVENING OF THE 26th March, 2015: Rain or thundershowers are likely to be scattered in Yangon and Taninthayi Regions, Shan, Kayah, Kayin and Mon States, isolated in the remaining Regions and States. Degree of certainty is (60%).

STATE OF THE SEA: Strong easterly winds with moderate to rough sea are likely at times Gulf of Mottama off and along Mon-Taninthayi Coasts. Surface wind speed in strong easterly wind may reach (35) mph. Seas will be moderate elsewhere in Myanmar waters.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Continuation of likelihood of isolated rain or thundershowers in the Lower Myanmar areas.

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Mulder and Scully return as Fox TV revives 'The X-Files'



Cast members David Duchovny (R) and Gillian Anderson wave at fans at the movie premiere of 'The X-Files: I Want to Believe' at the Grauman's Chinese theatre in Hollywood, California on 23 July, 2008.—REUTERS

LOS ANGELES, 25 March — Cult television thriller "The X-Files" will return for a limited series with David Duchovny and Gillian Anderson reprising their FBI agent roles, Fox Broadcasting network said on Tuesday.

"The X-Files," which premiered on Fox in 1993, followed FBI special agents Fox Mulder (Duchovny) and Dana Scully (Anderson) as they investigated cases of the unexplained, UFOs and often paranormal phenomenon.

Scully was the logical, practical partner of Mulder, who believed that alien worlds could exist within the universe and constantly searched for the truth in government cover-ups and conspiracy theories.

The show created by Chris Carter became the longest-running sci-fi series in US network TV history with nine seasons, concluding in 2002.

The new series will comprise six episodes, due to start production this summer. An air date has not yet been announced.

"I think of it as a 13-year commercial break," Carter said in a statement. "The good news is the world has only gotten that much stranger, a perfect time to tell these six stories."—Reuters

Miley Cyrus, Patrick Schwarzenegger enjoy dinner date after cheating rumours

LOS ANGELES, 25 March — New couple Miley Cyrus and Patrick Schwarzenegger were pictured together for the first time after he was rumoured cheating on her during his

spring break in Cabo.

The couple was spotted enjoying a dinner date at Studio City sushi restaurant Kiwami in Los Angeles earlier this week, reported Entertainment

ment Tonight.

According to the site which obtained a picture of the couple, Cyrus, 22, and Schwarzenegger, 21, looked content as they dined on the private patio at their corner table despite reports that their relationship was on the rocks.

He was pictured getting cozy with another woman during his vacation.

While Cyrus kept mum on the matter, he had addressed it on Twitter, "Omg. It's one of my best friends girlfriend... Would NEVER do anything against my GF.... Girls have guy friends and guys have friends that are girls..."—PTI



New couple Miley Cyrus and Patrick Schwarzenegger dined together after he was rumoured cheating on her. PTI

"Haider", "Queen" win big at National Film Awards



Bollywood actress Kangana Ranaut poses for a picture in Mumbai on 5 June, 2009.—REUTERS

NEW DELHI, 25 March — A modern-day Bollywood adaptation of Shakespeare's Hamlet set in restive Kashmir won five prizes at India's National Film Awards on Tuesday, but was snubbed in the most prestigious categories.

"Haider", the third in filmmaker Vishal Bhardwaj's trilogy of films based on Shakespearean trage-

dies, picked up honours for dialogue, costume design, music, choreography and male playback singing.

"Queen" was adjudged the best Hindi film and lead star Kangana Ranaut was named best actress for her portrayal of a jilted bride who spends her honeymoon alone in Europe.

"Mary Kom", a biopic based on India's epon-

ymous Olympian and five-time women's boxing world champion, was the only other Bollywood movie on the list of feature film winners announced on Tuesday, taking the gong for best popular film.

Bollywood films usually play second fiddle to regional language cinema at the National Film Awards, but prevailed in key cate-

gories this year.

But it did miss out on the biggest prize. The multi-lingual courtroom drama "Court" bagged the best feature film award and was cited by the jury for its "powerful and stark depiction of the mundaneness of judicial procedure."

The awards will be presented at a ceremony later this year.

Reuters

Cancer experts laud Angelina Jolie's decision to remove ovaries

LOS ANGELES, 25 March — Two years after a double mastectomy, actress Angelina Jolie has had her ovaries and fallopian tubes removed to avoid the risk of ovarian cancer, a move cancer experts described as courageous and influential.

The movie director and philanthropist, who is the wife of actor Brad Pitt and the mother of six children, said in an op-ed column in the *New York Times* on Tuesday that she had the surgery last week after blood tests showed what could have been early signs of the disease.

Jolie, 39, carries a mutation in the BRCA1 gene that increases her risk for breast and ovarian cancer. Her mother died of ovarian cancer at the age of 56.

Cancer specialists praised the Hollywood star's second public revelation for increasing awareness about genetic testing and prophylactic surgery to reduce the risk of breast and ovarian

cancer.

"My hat is off to her," said Dr Robert DeBernardo, a gynaecologic oncologist at the Cleveland Clinic's Ob/Gyn & Women's Health Institute. "She is doing a lot of good for women worldwide by raising awareness of BRCA testing and options women have."

"It was incredibly courageous," said Dr Marleen Meyers, an assistant professor of medicine at NYU

Langone's Laura and Isaac Perlmutter Cancer Centre.

Jolie said she went public with her decision so women would know about options available to them.

"I went through what I imagine thousands of other women have felt," Jolie wrote. "I told myself to stay calm, to be strong, and that I had no reason to think I wouldn't live to see my children grow up and to meet my grandchildren."



"Unbroken" director Angelina Jolie arrives at the 20th Annual Critics' Choice Movie Awards in Los Angeles, California on 15 Jan, 2015. —REUTERS

The surgery showed no signs of cancer, she said, but it triggered early menopause, and she will not be able to have more children. "I feel feminine, and grounded in the choices I am making for myself and my family," said Jolie, who travels the globe as a United Nations ambassador for refugees. "I know my children will never have to say, 'Mom died of ovarian cancer.'"

The Academy Award winning actress, who most recently directed the World War Two drama "Unbroken," said she had a progesterone IUD inserted in her uterus to help maintain hormonal balance and help prevent uterine cancer.

Research showed that her 2013 decision to have a double mastectomy to cut her risk of breast cancer increased demand for genetic testing in what was dubbed the "Angelina Effect."

Reuters

'X-Men: Apocalypse' will be Jennifer Lawrence's last in series

LOS ANGELES, 25 March — Oscar-winning actress Jennifer Lawrence has admitted that the next "X-Men" film will be her final appearance in the popular superhero franchise.

Lawrence, 24, who has played the character since 2011's "X-Men: First Class", said she will be done with the role following next year's "X-Men: Apocalypse".

"It is my last one, yes," she said. This makes Lawrence the second "X-Men" cast member to suggest "Apocalypse" would mark their final appearance in the last couple of weeks.

Nicholas Hoult, who played the Beast in "X-Men: First Class" and "X-Men: Days of Future Past", said the 2016 instalment of the series was the last movie he was signed up for, although he said he wouldn't rule out returning in future.—PTI



Novelist Mishima's notebook used for 1964 Tokyo Olympics found

TOKYO, 25 March — A notebook that eminent Japanese novelist Yukio Mishima (1925-1970) used to cover the 1964 Tokyo Olympics has been found at a museum housing his works and put on exhibit, the museum said on Tuesday.

The contents of the notebook appeared in an academic journal published Monday, and the exhibition opened on Tuesday at the Mishima Yukio Literary Museum in Yamanakako, Yamanashi Prefecture.

Mishima used the notebook with the title "Olympic" written on the front cover to write stories on the Tokyo Olympics at the request of three Japanese newspapers. He covered events such as weight lifting and volleyball.

The contents of the notebook were not included in his complete works published by Shinchosha Co.

"Raising his hand high (at 3:10 pm), he stands next to the Olympic cauldron and then appears to have

smiled," Mishima wrote of Yoshinori Sakai as the final torch relay runner approached the cauldron at the opening ceremony.

"Touching the bar, holding his breath for a while and lifting it. Excellently lifting it. Big applause," he wrote of Yoshinobu Miyake, a gold medalist in weight lifting at the Tokyo Olympics and in Mexico City in 1968. The notebook was found among a bunch of documents that the village government of Yamanakako

purchased in the 1990s from Mishima's family.

"He tried to write literary and quality sentences, but we can also see (in the notebook) Mishima's own views in covering the sports events," said Toru Matsumoto, the curator of the museum. Mishima, whose real name was Kimitake Hiraoka, wrote fiction, plays and essays. His famous works include "Confessions of a Mask" and "The Temple of the Golden Pavilion."

Kyodo News

Supreme Court ditches "Facebook" arrest rules

NEW DELHI, 25 March — The Supreme Court struck down a law on Tuesday that gave authorities powers to jail people for offensive online posts, a verdict hailed as a victory for free speech in the world's largest growth market for the Internet.

Section 66A of India's Information and Technology (IT) Act was challenged in the country's top court by law students, bloggers, writers and rights groups following arrests across the country for statements posted on social media sites.

Justices Jast Chelameshwar and Rohinton F. Nariman in their order said they found "the law hit at the root of liberty and freedom of expression".

"Our Constitution provides for liberty of thought, expression and belief. In a democracy, these values have to be provided within constitutional scheme. The law (Section 66A) is vague in its entirety," they said.

The petitioners argued the "draconian law" intro-



A television journalist sets his camera inside the premises of the Supreme Court in New Delhi on 18 Feb, 2014. — REUTERS

duced in 2008 by the last government was misused by politicians to hound critics. The government of Prime Minister Narendra Modi said it welcomed the ruling.

"The government absolutely respects the right to freedom of speech and expression on social media and has no intention of curbing it," telecom and IT minister Ravi Shankar Prasad said.

Facebook (FB.O), Twitter (TWTR.N) and Google (GOOGL.O) did not immediately comment on the ruling but the Internet and Mobile Association of India, a trade body, said the ruling protected consumers and businesses.

"This judgment will herald a new phase in the growth and evolution of the Internet in India," the group said in a statement that also

hailed a separate part of the judgement that makes it harder to force websites to take down content.

Both local and foreign Internet companies have in the past faced pressure for hosting content deemed offensive in India, which Google predicts is scheduled to overtake the United States as having the world's largest number of web users by 2018. —Reuters

Platini re-elected as Blatter sits through criticism

VIENNA, 25 March — Michel Platini was re-elected unopposed for a third term as UEFA president at the annual Congress on Tuesday, proudly proclaiming European football's governing body to be "the best".

Sepp Blatter sat through the day-long proceedings as a guest and had to endure some stinging criticism from his challengers for the FIFA presidency who were invited to make presentations to delegates.

In many ways, the day summed up the differing fortunes between the sport's European and world governing bodies.



UEFA President Michel Platini delivers a speech after his reelection at the 39th Ordinary UEFA Congress in Vienna on 24 March, 2015. REUTERS

While UEFA has basked in the financial success of the Champions League, FIFA has been hit

by a wave of corruption scandals over the last few years. "We're transparent, we're democratic and we're the best," Platini told reporters. "We have shown that it is indeed possible to combine romanticism and realism, ideals and action."

UEFA have said they will not back Blatter when he stands for a fifth mandate on 29 May, where he faces opposition from Luis Figo, Michael van Praag and Prince Ali Bin Al Hussein.

Frenchman Platini said there were no hard feelings against football's governing body. "I have to say, however, we do love FIFA dearly. Europe's entire foot-

ball community loves FIFA dearly. It is precisely because we love and respect it that we want it to be perfect." However, that did not seem to be the case with Blatter's opponents.

"The current state of disarray asks for a change in leadership," said Dutch FA president van Praag in a stinging attack.

"It is the responsibility of our generation to clean up the mess."

"The beautiful heritage of international football has been tarnished by ever continuing accusations of corruption, bribery, nepotism and waste of money."

Reuters

mitv Myanmar International

(26-3-2015 07:00 am~ 27-3-2015 07:00 am) MST

- | | |
|---|--|
| * News | * Today Myanmar |
| * An Ardent Aficionado of Traditional Design | * "Online Shopping" |
| * Hip-Hop and Design | * News |
| * News | * Myanmar Delicate Artistic Creations-Gem Stone Painting |
| * The Beauty of Stylish Myanmar Dress | * Myanmar Railways City Circular Train |
| * Exquisite Myanmar Silk | * Orphanage |
| * News | * News |
| * Myanmar Mega Factory (EP-4) | * Continuation In Rural Tradition |
| * A Person with Faith | * News |
| * News | * Kayah Style |
| * A Worth Studying Site For Ancient Myanmar Heritages | * News Extra (Ride for Climate Change) |
| * Pictures Decorated With Seashells and Gemstones | * News |
| * Scented Buddha Images | * Jeyyanandi (A Day in the Life of a Nun) |
| * News | * Products of Myanmar — Shin Ma Taung Thanakhar |
| * Beauties of Makyee Island - Island of Tamarind Tree | * News |
| * Around The Maha Boditahtaung | * Those Who Never Give Up |
| | * Atuladhipati Mahamunisacca Koe Htat Kyee Pagoda |

MRTV News Channel in Brief

(26-3-2015, Thursday)

- | | |
|---|--|
| 6:00 am | 2:20 pm |
| • Paritta by Hilly Region Missionary Sayadaw | • Songs In honour of 70 th Anniversary Armed Forces Day |
| 6:30 am | 3:35 pm |
| • Physical Exercises | • Weekly Entertainment |
| 7:00 am | 4:35 pm |
| • News / Weather Report | • University of Distance Education (TV Lectures) — Second Years (Oriental) |
| 8:00 am | 5:30 pm |
| • News / International News | • Head Line News |
| 8:35 am | 6:00 pm |
| • Documentary (International Press Institute (IPI)) | • News / Weather Report |
| 9:35 am | 7:00 pm |
| • Documentary (ASEAN) | • News |
| 10:35 am | 7:35 pm |
| • Solar Impluse-2 Video Clip | • Current Affairs |
| 11:35 am | 8:00 pm |
| • Science and Technology Programme | • News / International News / Weather Report |
| 12:00 noon | 9:00 pm |
| • News / International News / Weather Report | • News |
| 12:35 pm | • Hluttaw Image |
| • Hluttaw Image | • Clever |
| 1:20 pm | • Talk on Old Film |
| • Fine Arts —Boson of Dramatic Performance | |

MRTV Entertainment Channel

(26-3-2015, Thursday)

- | | |
|------------------------------|--|
| 6:00 am | 9:00 am |
| • Mono Classical Songs | • Musical Programme |
| 6:15 am | 9:15 am |
| • Cultural Show for Soldiers | • Pyi Thu Ni Ti |
| 6:45 am | 9:40 am |
| • Teleplay | • ASEAN China Cultural Show (Laos) |
| 7:05 am | • ASEAN China Cultural Show (Malaysia) |
| • Fashion Show | 10:00 am |
| 7:30 am | • Musical Programme |
| • TV Drama Series | 10:15 am |
| 8:15 am | • Myanmar Video |
| • TV Drama Series | |

MFF Nippon Foundation U-15 Cup 2015 commences



YANGON, 25 March — The MFF Nippon Foundation U-15 Cup 2015 kicked off at the artificial turf ground No 3 of Myanmar Football Federation in Thuwunna, here, on Wednesday, with an address by Yangon Region Minister for Planning/Economy and Sports U

Than Myint. President of MFF U Zaw Zaw stressed the needs for people to actively participate in uplifting football standard of the country, adding that people hope new generation youths to become talented players in the future.

The project manager of Nippon Foundation ex-

pressed thanks for Ministry of Education and MFF in holding the U-15 Cup.

In the debut, Shan State (North) played against Shan State (East).

Vice Chairman of Myanmar National League Committee and owner of Yadanabon FC Dr Sai Sam Tun, owner of Zwegabin

FC U Hla Htay, Chairman of Myanmar Motion Picture Organization U Lu Min and officials were in attendance.

The tournament was jointly organized by Ministry of Education and MFF with the sponsorship of Japan's Nippon Foundation.—MFF

Youths under training of football sports in Mandalay

MANDALAY, 25 March — The football coaches association in Mandalay gives training to about 70 local youths at Nandawshae football ground on 19th street in Aungthazan Township, Mandalay, as of Tuesday.

Members of selected footballers association

(Mandalay) U Nyo Win, U Thu Kha and U Myo Zaw donated footballs for the trainees. Chairman of the coaches association U Khin Maung Lat and coach of the training course U Tun Oo Khaing accepted the donations.

Tin Maung (Mandalay)



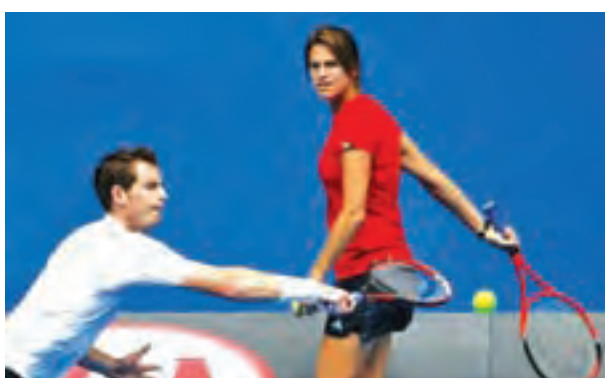
Murray hopeful Bjorkman can complement coach Mauresmo

MIAMI, 25 March — Andy Murray is hopeful that Swede Jonas Bjorkman will share a similar philosophy with his coach Amelie Mauresmo when he joins his team on a trial basis, the Scotsman said on Tuesday.

Bjorkman, a former world number four who retired from professional tennis in 2008, will join Murray's coaching set-up sometime after he finishes his involvement in a Swedish television dance show.

"I don't think he has a huge ego so I wouldn't envisage that being a huge problem," Murray told reporters at the Miami Open, where he is the third seed.

"They have spoken to each other a number of times on the phone, both have said to me that it went very well, they both



Amelie Mauresmo, coach of Britain's Andy Murray, watches him reach to hit a ball during a practice session on Hisense Arena at Melbourne Park on 15 Jan, 2015.—REUTERS

like each other and know each other from their playing days which is good.

"But obviously until we spend a bit of time together it would be tough to know for sure."

Murray, beaten in this year's Australian Open final by Novak Djokovic, was keen to add some depth to his support crew

given Mauresmo's busy schedule. World number five Murray, twice a grand slam champion, trimmed his entourage at the end of last season with hitting partner Dani Vallverdu jettisoned.

Murray said he often chatted with Bjorkman at tournaments and feels the former Wimbledon

and US Open semi-finalist who also excelled as a doubles specialist with nine grand slam titles has plenty to offer. "A lot of the things that I want to work on and improve in my game (are things) that he was very good at himself," said Murray. "Mentally he was very strong. He got the most out of his game. He was a very good competitor. He was obviously physically very strong as well, he played singles and doubles most weeks and had a very long career. "So, I decided to chat to him, we ended up speaking for two and a half hours on the phone and it went by very quickly, talking about the game, all parts of the game really. "I liked it and decided to get him to come along and see how it goes."

Reuters

Ronaldo faces possible sanction for 'Clasico' celebration

MADRID, 25 March — Real Madrid forward Cristiano Ronaldo could be sanctioned for his goal celebration when he netted the equalizer in Sunday's La Liga 'Clasico' at Barcelona, the president of Spain's professional football league (LFP) said.

Ronaldo, not for the first time when he has scored at the Nou Camp,

appeared to be urging the Barca fans to calm down when he struck to make it 1-1 in the 31st minute. The Portugal captain, regularly the subject of abuse himself, has gained a reputation for winding up opposing fans and was widely criticised when he tore off his shirt to celebrate his successful penalty in last season's Cham-

pions League final victory over Atletico Madrid.

"We have to be careful with provocative gestures by a player when he scores a goal or with any other provocation or conduct that could incite violence among spectators," LFP president Javier Tebas told reporters on Tuesday. "It must be sanctioned, from a fine

up to a suspension," he added. "We will look into it." Following the death of a Deportivo La Coruna fan in fighting before a La Liga game in November, Spain's football authorities are seeking to crack down on any action by players or supporters that may be construed as provocative.

Reuters

All Malaysian athletes to have dope test before SEA Games

KUALA LUMPUR, 25 March — All Malaysian athletes taking part in Southeast Asian Games in June will have undergone a doping test before arriving in Singapore, the country's sports minister said.

Malaysia has been rocked by high-profile doping cases in recent months with the country's most famous athlete, former badminton number one Lee Chong Wei, provisionally suspended after he failed a test at the world championships in August.

Tai Cheau Xuen became the first Malaysian Asian Games gold medalist to fail a drugs test after the Wushu exponent tested positive for sibutramine and was kicked out of the multi-sport event after failing with an appeal in

October. "I have ordered the Malaysian Anti-Doping Agency (ADAMAS) to conduct doping tests on every athlete going to the SEA Games," Khairy Jamaluddin was quoted as saying by Bernama news agency on Tuesday.

Bernama said only 30 percent of Malaysian athletes had been previously tested before going to a major sports event.

Malaysia sent more than 500 athletes to the last Southeast Asian Games in Myanmar in 2013.

The 28th SEA Games will take place from 5-16 June with athletes from the 11 nations that make up Southeast Asia taking part in an eclectic mix of 36 sports including athletics, billiards, sepak takraw and swimming.—Reuters



Malaysia's Lee Chong Wei looks on during a news conference in Bangkok on 21 Nov, 2014.

REUTERS