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Thingyan Festival starts with a splash in Yangon

By *Aye Min Soe*

YANGON, 13 April — The Thingyan Festival kicked off Monday in Yangon with water-throwing pandals opening to revelers across the city.

Yangon Region Chief Minister U Myint Swe unveiled the pandal of the government located on Yangon-Pyay Road, while Chairman of Yangon City Development Committee U Hla Myint opened the YCDC pandal at City Hall, followed by performances by dancing and cultural troupes and celebrities.

The YCDC has allowed the construction of more than 200 pandals of varying sizes to celebrate the traditional Myanmar New Year Water Festival in Yangon.

Big water-throwing pandals on Kaba Aye Pagoda Road and Kandawgyi Road have drawn throngs of revelers. The Rakhine community in Yangon began celebrating the water festival in its own traditional style at the Thuwunna Youth Sports Training Ground in Yangon, setting a new record with 18 pandals, 45 Rakhine cuisine restaurants and souvenir shops.

Meanwhile, city dwellers began charity food donations in their respective wards to mark the New Year Water Festival.

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***Damsels perform dances at opening ceremony of Yangon Mayor's central pandal.*—MNA**

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Local property group awards design, build contract to Singaporean consortium

YANGON, 13 April— Property group Thanlyin Estate Development awarded the design and build contract to a consortium consisting of Dragages Singapore and SPA Project Management, according to the company's statement.

Photo credit: bouygues-construction.com.au/

The subsidiary of Bouygues won a contract worth approximately at US$ 116 million, of which Bouygues Construction's share is valued at approximately $68 million.

The new phase of the Star City project covers the design and construction of six residential buildings including a total of 956 apartments. Four of the buildings will be 82 metres tall (25 storeys) and the other two will be 91metre (28 storeys). The contract also includes the construction of a two-storey car park along with a local community building and

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MHD forecasts rain, thundershowers, temperature drop on Tuesday

NAY PYI TAW, 13 April —The Meteorology and Hydrology Department issued a forecast Monday for scattered rain or thundershowers the following day in lower Sagaing, Mandalay and Taninthayi Regions, as well as Shan, Chin, Kayah, Kayin and Mon states, with a 60 percent degree of certainty.

The forecast also stated that isolated rain or thundershowers are expected Tuesday over the remaining regions and states, including Nay Pyi Taw, Yangon and Mandalay, with a 60-percent likelihood.

The temperature in central Myanmar is likely to decrease slightly, according to the forecast.

Rain or thundershowers have been scattered from Sunday afternoon in Taninthayi Region, as well as Shan and Kayin states, while they have been isolated in upper Sagaing Region, Chin and Rakhine states. The weather has been partly cloudy in the remaining regions and states, with day temperatures decreasing. Noteworthy amounts of rainfall recorded were 1.50 inches in Hpa-an, 0.63 inch in

(See page 2)

Fine Arts College (Nyuangshwe) to admit students in 2015

Photo shows completion of buildings for Fine Arts College (Nyaungshwe) in Shan State.
MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 13 April — A Fine Arts College (Nyaungshwe) is under construction in Nyaungshwe, Shan State, in 2014-15 fiscal year.

While visiting lecture halls, students' hostels and mess halls, Union Minister for Culture U Aye Myint Kyu instructed officials to open the school in November 2015 with readiness of curriculum and syllabus for 2015-16 academic year, recruit faculty members and gather teaching aid.

He stressed the need for supply of power and water for students in 2015-16 academic year, construction of hostels and roads in the college campus.

MNA

Thingyan Festival starts . . . .

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The festival lasts four days and will end on Thursday, one day ahead of Myanmar's traditional New Year's Day on Friday.

Bus fares have increased up to two to three fold in Yangon during the festival despite local authorities warning bus operators against such price gouging.

The Yangon Region All-Bus Lines Control Committee has already announced that 1,694 buses will operate in Yangon during the festival, inviting complaints from people for fare over-charging by conductors.

GNLM

MHD forecasts rain, ...

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Taungup, 0.59 inch in Hlaingbwe, 0.51 inch in Heho and 0.48 inch in Haka.

Temperatures are expected to drop during the Thingyan Festival as rain showers are likely in some regions, according to a top weather expert.

With rain showers, relief from the ultra-violet (UV) rays can arrive in some parts of Myanmar, which has been experiencing dangerous UV index levels, Dr Tun Lwin said in a Facebook post on Sunday.

The weather expert also warned people in eastern part of Shan, Kayah and Kayin states to be alert to the possibility of thunderstorms, lightning, isolated heavy falls, gale force winds and hailstones on April 13 and 14 due to cumulus clouds in those areas.

Thunderstorms mostly happen in April and May in Myanmar.

GNLM

Bangladesh eyes promotion of bilateral ties with Myanmar

YANGON 13 April — Bangladeshi foreign minister on Sunday offered a list of ongoing and future engagements that he has expected to promote bilateral ties with Myanmar.

Speaking at a conference on Bangladesh's engagement with India and Myanmar, Abul Hassan Mahmood Ali said Dhaka pursued a neighbourhood foreign policy and that the relation with the neighbours was characterized by "intensive engagements".

He said a "fresh start" in the relations began with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina assuming office in 2009 and it continued "to be strengthened and widened in our joint efforts to move ahead".

Abul Hassan Mahmood Ali said a proposal on Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) was currently being considered by both the countries, which, if implemented, will help improve the bilateral trade.

Bangladesh has expected to increase its export items to Myanmar like the ready-made clothes, pharmaceuticals, leather, ceramics, jute, agricultural products, while importing abundance of agricultural, natural and mineral resources from the Southeast Asia country. The foreign minister added while Myanmar has started to open up to foreign investments and, Bangladesh is looking for suitable investment opportunities in the resource-rich country.

Bangladesh and Myanmar agreed in 2007 to establish road link, followed by connecting the growth centres, ports and key cities.

GNLM

Local property group awards design, build. . .

(from page 1)

the development of green spaces, a swimming-pool and a leisure activity area.

Ludwig Reichhold, executive vice president for Southern Asia at Bouygues Bâtiment International, said in the statement of company: "Following on from an initial contract awarded in 2013, this latest success will reinforce our long-term commitment to Myanmar, which includes an initiative to provide training for local employees."

The works will involve 2,100 people at peak periods and scheduled to last approximately three years.

The first phase of the Star City project — consisting of five residential buildings which have already been built by Dragages Singapore and SPA Project Management for Thanlyin Estate Development — is currently at the completion stage.

GNLM

Tatmadaw captures strategic mountains from Kokang insurgents

NAY PYI TAW, 13 April — Tatmadaw columns repelled an advance by Kokang insurgents into Laukkai on Monday, forcing them to retreat to steep mountains east of Parsinkyaw village near the Myanmar-China border.

Tatmadaw columns managed to recapture insurgent camps including at Point 1845 mountain after launching synchronized artillery and armoured corps operations.

Tatmadaw personnel also recaptured the strategic mountain overlooking Tarkahtan Village held by the insurgents after fierce fighting.

Five Tatmadaw members were killed in the fighting while another 18 were wounded. The injured were transported to military hospitals for treatment.

During the fighting, Tatmadaw personnel seized weaponry including machineguns, rocket-propelled grenades and land mines.

With the recapture of strategically important mountains and areas around Tarkahtan Village, Tatmadaw columns have established complete control over the communication routes east of Parsinkyaw Village and can launch attacks against the insurgents who are retreating from the area.

Myawady

Singapore Airlines to be official airline partner for 28th SEA Games

SINGAPORE, 13 April– Singapore Airlines (SIA) is further strengthening its support for sports and tourism by sponsoring the 28th Southeast Asian (SEA) Games to be held in Singapore from 5 to 16 June 2015.

As the Official Airline Partner for the 28th SEA Games, SIA will sponsor complimentary Economy Class tickets to Singapore as prizes for promotional activities around the region. One key component of this engagement will be NILA's Quest – a web-based digital game specially created for the 28th SEA Games that aims to engage the regional community. The grand prize will see a winning pair from each country fly to Singapore to enjoy the SEA Games.

SIA will also sponsor handheld fans which are included in the fun packs that will be distributed during the preview, opening and closing ceremonies, as well as SEA Games-themed Airbus A380 aircraft models. Singapore Airlines cabin crew will also be participating in the opening and closing ceremonies.

"As a strong supporter of both sports and tourism, Singapore Airlines is proud to be the Official Airline Partner of the 28th Southeast Asian Games. We are especially honoured to support this milestone sporting event which will be held in Singapore after a 22-year hiatus, as we celebrate the country's 50th birthday this year," said Singapore Airlines Executive Vice President Commercial, Mr Mak Swee Wah.

Mr Toh Boon Yi, Chief, Community & Corporate Outreach, Singapore SEA Games Organising Committee (SINGSOC) said, "Singapore Airlines is a Singapore icon, and we are very pleased to work with a top-class partner for the 28th SEA Games. They have been involved in the local sporting scene and we hope that its support will set off more involvement from Corporate Singapore. We look forward to working with partners like Singapore Airlines to co-create this sporting experience for all."

In addition to its sponsorship, SIA will offer special fares for officials who are travelling to Singapore for the Games as well as publicity through its proprietary media channels reaching customers travelling worldwide throughout the Airline's extensive network of 60 destinations in 33 countries. The channels include SilverKris, SIA's inflight magazine which is available in print, tablet and online editions; and KrisWorld, SIA's inflight entertainment system.

Singapore Airlines Public Affairs Department

Water-throwing festival kicks off in Nay Pyi Taw

NAY PYI TAW, 13 April—People should enjoy Maha Thingyan festival by preserving Myanmar traditions and fostering nationalistic spirit, Nay Pyi Taw Mayor Union Minister U Thein Nyunt said at the opening ceremony of the central pandal of Nay Pyi Taw Mayor on Monday, Akyo Day of the festival.

Vocalists presented songs related to Thingyan festival to the audiences while damsels from 25 choir and dance troupes performed entertainments.

Also present at the ceremony were union ministers Lt-Gen Ko Ko, U Thein Nyunt, U Soe Win, U Htay Aung and U Ye Htut, deputy ministers and officials.

The union ministers, Vice Mayor of Nay Pyi Taw U Than Kyaw Htoo, Daw Ni Ni of Shwe Than Lwin Company and officials cut the ribbon to open the water-throwing pandal of Shwe Than Lwin Company in Hotel Zone in Zabuthiri Township on Monday (Akyo day of Maha Thingyan Festival).

Union ministers U Aye Myint Kyu and U Htay Aung, deputy minister Daw Thet Thet Zin, Daw Sanda Khin, Daw Lei Lei Thein, Daw Win Maw Tun and Dr Tin Shwe, vice mayor U Than Kyaw Htoo and Nay Pyi Taw Council member U Kan Chun formally opened the water-throwing pandals of companies in Zabuthiri Township.

After the opening ceremony, vocalists and artists performed entertainment with Thingyan songs to the audiences.

Revelers and people enjoyed Maha Thingyan festival at Hotel Zone since Akyo Day morning.

MNA

The opening ceremony of Mayor's central pandal in progress in Nay Pyi Taw Maha Thingyan festival.—MNA

Mandalay Mayor opens Maha Thingyan festival 2015

MANDALAY, 13 April—Decorated floats representing districts of Mandalay Region carried singing and dancing performers at the opening ceremony of the Mayor's Thingyan pandal in the regional capital on Monday.

Mandalay Mayor and Mandalay Region Minister for Development Affairs U Aung Moung extended greetings at the opening of the pandal in front of Mandalay City Development Committee on 26th street.

Chief Minister of Mandalay Region U Ye Myint and wife, Commander of Central Command Maj-Gen Soe Htut, ministers, the mayor and party enjoyed the water-throwing festival together with artists.

Famous vocalists and dancers accompanied by bands performed for the public who thronged to the pandals around the moat in Royal Mandalay City and downtown Mandalay.

Tin Maung (Mandalay)

Damsels perform entertainment at Mayor's pandal in Mandalay Maha Thingyan festival.—TIN MAUNG (MANDALAY)

Yangon Region Chief Minister enjoys water festival

Yangon Region Chief Minister U Myin Swe sprays fragrant water on a diplomat at Yangon Region Government Office pandal.—MNA

YANGON, 13 April—As Myanmar New Year Water Festival was launched Monday nationwide, Yangon Region Chief Minister U Myin Swe and officials from foreign embassies enjoyed the festival at Yangon Region Government Office pandal.

The chief minister and officials including ambassadors and charges d'afaires ai of foreign embassies led by Chinese Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Yang Houlan together with chairperson of Basic Diplomatic Skills Course U Ye Tun and party actively participated in the traditional Maha Thingyan by pouring water each other.

After enjoying the entertainment programme at the pandal, U Myint Swe and wife Daw Khin Thet Htay presented gifts to artists who performed entertainment at the pandal.

The water festival is the New Year's celebration of Myanmar that usually takes place in every April nationwide for four days.

MNA

Gov't to seek facts on introduction to minimum wages

NAY PYI TAW, 13 April— Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security will hold separate meetings with representatives of employers and employees on April 25 and 26 to discuss about fixing minimum wages of local workers.

The ministry has already collected results from tripartite meetings among workers, employers and local authorities in states, regions and Nay Pyi Taw council area, and the upcoming meetings will be reviewed these findings.

The meetings will also discuss the living costs of households which was surveyed across the country.

The ministry will organize a meeting of Hluttaw members, representatives of political parties, experts, employees and employments in May for fixing minimum wages as soon as possible.

MNA

Bodybuilders, physique athletes compete for title

YANGON, 13 April — The Myanmar Bodybuilding and Physical Culture Federation and the Fine Arts Department jointly held the Summer Bodybuilding and Model Physique Sports Contest 2015 at Aung San Gymnasium here on 11 April.

Under the assessment of judges led by Daw Mya Min Min Mu and Daw Khin Wai, 29 bodybuilders and three physique athletes participated in the 60 kilogram, 65 kg, 70 kg, and over-70 kg events.

Ma Khin Hsu Yi finished first, Ma Yin Mar, second and Ma Thuza Aung, third in the model physique contest.

On 27 June, a bodybuilding and model physique contest marking International Olympic Day will be held in Yangon, judges said.

Thant Zin Win

Villages receive loans for 2015-16 fiscal year

MAHLAING, 13 April— Authorities on 9 April delivered capital funds to the villages in Mahlaing Township, including for implementation of the emerald green project in the 2015-16 fiscal year.

In meeting with members of the village financial supervisory committee for the project, head of the Rural Development Department U Aung Bo Bo said the department collected interest for the loans in 2014-15 fiscal year. He added that the department will disburse K32.09 million to each village and they must pay back loans to the department at the end of the fiscal year.

Officials presented K32.09 million each to Myinthaw, Nyaungbintha, Kanthitgyi and Gaunghsaykan villages.

Aung Htay (Mahlaing)

Graduates, students of NYRDDC meet at gathering

LOIKAW, 13 April — Graduates and student of Nationalities Youth Resources Development Degree Colleges in Yangon and Mandalay gathered for an annual party at the city hall in Loikaw, the capital of Kayah State, on the evening of 7 April.

Kayah State Social Affairs Minister U Koe Rei and guests attended the party.

The gathering was aimed at further strengthening relationships among the students and graduates from the colleges. The event is held in Loikaw, Demawhso, Moebye and other towns in rotation annually.

District IPRD

Summer sports course concludes

SAGAING, 13 April — A summer sports course concluded at the gymnasium in Sagaing on 8 April, with a speech by Township Administrator U Myo Min Tun.

Head of the District Sports and Physical Education Department U Than Htay Ko presented gifts to the trainers.

"We trained the youths in six sports events in the summer course 2015," said the head of Township SPED. "Twelve trainers from the department conducted the training course for 145 local youths."

The ceremony was also attended by township level departmental officials and representatives from NGOs.—*Zaw Myint Naing*

Chairperson of Township Maternal and Child Welfare Association Daw Win Mar Thein gives talks on reproductive health for youths and breast cancer disease to women in Zeebyuthaung Village, Ye Township, Mon State, on 8 April.—ZIN (IPRD)

Police seize 199 stimulant tablets in Thakayta Tsp

NAY PYI TAW, 13 April — Members of No 41 anti-drug police squad, acting on a tip-off, searched the bag of Po Kay (a) Po Aye (a) Zeyar on Thumana Street in Ward 3 in Thakayta Township, Yangon, on 11 April.

They seized 199 stimulant tablets and one mobile phone from the bag.

Action was taken against Po Kay (a) Po Aye (a) Zeyar under Narcotic Drug and Psychotropic Substances Law.

Police Information

Cambodia's reformed election body officially established

PHNOM PENH, 13 April —Cambodia's new National Election Committee launched operations on Monday, vowing to organize free, fair and transparent elections in the future.

The new committee's nine members, who were elected by the National Assembly last Thursday, took office on Monday in a ceremony presided over by Deputy Prime Minister and Royal Palace Minister Kong Sam Ol.

Sek Bunhok, ex-lawmaker from the ruling Cambodian People's Party (CPP), was named as chairman of the committee, while Kuoy Bunroeun, ex-lawmaker from the opposition Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP), was appointed vice-chairman.

Other seven members included three each from the CPP and CNRP, and one "neutral" person, who is not related to political parties.

"As the leaderships of the new committee, we will do our best to carry out roles and duties with independence, neutrality, integrity, and transparency in order to ensure free and fair elections in the future that can be accepted by all concerned parties," Sek Bunhok said at the ceremony.

The new committee was introduced after Prime Minister Hun Sen and CNRP President Sam Rainsy reached an agreement on 22 July last year to end the opposition's 10-month boycott of the National Assembly following the 2013 elections.

Both Hun Sen and Sam Rainsy have confidence that the new committee will ensure free and fair national elections in 2018 and prevent post-election deadlock.

"I'm confident that the reformed National Election Committee will end the concerns of our people and businessmen over post- election crisis," Hun Sen told reporters on Thursday last week.

Xinhua

China's former state-assets chief stands trial for corruption

BEIJING, 13 April— Jiang Jiemin, former head of the State-owned Assets Supervision and Administration Commission, went on trial Monday for corruption, a local court said.

Prosecutors accused Jiang of taking bribes, possessing a large number of assets from unidentified sources and abusing power while performing duty for a state-owned enterprise.

Jiang was chair of the board of China National Petroleum Corporation.

He is tried at the Hanjiang Intermediate People's Court in Hubei Province.

The court began hearing the case at about 8:30 am. Jiang and his defender appeared at the court.

Xinhua

Jiang Jiemin (C), former head of the State-owned Assets Supervision and Administration Commission, stands trial at the Hanjiang Intermediate People's Court in central China's Hubei Province on 13 April, 2015. Jiang went on trial Monday on charges of taking bribes, possessing a large number of assets from unidentified sources and abusing power while performing duty for the state-owned China National Petroleum Corporation.—XINHUA

No plan yet to hold defence talks with Japan in May: S Korea

SEOUL, 13 April— South Korea has no plan yet to hold a bilateral defence ministerial meeting with Japan on the sidelines of Asia's key security forum set to be held in Singapore in late May, a Defence Ministry spokesman said on Monday.

"At the moment, we have not discussed holding defence ministerial talks with Japan and we don't have a plan for such talks at the Shangri-La Dialogue," Kim Min Seok said during a Press briefing, referring to the annual security forum by its widely known name.

Kim made the remarks when asked about the South Korean government's position after Japanese Defence Minister Gen Nakatani expressed eagerness last Friday to meet with his South Korean counterpart Han Min Koo on the sidelines of the forum.

If realized, it would be the first time since January 2011 for the Japanese and South Korean defence ministers to hold talks.

Kim also added that South Korea "has not discussed at all" the issue of a possible bilateral accord with Japan known as the Acquisition and Cross Servicing Agreement.

Once an agreement is reached, Japanese and South Korean forces will be able to exchange most types of support, including food, fuel and transportation.

Japan is hoping to arrange the defence ministerial talks through a security dialogue in Seoul on Tuesday involving senior foreign affairs and defence officials, Japanese officials said. The security dialogue will be the two countries' first since December 2009.

Kyodo News

LDP-backed governors win in Hokkaido, Oita, giving boost to Abe

TOKYO, 13 April—The governors of Hokkaido and Oita prefectures won fourth terms in Sunday's gubernatorial elections, giving a boost to Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's efforts to revitalize regional economies and ensure the benefits of "Abenomics" aimed at achieving economic recovery and beating deflation are shared across the country.

The victories reversed losses by Abe's Liberal Democratic Party in recent gubernatorial contests despite its overwhelming victory in the House of Representatives election in December.

Hokkaido Gov Harumi Takahashi, backed by the LDP and its junior coalition partner the Komeito party, beat Noriyuki Sato, a former television anchor backed by the Democratic Party of Japan and other opposition parties.

Oita Gov Katsusada Hirose defeated Ban Kugimiya, a former Oita city mayor backed by the DPJ.

But in the mayoral election in Sapporo, the capital of Hokkaido, former Sapporo Deputy Mayor Katsuhiro Akimoto, backed by the DPJ and the Japan Innovation Party, defeated Nana Honma, a former central government official backed by the LDP.

The elections were part of the first round of unified quadrennial local elections held across Japan to choose governors, mayors and local assembly members.

During the campaigning period, the ruling and opposition parties strove to shore up their support bases ahead of upcoming national elections, including one for the House of Councillors next year.

On Sunday, voters cast ballots to pick governors in 10 prefectures and mayors in five government-designated major cities, as well as assembly members in 41 of Japan's 47 prefectures and in 17 of the country's 20 major cities.

The day's voting was the first part of two-stage local elections, which are held simultaneously every four years to cut election costs and improve voting rates. A second round is set for April 26 to elect mayors and city assembly members in other areas.

As of 11 pm on Sunday, *Kyodo News* estimated voter turnout at 49.26 percent, down from 52.77 percent in the 2011 gubernatorial elections for the 10 prefectures plus Tokyo and Saga.

It is likely to end up lower than the record low of 52.63 percent logged in 2003.

Incumbent governors won reelection in all 10 prefectures holding gubernatorial elections. Of those 10 elections, the ruling and opposition blocs squared off in just two prefectures — Hokkaido and Oita. There were no head-to-head contests between ruling and opposition blocs in the other eight prefectures of Kanagawa, Fukui, Mie, Nara, Tottori, Shimane, Tokushima and Fukuoka.

Among the five mayoral elections, the battle in Sapporo was the only one fought between the two blocs.

Harumi Takahashi (C) and her supporters celebrate her victory in the Hokkaido gubernatorial race on 12 April, 2015, in Sapporo. Incumbent Takahashi, backed by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's ruling Liberal Democratic Party and its junior coalition partner the Komeito party, was projected to have beaten Noriyuki Sato, a former television anchor backed by the Democratic Party of Japan and other opposition parties.—KYODO NEWS

And of 2,284 seats in 41 prefectural assembly elections up for grabs, the LDP had won 829 as of 11 pm — and was on course to win a majority, according to tallies by *Kyodo News*.

The DPJ had so far won 106 seats, just a third of the 314 seats it held prior to the elections as it struggles against waning popularity.

In Osaka, the Osaka Restoration Association, linked to the Japan Innovation Party and led by Osaka Mayor Toru Hashimoto, was certain to remain the largest force in both the prefectural and city assemblies.—*Kyodo News*

World military spending inches down in 2014

LONDON, 13 April— Global military spending fell in 2014 for the third straight year, albeit by just 0.4 percent, as increased spending in Eastern Europe, the Middle East, Africa and Asia nearly matched cutbacks in the United States and Western Europe, a Swedish think tank said on Monday.

According to a report by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, global military spending in real terms in 2014 decreased 0.4 percent from the previous year to $1.78 trillion.

"While total military spending is mostly unchanged, some regions, such as the Middle East and much of Africa, are continuing to see rapid build-ups that are placing an increasingly high burden on many economies," said Sam Perlo-Freeman, head of SIPRI's military expenditure project.

China boosted its military spending in 2014 by 9.7 percent from the previous year, while Russia's spending grew 8.1 percent.

Compared to 2005's figures, China's spending has expanded by 167 percent, Russia's by 97 percent, India's by 39 percent and South Korea's by 34 percent.

The United States, attempting to trim its fiscal expenditure, spent 0.4 percent less in 2014 than in 2005, while France and Britain, fifth and sixth in the rankings, trimmed their spending by 3.2 percent and 5.5 percent respectively.

Japan stood out in Asia with its relative decrease in spending. Its 2014 expenditure was down 3.7 percent on 2005's figure, although this likely reflected the effect of a weak yen.

Japan ranked ninth in the world's expenditure rankings in 2014, down from seventh place in the previous year after being eclipsed by India and Germany.

While the United States remained the world's top military spender, its share of total global expenditure fell to 34 percent in 2014. Second-place spender China's share rose to 12 percent.

In third place, Russia accounted for 4.8 of global expenditure, followed by Saudi Arabia in fourth with 4.5 percent.

In the face of expansion by Russia, Ukraine's military spending rose 23 percent in 2014 compared with the previous year. The total monetary cost of the Ukraine crisis is expected to be higher, according to the report.

The effect of the crisis extended to nearby Eastern European and the Baltic states, which also ramped up their spending. Among these countries, Poland's spending rose 13 percent.

Saudi Arabia increased its spending by 17 percent compared to 2013, the largest increase among the world's top 15 spenders, as a wave of conflicts continued in the surrounding region.

Notable in Asia was Vietnam's 9.6 percent rise in spending. The country is facing territorial disputes with China in the South China Sea.

Kyodo News

Pair of Miyazaki mangoes fetch 300,000 yen at season's 1st auction

A man holds a box of two mangoes under the brand "Taiyo no Tamogo" (Egg of the Sun) at the local central wholesale market in the city of Miyazaki, southwestern Japan, on 13 April, 2015. The pair fetched 300,000 yen at the year's first auction of mangoes the same day, tying the record high. —KYODO NEW

MIYAZAKI, (Japan) 13 April —A brand-name pair of mangoes from Miyazaki Prefecture fetched 300,000 yen ($2,495) on Monday in this season's first auction at a local wholesale market, setting the same record high as marked last year.

Mangoes of this variety, called "Taiyo no Tamago" (Egg of the Sun), are selected under strict criteria such as weight of more than 350 grams each and a high level of sugar content. This year's production is expected to be about 1,010 tons and the peak of shipping will be between May and June, according to the Miyazaki Agricultural Economic Federation.

Among 157 cases containing two mangoes each auctioned on the day, the highest-priced pair were to be sold at a department store in Fukuoka, the largest city in the Kyushu region in southwestern Japan where Miyazaki is located.

Kyodo News

South Korea's Park to skip Russia World War II event that North's Kim will attend

South Korean President Park Geun-hye.

SEOUL, 13 April— South Korean President Park Geun-hye will not attend an event in Moscow to mark the end of World War Two in Europe and instead send an envoy, an official said on Monday, dashing the possibility for a rare summit with the leader of North Korea.

Russia has said the North's Kim Jong Un would attend the 9 May celebrations marking the 70th anniversary of the war's end, which would be his first trip overseas since taking power in 2011 after the death of his father.

"The president will not be going," a South Korean government official said on Monday, speaking on condition of anonymity.

The country's foreign ministry said over the weekend that a ruling Saenuri Party member of parliament's foreign affairs committee, who is also a special aide to Park, would attend as her special envoy.

The government official and the foreign ministry did not elaborate on why Park had chosen not to attend. If Park and Kim were both to travel to Moscow for the event, it would make possible only the third summit between the leaders of the rival Koreas, which remain technically at war under a truce ending their 1950-53 conflict.

Attempts at dialogue between the North and the South are at a stalemate, following the 2010 sinking of a South Korean navy ship and the bombing of an island in the South that Seoul blames on the North. Pyongyang denies any role in the sinking of the naval ship Cheonan.— *Reuters*

Hobart Airport website taken offline after cyber-attack

MELBOURNE, 13 April —Hobart International Airport's website remained shut down on Monday, more than 24 hours after Tasmania Police was forced to take it offline due to a cyber- attack.

A group with ties to radical group Islamic State (IS) reportedly claimed responsibility for the computer hack on Monday.

Police shut down the website in the early hours of Sunday morning, just hours after the hackers placed a pro-radical message on the homepage.

The website has not yet been reinstated.

Tasmania Police issued a statement saying the hackers targeted the web hosts and not the airport's website itself. It has been revealed that thousands of other sites managed by the web host have also been hacked using the same message since late last year, but police said there was no cause for concern for those using Hobart Airport.

"There were no threats made towards the Hobart Airport or flight operations to and from the airport," the statement said on Monday.

"Investigations have shown that identical messages have appeared on thousands of websites worldwide since late 2014."

The company that operates Hobart Airport also released a statement confirming the news and stated that measures would be put in place to tighten airport security as well as its online presence.

"The airport website was defaced with pro-Islamic militant messages," it said on Monday.

"The airport is working with our IT service providers to review website security protocols."— *Xinhua*

Niloofar Rahmani gets on a military plane at a military airport in Kabul, Afghanistan on 12 April, 2015. Born in 1992, Rahmani is the first Afghan female fixed-wing Air Force aviator.—XINHUA

History now made, US and Cuba face bumpy road ahead

PANAMA CITY, 13 April — Cuba and the United States just made history. Now comes the hard part.

In the first meeting of its kind in nearly 60 years, US President Barack Obama and Cuban leader Raul Castro sat down together for over an hour on Saturday at a regional summit in Panama, moving a step closer to restoring diplomatic ties.

It was the result of nearly two years of secret talks and quiet diplomacy and the mood was positive, both inside the room and out, where Latin American leaders praised Obama for ending decades of US hostility toward the communist-ruled island.

Obama clearly sees Cuba as a possible success story for his policy of engaging US foes.

At a time of multiple risks to his foreign policy record — from Iran's nuclear programme and the war in Syria to Russian involvement in Ukraine and the violence of Islamic State — getting on well with Cuba looks relatively easy.

"The Cold War is over," Obama said. "I think there is a strong majority both in the United States and in Cuba that says our ability to engage, to open up commerce and travel and people-to-people exchanges is ultimately going to be good for the Cuban people."

Yet the gulf between the two sides remains wide, illustrated by the absence of US and Cuban flags at the carefully orchestrated meeting on Saturday in a sparsely furnished conference room.

The US economic embargo, which has blocked nearly all trade between the two nations for the last five decades, is firmly in place. Cuba's human rights record stills draw scorn from Washington, as does US foreign policy from Havana.

"Let's not fool ourselves. We have a lot of differences," said Castro, 83, who has been an enemy of the United States for most of his life and still railed passionately against its past policies even as he praised Obama as "an honest man".

"In other words, we're willing to talk about everything with patience, with a lot of patience," added the army general and younger brother of revolutionary leader Fidel Castro.

Obama and Castro announced in December they would work to re-establish full diplomatic ties severed in 1961, reopen embassies in each other's capitals and free up trade and travel.

Restoring diplomatic relations is easy enough, requiring little more than the presidents' agreement. But normalizing overall relations could take years.

Cuba has shown no signs that it is willing to allow wider political rights. The government dismisses dissidents as mercenaries, moves quickly to stifle dissent, and Castro has made clear he does not intend to allow any relaxation of Communist Party rule.

Cuban leader Raul Castro and US President Barack Obama.—REUTERS

And while Cuba is looking to draw in foreign investment, any US businesses seeking to set up there need the government's blessing. Castro's government moves cautiously, as it has shown with its own market-style economic reforms in recent years.

In the short term, Cuba is still waiting to be removed from the US State Department's list of state sponsors of terrorism, a unilateral designation that Cuba rejects as unjust.

Obama is expected to inform Congress within a few days he is taking Cuba off the list, which would free the island from some economic sanctions.

There had been some expectations that Obama would announce his intention to remove the terrorism designation and move forward on restoring diplomatic relations at the summit.

Though there is little doubt that Havana will be taken off the blacklist, US officials privately have made clear that they have sought to use the timing of the move as leverage in broader normalization negotiations.

A number of unresolved issues have slowed down the process, including Washington's wish that Cuba allow US diplomats to travel around the island and relax the police presence around the diplomatic mission in Havana, where visiting Cubans are closely watched.

"They're building a road, and when you're building a road you don't expect to finish right away," Brazilian President Dilma Rousseff, speaking in Panama, said of the US-Cuba relationship.

Obama wants the Republican-controlled US Congress to dismantle the embargo and some allies believe a coalition of Democrats and Republican free-marketeers may succeed.

It could be a long battle.

The US president has already used his executive powers to ease travel restrictions to Cuba, and allow US importers to buy goods from independent Cuban contractors and exporters to ship building materials to private Cuban companies.

He has so far used those powers sparingly, however, and Cuba would like him to go further.

"President Obama retains ample executive authority ... to eliminate the embargo," said Foreign Minister Bruno Rodriguez.

US officials acknowledge Obama can ease more restrictions on his own, within limits, but they are waiting to see the results of the latest changes before deciding future measures.

While Cuba is keen to reopen embassies and see more US sanctions lifted, US officials say the communist government appears intent on moving slowly toward full normalization, fearful that a quick opening in areas like travel, trade and Internet access might loosen its grip on Cuban society. The meeting between Obama and Castro was marked by what one US official described as a spirited back-and-forth over issues that divide them, including human rights and press freedoms.

"There wasn't tension," the official said, adding that there were also "lighter moments" when the leaders marveled at how unimaginable such a meeting would have been not long ago.

Reuters

France's Jean-Marie Le Pen pulls out of regional vote

Marine Le Pen (R), France's National Front political party leader, and her father Jean-Marie Le Pen arrive for a meeting in Cormont, in this file picture taken on 29 Aug, 2010.—REUTERS

PARIS, 13 April — Jean-Marie Le Pen, founder of France's far-right National Front, has said he will not seek the party's ticket for regional polls later this year after a damaging public row with his daughter Marine, now the party leader.

Asked by *Le Figaro Magazine* about his possible candidacy in the southeast Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur region, he said: "No — even though I think I am the best candidate."

In a sign of his family's strong grip on the party, Le Pen said the best replacement candidate would be his grand-daughter Marion Marechal-Le Pen.

Jean-Marie Le Pen's defence last week of his view that Nazi gas chambers were a mere "detail" of war has prompted Marine Le Pen, FN leader since 2011, to demand his role in the party be discussed at a meeting of FN executives on Friday.—*Reuters*

Brazilians protest Rousseff in second big demonstration of 2015

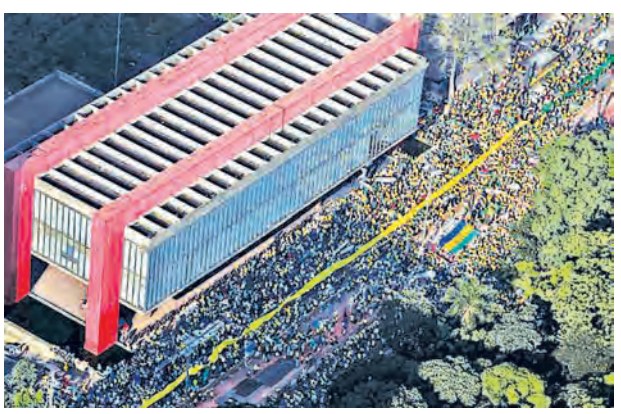
SAO PAULO, 13 April — Brazilians took to the streets in over 100 cities on Sunday in the second major protest of the year against President Dilma Rousseff, blaming her for a sputtering economy and widening corruption scandal at state-run oil company Petrobras.

While the crowds shrank significantly from around a million protesters on 15 March, organizers said the dozens of major demonstrations in every corner of Brazil showed the extent of anti-government sentiment that has taken hold in the country.

Three quarters of Brazilians support the protests, according to a Datafolha poll released on Saturday.

"Out with Dilma" was the recurring chant at the peaceful, almost festive protests, and that sentiment united the handful of loosely associated groups organizing the events. But views differed widely on what their rallying cry meant.

"The best would be for her to resign so the country doesn't have to suffer so much with impeachment," said Sandra di Giacomo, a protester in São Paulo draped in a Brazilian flag.



Demonstrators take part in a protest against Brazil's President Dilma Rousseff in front of Sao Paulo Art Museum on 12 April, 2015.—REUTERS

State police said she was one of 275,000 there, down from a million protesters in the city on 15 March. Polling firm Datafolha estimated 100,000 demonstrators in São Paulo on Sunday, down from 210,000 a month ago.

"Impeachment Now" read a banner stretching almost of a city block in Sao Paulo. Nearly two thirds of Brazilians favour impeachment of the president who narrowly won re-election in October, according to Datafolha, but almost as many doubt the corruption scandal will drive Rousseff from office.

Opposition parties have played down the prospects for impeachment, even as prosecutors charge members of Rousseff's ruling coalition in the graft investigation at state-run oil giant known formally as Petroleo Brasileiro SA.

Rousseff herself is not under investigation in the still-expanding Petrobras probe. She says she knew nothing about the bribery and price-fixing racket that allegedly cost the company billions of dollars while she was chairwoman from 2003 to 2010.—*Reuters*

PERSPECTIVES

Tuesday, 14 April, 2015

What defines a healthy work environment?

By *Myint Win Thein*

One of the characteristics of a good working environment is a healthy relationship with superiors and co-workers. Most workers know how to establish a good relationship with superiors, since doing so is obviously in their interest.

Some may seek favourable treatment from superiors while at the same time doing little actual work or claiming credit for the efforts of others. They may tell their superiors they have devoted their lives to the work. They think they have established a good working environment and say that some jealous co-workers are disturbing it. Such a work environment is only beneficial to the self-seekers. Not every co-worker can accept their egotistical behaviour which puts a greater burden on others. Self-seekers offend their co-workers by exaggerating their meagre work and fawning before their superiors.

All workers want a pleasant working environment, but this does not necessarily mean demanding a better working environment than those around them. One may work as long and hard as anyone else, yet never seek any opportunity or advantage. Unfortunately, a few self-seekers in a workplace can demolish a pleasant working environment for many of those around them.

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

Thingyan-Spirit and New Year's Resolutions for Myanmar

By *TOMMY PAUK*

Myanmar Era 1376 ends and Myanmar Era 1377 comes. We Myanmar celebrate traditional Thingyan Festival known as Water Festival across the country. The literal meaning of 'Thingyan' is 'change'. A four-day long water festival welcomes the new Myanmar Era. It is celebrated to mark a short period of passing over into to new year. Thingan festival also welcomes everyone to participate and enjoy a lot of fun irrespective of races. Changing is an absolute natural process, but we humans prefer to face the change which gives us positive effect.

The last day of Thingyan Festival (Myanmar term: A -Tet nae) is the Myanmar New Year's Eve. Normally, Myanmar including all national races or national brethren participate in Thingyan Festival. This festival is enjoyed by all national brethren with joyful, sincere and cordial spirit. Even then, the international tourists, foreign diplomats and foreigners also take part in Thingyan festivities merrily. Thingyan has no discrimination among nationalities or national races although it is a Myanmar traditional festival. Thingyan spirit is significant, friendly, warm and courteous. It also depicts a part of Myanmar culture. That is why the foreigners take part in Thingyan festival celebrations rapturously and independently. The rapturous traditional event reveals the friendliness, fraternity and goodwill. Foreigners are eager to know the essence of Thingyan Festival and love to learn it and enjoy the most exciting and joyful Thingyan water festival in Myanmar.

During the water festival period, few youngsters act or imitate or wear outlandish fashions or dresses related to alien cultures. However, we Myanmars preserve and cherish the traditional festivals including Thingyan festival with great care. Even the tourists from different countries pay respect to Myanmar culture and they really like it and regard or value the essence of Thingyan spirit. Cleansing and dousing each other with clean water and doing meritorious deeds are practiced during Thingyan festival or Myanma New Year festival. Meditation centers are specially opened during Thingyan Festival for those who wish to get rid of worries, anxiety, stress, pressure or to calm down greed, anger and delusion. The merry-makers and Thingyan revelers make a lot of lovely and lively fun. This festive occasion or celebration portrays the intimacy among Thingyan revelers. Traditional Thingyan dances and songs entertained to the revelers at the water throwing pandals are very attractive to the foreigners in Myanmar. The revelers also do the chanting of constructive criticism (Myanmar term: THANGYAT) on the inefficient public officials, malpractice, wrong doings done by some people in Myanmar. The style of chant sung to the accompaniment of drums is rather amusing and satirical. This shows that we can frankly and independently express to point out the mistakes or faults or immoral behaviors or inefficiency of the public officials as well as citizens concerned so as to change their bad practice to good practice or to correct their mistakes. The chants include the rising prices of commodities, political objectives, people's voice on some difficulties facing in their life in Myanmar. Therefore, Thingyan-spirit leads to the harmony, intimacy, improvement and progress for Myanmar society.

We the entire people of Myanmar have to make New Year's resolution. We should discard the bad things and create good things for the interest of the national brethren. In other words, we need to assess ourselves on loads of demerits and merits that we have already committed or done in the last year. Afterwards, we ought to purify our hearts so that we can enjoy peace of mind.

If we have bad result or failure in business, education and economy in last year, we need to improve all that stuff by making New Year's resolution. Time lime of our project or task or plan for nation's economy must be drawn based on the outcome of the old year. As for individuals, they must review their conducts, deeds, success, failure and improvement which have been already done by themselves or encountered in life in the old year. Thus, they can focus and carry on the endeavor in the year to come. Also, they must prepare for new challenges they might encounter in the forthcoming year as well. We Myanmars make New Year's resolution traditionally or customarily.

The following instances are the New Year's resolutions made by Myanmar people: to do or behave more politely or auspiciously; to venture job or business opportunities; to make peace among all national races as well as the global races on earth; to strengthen the relations with international communities; to avoid sinful acts or violent act ; to make more concerted effort for social welfare and charity etc. Anyway, these resolutions for the New Year must be, by any means, implemented perfectly so that the personal benefit and communal benefits can be obtained.We should prepare our resolutions and then materialize our projects properly. Normally, humans wish to see or begin the New Year with prosperity, happiness, auspiciousness and peace. As for Myanmars, we wish our motherland to be more prosperous with peace, fraternity, unity and loving kindness among our national brethren to continue to march towards the Democratic state in the New Year. We ought to vow or pledge that we are not going to bring any internal dispute, conflicts, controversy into the New Year. It is an auspicious news that the ceasefire agreement is unanimously made and signed by present democracy government and all ethnic armed groups in Myanmar. It is a good omen for future socio-economic development of Myanmar. Moreover, Myanmar New Year will have more prosperity, tranquility and pleasantness indeed. Hopefully, the entire Myanmar citizens will be happy, healthy and wealthy in the New Year. To radiating or showing more compassion, sympathy, empathy and religious tolerance should be included in New Year's resolutions. Individuals may have made New Year's resolutions differently. Maybe some might want to extend the businesses of their own or some have vowed to quit or give up smoking or drinking alcohol or chewing betel etc,. Actually, their plans or decisions to do for New Year may vary according to their circumstances and situations. Nevertheless, every one of us wishes to have better, comfortable and prosperous life with change which must be a positive effect. Let us practically implement our New Year's resolutions with concerted efforts.

May cool and fragrant Thingyan water freshen the Myanmar citizens to be able to serve their motherland with vigorous strength and capacity for Myanmar New Year, 1377.

Have a happy and prosperous New Year!!!!

*****

Tommy Pauk is the pseudonym of U Thein Swe, who is B.A (English) and (Registered Law) R.L I. degrees holder. He has English Teaching experience at Yangon University English Department and Workers' college in Yangon, and now is working as freelance writer and English Teacher cum Translator/Interpreter for foreign firms.

Union construction minister inspects road projects in Mandalay, Sagaing regions

NAY PYI TAW 13 April— Union Construction Minister U Kyaw Lwin recently inspected road-building and maintenance projects in Mandalay and Sagaing regions.

The union minister checked the road section between Nay Pyi Taw and Mandalay on the Yangon-Mandalay Expressway near Tatkon Township and the construction of a 19-mile long road between mile posts 233/6 and 233/7 on Saturday.

He then inspected the maintenance of roads along Meiktila, Mahlaing, Taungtha, Welaung and Popa townships, together with construction of a 420-foot-long bridge on the Yangon-Magway-Mandalay route.

The union minister also inspected construction and maintenance of bridges on the same road.

U Kyaw Lwin then met engineers and officials concerned with repairing Monywa-Pale-Gangaw Road and bridges along it.

He also viewed a bridge being upgraded by the Japan International Cooperation Agency under an official development assistance programme on Monywa-Ayadaw-Shwebo motorway.

MNA

Residents honour religious title recipient Sayadaw

MYAWADY, 13 April — A ceremony to honour Dr Ashin Paññananda, who has received the religious title of Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja, was held at Sasana Hitakari Dhammayon in the precinct of Shwemyinwun Pagoda in Myawady, Kayin State, on 11 April.

Secretary of the Township Sangha Nayaka Committee Bawdi monastery, Abbot Bhaddanta Rajadhamma, read the biography of the title-recipient Sayadaw.

The district's deputy commissioner U Lwin Ko Oo spoke on religious affairs, while well-wishers donated offertories and shared merits.—*Tun Tun Oo (Myawady Town)*

Well-wishers donate cash for storm victims

MYINGYAN, 13 April— The Interfaith Friendship Group provided cash assistance to storm victims at the office of Layeindan village, Myingyan Township, Mandalay Region, on 10 April.

A storm hit Dahkyun, Tasaung and Aungpyisoe villages in Myingyan Township on 2 April, destroying or damaging 46 homes.

"As humanitarian aid, we presented cash assistance to the storm victims because we all are living in the same country, through thick and thin," an official of the group said. "We believe our assistance will contribute towards rehabilitation of the victims."

On the occasion, the organization donated K330,000 to the victims, while the Township Maternal and Child Welfare Association and departmental personnel contributed K432,000.

On 9 April, the Relief and Resettlement Department provided textiles, personal goods, kitchen utensils and other equipment to the victims. Additionally, Myanmar Red Cross Society presented provision kits to the families.

Zaw Min Naing (Myingyan)

Volunteers clean Chaungtha Beach

PATHEIN, 13 April— Local residents and workers came together to clean the beach in Chaungtha village, Pathein Township, Ayeyawady Region, on 8 April.

Around 150 people, including police, hotel workers and staff of local authorities participated in the cleanup of Chaungtha Beach under the auspices of Abbot U Paduma of Ywama Monastery.

Shwethaungyan Township Development Committee helped the volunteers dispose of waste they collected.—*Maung Maung Myint (IPRD)*

Police seize heroin, stimulant tablets in Myothit Tsp

NAY PYI TAW, 13 April — Members of No 7 anti-drug squad (Tamu), acting on a tip-off, stopped a motorcycle driven by Thang Kho Ram on Tamu-Zedi road in Thanan Village, Myothit Township, Sagaing Region, on 11 April.

The police seized 0.252 kilo of heroin and 202 stimulant tablets from the motorcycle. Action was taken against Thang Kho Ram, 42, under Narcotic Drug and Psychotropic Substances Law.

Police Information

TODAY'S MYANMAR NEWS SITES

Earthen pots occupy market share during Thingyan festival

NYAUNGSHWE, 13 April — Atar pots (earthen pots) are marketable in Shan State as an activity of Maha Thingyan festival.

Kyauktaing village in Inlay region, Nyaungshwe Township, sends earthen pots to the market.

Local pottery industries mainly produce Atar Thingyan pots and drinking water pots in the months of Tabaung and Tagu (March and April) yearly. Moreover, local pottery makers produce different sizes of vases, stoves, cup of oil lamp and toys made of clay.

These pots are sent to the market in Nyaungshwe, Taunggyi, Phekon and Loikaw. They sell K300 per Atar pot depending on the sizes, a local resident said.

Kyauktaing Village in Nyaungshwe Township is engaged in production of earthen pots for many years.—*Nay Myo Thurein*

Deal or not, many US states will keep sanctions grip on Iran

WASHINGTON, 13 April — As the United States and Iran come closer to a historic nuclear deal, many US states are likely to stick with their own sanctions on Iran that could complicate any warming of relations between the long-time foes.

In a little known aspect of Iran's international isolation, around two dozen states have enacted measures punishing companies operating in certain sectors of its economy, directing public pension funds with billions of dollars in assets to divest from the firms and sometimes barring them from public contracts.

In more than half those states, the restrictions expire only if Iran is no longer designated to be supporting terrorism or if all US federal sanctions against Iran are lifted — unlikely outcomes even in the case of a final nuclear accord. Two states, Kansas and Mississippi, are even considering new sanctions targeting the country.

The prospect of unwavering sanctions at the state level, or new ones, just as the federal government reaches a landmark agreement with Iran risks widening a divide between states and the federal government on a crucial foreign policy issue.

Though US states have often coordinated their measures with federal sanctions on Iran, their divestment actions sometimes take a tougher line on foreign firms with Iran links than is the case under federal policy.

US Secretary of State John Kerry (L) and his Iranian counterpart Mohammad Javad Zarif discuss seating arrangements for a meeting during a new round of nuclear negotiations in Montreux on 2 March, 2015.
REUTERS

"Our investment sanctions are not tied in any way to President Obama's negotiatons with the Iranians," said Don Gaetz, a Republican Florida state senator who sponsored legislation in 2007 punishing companies with investments in Iran's energy sector. "They would have to change their behaviour dramatically and we would not be necessarily guided by President Obama or any other president's opinion about the Iranians," Gaetz said. A final accord, which is still being negotiated ahead of a 30 June deadline, would likely lift US sanctions on Iran's crude oil sales to other countries and loosen restrictions on Iran's financial system. Federal sanctions on Iran tied to issues such as human rights and terrorism would remain in place.

Among around a dozen states contacted directly by *Reuters*, legislators in Georgia, Florida, and Michigan said they had no intention of changing their Iran policies even in light of a federal deal. State officials in Connecticut and Illinois said new local legislation would be needed to change their divestment policies, even if a deal were signed.

Officials in New York and Oregon told *Reuters* they would look to changes in law at the federal level in the case of a nuclear deal to determine how it would affect their policies.

Officials at Iran's mission to the United Nations did not immediately respond to a request for comment from *Reuters* on the state policies. White House spokeswoman Bernadette Meehan did not respond directly to a *Reuters* query about states' sanctions policies, but stressed that only sanctions related to Iran's nuclear programme would be affected by a deal.

The first divestment campaigns gathered steam in 2008 and 2009, and received a federal stamp of approval in 2010 with passage of the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability, and Divestment Act, which encouraged states to pass such measures.

Reuters

Clinton's 2016 White House launch contrasts with her 2008 bid

*Former US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton delivers remarks during the 2015 Toner Prize for Excellence in Political Reporting award in Washington on 23 March, 2015.—*REUTERS

NEW YORK/ WASHINGTON, 13 April — Hillary Clinton cast herself as a champion for everyday Americans on Sunday, kicking off her long-awaited second run for the White House with a vow to fight for a level playing field for those recovering from tough economic times.

Clinton, who begins the 2016 presidential race as the commanding Democratic front-runner, entered the fray with a flurry of video, email and social media announcements that indicated she had absorbed some of the lessons of her painful 2008 loss and would not take anything for granted this time.

When she lost the Democratic nominating battle to Barack Obama, her campaign was heavily criticized for conveying a sense of arrogance and entitlement, and for being out of touch with the party's progressive wing. This time, the video launching her campaign portrayed her as a warmer, more empathetic figure and laid the groundwork for a more populist economic agenda.

Eight years ago, her launch message was "I'm in it to win." On Sunday, she shifted the attention to voters, declaring on her new website, "Everyday Americans need a champion. I want to be that champion."

Her roll-out included a sophisticated use of social media, including Twitter, Facebook and YouTube -- a contrast to her last campaign that was seen as less adept than Obama's at using technology to convey messages.

In a tweet on Sunday night, Clinton said: "Road trip! Loaded the van and set off for IA."

A campaign aide said Clinton left her home in Chappaqua, New York, for the drive to Iowa, where she will attend her first campaign events this week. In the tweet from a stop in Pennsylvania, Clinton said: "Met a great family when we stopped this afternoon. Many more to come."

But showing a more down-to-earth side while connecting with ordinary voters will be a challenge for Clinton, one of the most famous figures in the United States after decades as the wife of former President Bill Clinton, a US senator and secretary of state. Indeed, her launch drew praise from French and German government ministers.

While Clinton enters the race as prohibitive favourite to be her party's presidential nominee, a crowd of potential candidates are vying for the Republican nomination.

Clinton's campaign will be based around her plans to address economic inequality and will tout the historic nature of her effort to become the first woman US president, aides said.

In announcing her presidential bid in 2007, Clinton spoke to the camera alone while sitting on a couch and asked voters to join her later for a series of Web chats.

This time, her video featured a mix of Americans talking about their futures and their economic troubles, along with images of Clinton in listening mode and only a small snippet of her speaking.

Her announcements featured strong words but no specific policy proposals about the struggles of working Americans and the need for economic equality. That included a shot at executive salaries that reflected populist rhetoric to a degree that could raise alarm among her Wall Street backers.

"Families have fought their way back from tough economic times. But it's not enough - not when the average CEO makes about 300 times what the average worker makes," Clinton said in an email to supporters.

Reuters

Islamic State militants claim attacks on embassies in Libya

TRIPOLI, 13 April — A bomb exploded at the gate of the Moroccan embassy in the Libyan capital early on Monday, causing some damage but hurting nobody, a security official said, only hours after gunmen attacked South Korea's mission in Tripoli.

Militants claiming loyalty to Islamic State said on twitter they were responsible for both attacks, the latest strikes against foreigners, embassies or oilfields in Libya. It was not possible to verify the authenticity of the claims.

Islamic State militants have exploited chaos in the North African country where two governments allied to a host of armed groups fight for control four years after the ousting of Muammar Gaddafi.

The bomb damaged the gate and a residential building next to the Moroccan embassy located in the up market Ben Ashour district, a security official and *Reuters* reporter at the scene said.

Nobody was hurt by the blast early on Monday, the official said.

On Sunday, gunmen fired shots at the South Korean embassy in Tripoli killing two local security guards and wounding a third person, South Korean and Libyan officials said.—*Reuters*

Saudi minister in Pakistan after lawmakers reject troop request

ISLAMABAD, 13 April — Saudi Arabia's minister for religious affairs arrived in Pakistan late on Sunday, two days after the country's parliament rejected a Saudi appeal for support for its military intervention in Yemen.

His arrival follows a visit by the Iranian foreign minister last week, in which the Iranians urged Pakistan to support dialogue in Yemen rather than sending troops.

On Friday, Pakistan's parliament voted not to join the Saudi-led military campaign in Yemen, dashing Riyadh's hopes for powerful support from outside of the region in its fight to halt Houthi rebels, some of whom have links to Iran.

Saudi Arabia had asked fellow Sunni-majority Pakistan to provide ships, aircraft and troops for the campaign, now in its third week, to stem the influence of Shi'ite Iran in what could develop into a proxy war between the Gulf's two dominant powers.

"The resolution passed by Pakistan's parliament is Pakistan's internal matter," Saleh bin Abdul-Aziz bin Mohammad al-Sheikh told reporters at the airport.

He added: "We have very good relations with Pakistan, and we expect a lot of good from it. Pakistan is a very important country, it is a big country in the Islamic world." "Pakistan and Saudi Arabia have had very strong relations ever since Pakistan's creation...we should try and improve these ties as best we can."

He is expected to return to Saudi Arabia on Tuesday, a foreign office official said. His schedule was not made public.—*Reuters*

World Bank cuts East Asia growth forecast, warns of risks to outlook

*A man is silhouetted against the logo of the World Bank at the main venue for the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank annual meeting in Tokyo on 10 Oct, 2012.—*Reuters

Singapore, 13 April — The World Bank cut its 2015 growth forecasts for developing East Asia and China, and warned of "significant" risks from global uncertainties including the potential impact from a strengthening dollar and higher US interest rates.

The Washington-based lender expects the developing East Asia and Pacific (EAP) region, which includes China, to grow 6.7 percent in each of 2015 and 2016, down from 6.9 percent growth in 2014.

That's down from its previous forecast in October of 6.9 percent growth this year and 6.8 percent in 2016.

China's growth is likely to slow due to policies aimed at putting its economy on a more sustainable footing and tackling financial vulnerabilities, the World Bank said in its latest East Asia and Pacific Economic Update report on Monday.

The World Bank said China's economy is likely to slow to 7.1 percent in 2015 and 7.0 percent in 2016, from 7.4 percent in 2014. The previous forecast was for growth of 7.2 percent in 2015 and 7.1 percent in 2016.

While the impact of low oil prices will vary from country to country, the World Bank said the prospect of a sustained period of low oil costs will help underpin growth in the region, as will an expected improvement in high-income economies.

However, due to uncertainties in the global economy, there are "significant risks" to the regional outlook, it added.

"Higher US interest rates and an appreciating US dollar, associated with monetary policy divergence across the advanced economies may raise borrowing costs, generate financial volatility, and reduce capital inflows more sharply than anticipated," the World Bank said.

Any downturn in Japan and the euro area would dent the region's exports, it said. Another risk is a significant slowdown in China, although that is unlikely since the world's second-biggest economy enjoys policy buffers including large foreign reserves, and ample fiscal room to deploy stimulus or bail out debtors, the report added.

China's central bank has cut interest rates twice since November in a bid to spur an economy growing at its slowest pace in decades.

Growth in developing East Asia and Pacific excluding China is expected to accelerate to 5.1 percent in 2015 and 5.4 percent in 2016, from 4.6 percent in 2014, the World Bank said.

Malaysia, the region's largest oil-exporter, is likely to see growth slow in 2015, as low oil prices hit capital spending in the energy sector and private consumption cools due to the implementation of the goods and services tax in April, it said.

Reuters

Australian doctors, parents back hardline stance against anti-vaccination families

Canberra, 13 April — Medical organizations and parent groups aired strong support on Monday to the hardline stance taken by Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott against parents who choose not to vaccinate their children.

Abbott announced on Sunday parents who were conscientious objectors to childhood vaccinations would be stripped of family tax and childcare payments worth 11,700 US dollars per year. "The choice made by families not to immunize their children is not supported by public policy or medical research nor should such action be supported by taxpayers in the form of childcare payments, "Abbott said on Sunday.

Although Australia's childhood vaccination rates remain relatively high — at around 97 percent — the number of children under seven years of age recorded with conscientious objections rose for the 15th consecutive year in 2014 to 1.77 percent. Opposition Leader Bill Shorten said he would support the payment restrictions and he did not accept people putting kids at risk by "claiming some sort of loose, undefined conscientious objection."

The Australian Medical Association (AMA) and Early Childhood Australia both backed the proposed laws but called for more public education to dispel anti-vaccination fears.

AMA President Professor Brian Owler said the message for vaccinations benefits had to continue year in year out. He said on Monday many new parents had become complacent because they haven't encountered these diseases in their lifetime. The parents of four-week old Riley Hughes who was killed by whopping cough last month before he could be vaccinated said they welcomed the decision and hoped the money saved could be put towards a register of immunized adults.

Reuters

IEA sees sharp rise in Iran oil output in 3-5 years post nuclear deal

New Delhi, 13 April — World oil markets will not see a significant rise in Iranian supplies for up to five years even if the OPEC member and world powers clinch a final nuclear deal by end-June, Fatih Birol chief economist and future head of International Energy Agency (IEA) said.

While the likelihood of an immediate jump in Iranian supplies looks slim, the chance of a steep fall in deliveries from other regions is rising as IEA estimates companies will cut investments by as much as $100 billion (68 billion pound) in 2015 in oil exploration and production due to lower prices.

Iran and six world powers reached a framework nuclear agreement on April 2, spurring hopes for a final deal by end-June that would lift economic sanctions imposed by the West against Teheran's disputed nuclear programme.

"In three to five years we may see stronger (oil production) growth coming from Iran assuming Iran and global powers strike a final deal in June," Fatih Birol, who will head the IEA from September, told *Reuters* in an interview in New Delhi.

He said there may not be a big growth in Iranian oil production immediately as Teheran's huge and geological complex fields have not been maintained "in the best way" due to the sanctions.

Western sanctions have cut Iran's oil exports by more than half to around 1.1 million bpd from a pre-2012 level of 2.5 million bpd, with the loss of oil income making it difficult to invest in new development and pay for the equipment and services needed to keep its production operating smoothly.

Birol sees a limited impact of the lifting of sanctions on Iran on global oil prices, which have been halved since June on supply glut mainly from the United States.

Global economic growth mainly in Asia and Europe and investment in boosting oil output will be important factors determining movement in future global oil prices.

"We see a very sluggish economic growth prospects in Europe which is very important to determine the demand of oil growth," he said.—*Reuters*

New generation of antibodies highly effective against HIV

Berlin, 13 April — A new generation of antibodies can significantly reduce the number of strains of human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) in the blood of infected persons, said a new study published in Wednesday's issue of the journal *Nature*.

More than 30 years after the discovery of HIV as the cause of acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS), an international team of scientists with the participation of the University Hospital of Cologne and the German Center for Infection Research (DZIF) has tested a new generation of antibodies on humans for the first time.

As the study showed, the special feature of this antibody is its ability to effectively neutralize a large number of different HIV viruses. According to the researchers, HIV infection can be easily treated with a combination of different antiviral drugs today. However, the drugs sometimes cause severe side effects, are expensive, and must be taken for life.

In the study, the antibody was well tolerated and showed even more advantageous pharmacological properties.

"Neutralizing antibodies have a different mechanism of action and different pharmacological properties than existing HIV drugs," said the study's co-author Prof Florian Klein.

In addition, a significant decrease in viral load in the blood was found in patients who were treated with the highest dose level (30 mg per kg of body weight).

"Thus, the antibodies showed comparably potent as the drugs that we currently use in therapy," said Cologne epidemiologist Prof. Gerd Faetkenheuer at DZIF.

An effect of the therapy could be only observed for up to 28 days after administration of the antibody, the study revealed. The team's current plan is to do clinical trials wherein the efficacy of neutralizing antibodies in relation to the cure of HIV will be investigated.

Xinhua

N Korea unveils revamped 150,000-seat stadium

PYONGYANG, 13 April — North Korea on Monday unveiled its May Day Stadium, the world's largest soccer stadium by seating capacity, to *Kyodo News*, the first among foreign media. The 150,000-seat multipurpose stadium in Pyongyang, which for many years served as the venue for the Arirang mass games, has been remodeled to enable it to host more international sports events, North Korean officials said.

While the number of seats remains the same as before, the stadium now has a soccer pitch with artificial turf, surrounded by a running track covered by new rubber mats.

The spectators' seats are in red, blue and white, the colours of North Korea's national flag, while about 700 lights stretching around the roof of the stadium have been modernized, the officials said.

The stadium, inaugurated on 1 May, 1989, is also equipped with new rooms for players, coaches, referees and sports officials, as well as a press centre, with FIFA logos and Olympic rings being ubiquitous.

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un has been eager to strengthen his country's athletic prowess since inheriting power following the death of his father, Kim Jong Il, in December 2011.

In September 2013, he ordered officials to refurbish the stadium, located on Rungna Islet in the Taedong River that runs through the capital city, to have world-class functions.

The renovation work began last April and finished in October, the officials said. But the stadium has yet to host an international event since the completion of the remodeling.

"I expect more Asian or international games will be held here," said Kim Yong Ok, 44, who works at the stadium.

The mass games, or the highly choreographed shows, are not scheduled this year in North Korea. They last took place in 2013.—*Kyodo News*

Japan's nuclear power output zero for whole fiscal year for 1st time

TOKYO, 13 April — Japan's nuclear power output stood at zero throughout fiscal 2014 for the first time since the country began commercial operation of its first nuclear plant in fiscal 1966, the Federation of Electric Power Companies of Japan said on Monday.

All of Japan's commercial reactors were shut down by the end of September 2013 and have remained offline since as none of them have yet to complete the safety procedures required to restart operation in the wake of the Fukushima nuclear crisis in 2011.

The total amount of electricity generated and purchased by Japan's 10 major utilities stood at 893.8 billion kilowatt-hours in the fiscal year that ended in March, falling 3.1 percent and marking a decline for the fourth consecutive year because the temperature in the summer was not as high as the year before and the winter was relatively warm.

The decline in output also reflected the growing number of new companies entering the electricity market ahead of a major power sector reform next April that will bring an end to the utilities' regional monopolies on supplying power to households.

All 10 utilities saw declines in the amount of electricity generated and purchased from a year earlier, with Kansai Electric Power Co posting the largest — a 4.2 percent drop — followed by Tokyo Electric Power Co and Kyushu Electric Power Co, which saw a 3.9 percent and 3.7 percent drop, respectively.

The combined amount of thermal power output decreased 3.5 percent to 649.2 billion kilowatt-hours. The capacity utilization rate of nuclear reactors was also zero.

A total of 48 commercial reactors currently exist in Japan, excluding six reactors at the crisis-hit Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant owned by TEPCO. Utilities have recently decided to scrap five aging reactors.

Kyodo News

US marines arrive for six month deployment to Australia

SYDNEY, 13 April — More than 1,100 US marines began arriving in Darwin on Monday for a six month rotation to train with Australian troops in the far north of the country, local media reported.

They are the fourth rotation of US marines to arrive in Darwin after Australia and the US struck a deal in 2011 to raise the number of US troops based in Australia.

The goal is to have 2,500 marines serving in Australia at Darwin — by 2017.

They will live in the Australian defense base in Darwin and train in the harsh outback areas of the Northern Territory.

Meanwhile 70 Australian defence personal continue to participate in the Exercise Balikatan war games with the US and Philippines on the Filipino islands of Luzon and Palawan which run until 30 April.

Xinhua

Germanwings plane evacuated after bomb scare

BERLIN, 13 April — A Germanwings flight bound for Italy from Germany was evacuated late on Sunday due to a bomb threat, the airline said.

Germanwings, a budget unit of German airline Lufthansa (LHAG.DE), has been in the spotlight since one of its planes crashed into a mountain in the French Alps last month, killing everyone on board.

Germanwings said the pilot of Flight 4U 826 to Milan was taxiing to the runway when he received a call from the air traffic tower at Cologne/Bonn airport to abort the flight.

Passengers and crew vacated the *Airbus A320* in an orderly fashion, it said, adding federal police had received the bomb threat.

A total of 132 people were aboard the plane, including 126 passengers and six crew members, Spiegel-Online reported.

The logo of Germanwings is pictured in Duesseldorf airport on 24 March, 2015.—REUTERS

An examination of the baggage and the aircraft itself yielded no results, Germanwings said in a separate statement later on Sunday evening. A spokesman for Cologne/Bonn airport could not immediately be reached for comment. The federal police did not immediately return a call seeking comment. Germanwings said passengers would be able to fly to Milan on a different aircraft on Sunday night while the searched plane has been cleared for air traffic.

Lufthansa has faced questions about its pilot screening process since the 24 March Germanwings crash which appears to have been caused by a co-pilot who suffered from depression and deliberately steered the plane into a mountain.—*Reuters*

French parliament debates bill to give spies more power

PARIS, 13 April — French spies could get more powers to bug and track would-be Islamist attackers inside the country and require Internet companies to monitor suspicious behaviour under a bill to be debated in parliament on Monday.

Web hosting companies have raised concerns the legislation could frighten away clients, while civil liberties advocates say it lacks adequate privacy protections — concerns dismissed by the government.

More than three months after 17 people were killed in attacks by three Islamist gunmen in Paris, the government is pushing measures that will allow spy agencies to tap phones and emails without seeking permission from a judge.

Surveillance staff will also be able to bug suspects' flats with microphones and cameras and add "keyloggers" to their computers to track every keystroke.

"The measures proposed are not aimed at installing generalised surveillance," Interior Minister Bernard Cazeneuve said in an interview with the newspaper Liberation on 11 April. "On the contrary it aims to target people who we need to monitor to protect the French people."

France is monitoring an estimated 1,200 Islamists and about 200 people who have returned from fighting with militant groups in Syria and Iraq.

It has earmarked about 425 million euros (307 million pounds) to recruit thousands of extra police, spies and investigators to beef up surveillance and boost national security and intelligence.

Former US National Security Agency contractor Edward Snowden last year disclosed classified details about the breadth of the intelligence gathering, triggering an international outcry.

Among those critical of the French bill are web providers who in a column published on 9 April threatened to relocate outside France because the bill would allow intelligence services to place "black boxes" on their infrastructure with algorithms to filter communications.—*Reuters*

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MV KOTA RESTU VOY NO (RSU-441)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV KOTA RESTU VOY NO (RSU-441) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 14.4.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.W.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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AGENT FOR: M/S ADVANCE CONTAINER LINES

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CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV YANTRA BHUM VOY NO (953N)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV YANTRA BHUM VOY NO (953N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 14.4.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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AGENT FOR: M/S REGIONAL CONTAINER LINES

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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.

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S CMA CGM

Phone No: 2301185

Cambodian court frees five opposition activists, three monks on bail

PHNOM PENH, 13 April — A Cambodian court decided on Monday to release on bail five opposition figures, charged with involvement in an insurrection, and three Buddhist monks accused of taking part in an illegal protest, opposition leader Sam Rainsy confirmed.

"The Phnom Penh Municipal Court decided this (Monday) morning at 10:30 (local time) to allow eight prisoners to be bailed out," Sam Rainsy, president of the opposition Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP), wrote on his facebook page. "Those prisoners will be freed this afternoon."

Am Sam Ath, a senior investigator for the human rights group LICADHO (Cambodian League for the Promotion and Defence of Human Rights), who monitored the bail hearing on Monday morning, also confirmed that the court decided to release those activists on bail.

The opposition figures, including Meach Sovannara, head of the CNRP's information department, were arrested in November for their alleged involvement in an insurrection that left more than 40 people injured, mostly security guards, while the three monks were imprisoned for holding an illegal protest.

The release of the activists came just four days after lawmakers from the ruling and the CNRP approved the nine members of the new National Election Committee, a central component of the July political deal that ended the CNRP's 10-month boycott of parliament following the 2013 national elections.

Last Saturday, the country also released 10 female activists, who had been imprisoned on protest-related convictions last year, after King Norodom Sihamoni granted them a royal pardon.—*Xinhua*

WEATHER REPORT

FORECAST VALID UNTIL EVENING OF THE 14th April, 2015: Rain or thundershowers are likely to be scattered in Lower Sagaing, Mandalay and Taninthayi Regions, Shan, Chin, Kayah, Kayin and Mon States and 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 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.

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Fifteen killed in wildfires in Russia

Local residents stand amidst the debris of a burnt building in the settlement of Shyra, damaged by recent wildfires, in Khakassia region on 13 April, 2015.

REUTERS

MOSCOW, 13 April — Wildfires in the Russian region of Khakassia in southern Siberia have killed 15 people and caused damage worth at least $96 million, the region's leader said on Monday.

In a video link with Emergencies Minister Vladimir Puchkov broadcast on television, Viktor Zimin, head of the Khakassia Republic's government, said 78 people had also been taken to hospital during several days of fires raging through grasslands in dry and windy weather.

A primary school, other public infrastructure and private homes have been damaged or destroyed and some cattle have been killed, he said, adding that the initial cost of damages was at least five billion rubles ($96 million).

Wildfires in Russia often start when locals set grass on fire on rolling fields to clean them up after the winter, a widespread practice criticized by environmentalists as well as state officials.

Wildfires in the hot summer of 2010 caused dozens of deaths in Russia. Some scientists and environmentalists suggest the number of indirect deaths caused by the heat wave and wildfires of five years ago may have been much higher.—*Reuters*

Pope sparks row with Turkey by calling Armenian massacre genocide

VATICAN CITY, 13 April — Pope Francis sparked a diplomatic row on Sunday by calling the massacre of up to 1.5 million Armenians 100 years ago "the first genocide of the 20th century," prompting Turkey to accuse him of inciting hatred. Muslim Turkey accepts that many Christian Armenians died in clashes with Ottoman soldiers beginning in 1915, when Armenia was part of the empire ruled from Istanbul, but denies hundreds of thousands were killed and that this amounted to genocide.

At an Armenian rite Mass in St Peter's Basilica to mark the 100th anniversary of the mass killings, Francis became the first head of the Roman Catholic Church to publicly pronounce the word "genocide" to describe them.

Some European and South American countries use the term to describe the killings, but the United States and some others, keen to maintain good relations with an important ally, avoid doing so.

Turkey was swift to protest. "The pope's statements, which are far from historical and judicial facts, cannot be accepted," Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu said on his Twitter account.

"Religious offices are not places to incite hatred and revenge with baseless accusations," he said.

The foreign ministry called its ambassador to the Holy See back to Ankara, and summoned the Vatican's ambassador, saying Francis' remarks had caused a "problem of trust" in diplomatic relations.

Pope John Paul II and Armenian Apostolic Church Supreme Patriarch Kerekin II called the massacre "the first genocide of the 20th century" in 2001, but that was in a joint written statement.

Francis, who has disregarded many aspects of protocol since becoming pope two years ago, uttered the phrase during a private meeting at the Vatican with an Armenian delegation in 2013, prompting a strong protest from Ankara.

As archbishop of Buenos Aires, Cardinal Jorge Bergoglio had already publicly described the killings as genocide before he was elected leader of the world's 1.2 billion Catholics in 2013. In November, the Argentine-born pontiff made an official visit to Turkey as part of his efforts to strengthen relations with moderate Muslim states.

At the start of the commemorative Mass, the pope described the "senseless slaughter" of 100 years ago as "the first genocide of the 20th century" and noted it was followed by Nazism and Stalinism.

"It is necessary, and indeed a duty, to honour their memory, for whenever memory fades, it means that evil allows wounds to fester. Concealing or denying evil is like allowing a wound to keep bleeding without bandaging it!" he said.—*Reuters*

Hundreds targeted in Asia for illegally sharing Dallas Buyers Club

SINGAPORE, 13 April — Academy Award-winning movie Dallas Buyers Club is earning fame in Asia not for its cinematic wonder alone, but as a cautionary tale for thousands of people who could face legal action for illegally sharing the 2013 film.

The film's co-producer Voltage Pictures has obtained court orders in Singapore and Australia, forcing Internet Service Providers (ISPs) to reveal the names of hundreds of suspected offenders who downloaded and shared the film illegally.

The scale of the crackdown has been unprecedented, identifying more than 500,000 unlawful distributors worldwide, according to Voltage Pictures.

"We can only pursue a small proportion, but the hope is that that will be sufficient to raise awareness of this massive problem," said Michael Wickstrom, vice president of Royalties and Music Administration at Voltage Pictures, said in an email to *Reuters*

The film, for which Matthew McConaughey won an Oscar for best actor, is about a homophobic, rodeo-loving Texan who contracts AIDS and becomes an unlikely saviour for gay patients and drug addicts desperate for treatment.

The legal case has sent shivers down the spine of illegal downloaders globally.

"Everyone is now warning each other not to download illegally online," said a 24-year-old Singaporean studying in the United States, who wished to be known only as Clement.

Voltage Pictures has not demanded specific damages, but alleged infringers are being invited to make a settlement offer. Failure to comply will result in legal action, said Samuel Seow Law Corporation, legal representative for Voltage Pictures in Singapore.

But Wendy Low, a lawyer from Rajah & Tann who has been contacted by some alleged infringers for legal advice, said court proceedings were usually not pursued in cases of small-scale downloads because of the legal costs.

"The damages recoverable may be pegged to the price of a licensed movie download or a DVD, and this may outweigh the legal fees and investigation costs involved," she said.

Reuters

(From L-R) Jeff Shell, Chairman of Universal Filmed Entertainment Group, Ron Meyer, President and COO of Universal Studios, Camila Alves and husband actor Matthew McConaughey, Focus Features Co-CEO Andrew Karpen and Donna Langley, Chairman of Universal Pictures.

Singer Glynne tops singles chart for third successive week

LONDON, 13 April — Singer-songwriter Jess Glynne topped the British singles chart for the third week in a row, fending off the challenge of US artist Nick Jonas by 5,000 sales, the Official Charts Company said on Sunday.

Glynne's song "Hold My Hand" came in ahead of "Jealous", Jonas's debut solo single, and former number-one "King" by Years & Years. James Bay's "Hold Back the River" and "Bloodstream" by Ed Sheeran completed the top five.

The race to the top of the album chart was won by US band All Time Low whose sixth album "Future Hearts" earned them their first UK number one. "Chaos and the Calm" by Bay missed out on the top spot by the slim margin of 278 sales.

Ed Sheeran's "X" charted in third place ahead of "In the Lonely Hour" by Sam Smith and last week's number one, "The Day is my Enemy" by The Prodigy.

Reuters

Singer Jess Glynne arrives for the BRIT music awards at the O2 Arena in Greenwich, London, on 25 Feb, 2015.—REUTERS

'Fault' wins big at MTV Movie Awards filled with naughty humour

"Iron Man" Robert Downey Jr

LOS ANGELES, 13 April — In a night of vagina jokes, naughty humour and a crotch-grab at the irreverent MTV Movie Awards, teen cancer romance "The Fault In Our Stars" walked away the big winner while "Iron Man" Robert Downey Jr delivered wise words for the youth-orientated show.

Scarlett Johansson, Mark Ruffalo, Chris Hemsworth, Chris Evans and Jeremy Renner, the star cast of upcoming summer blockbuster "Avengers: Age of Ultron," handed their co-star Downey the MTV Generation Award, playfully kneeling at his feet as he gave his speech.

"I've grown up, struggled, failed, succeeded, partied way too much, repented, begged for second chances and literally clawed my way to the top," the 50-year-old actor said.

"With my fellow Avengers, I advise you to dream big, work hard, keep your noses clean, be of service and, because you can, define your generation," he said.

"Fault," about two teenagers stricken with cancer who fall in love, won three awards: Movie of the Year, best female performance for lead actress Shailene Woodley and best kiss for Woodley and co-star Ansel Elgort.

Woodley, 23, dedicated her accolade to author John Green, who penned the novel on which the film was based.

"It changed my life when I read it and dramatically influenced who I am today, and his words will transcend time," Woodley said as Green shed tears in the audience.

Woodley also received the night's Trailblazer Award, which rewards individuals carving a unique and inspirational path in movies, from her "Divergent" co-star Miles Teller, who praised the actress for being "an incredible force of nature."

Viacom Inc-owned MTV's Movie Awards ushers in the summer blockbuster movie season, and is known for its more unconventional award categories voted for by fans, such as best scared-as-s**t performance, won by Jennifer Lopez for low-budget horror movie "Boy Next Door." The night's most irreverent moments came courtesy of comedian host Amy Schumer, who filled her monologue and movie parody sketches with sexual innuendo.

She also shared a passionate kiss with model Amber Rose, while "Pitch Perfect" star Rebel Wilson made a joke about her vagina while dressed in a bra and angel wings on stage.

"Neighbours" stars Zac Efron and Dave Franco accepted their popcorn-shaped accolade for best comedic duo dressed in character from the raucous comedy, with Efron grabbing Franco's crotch on stage.

"Neighbours" and dystopian young adult thriller "The Maze Runner" also won three awards each, but most were not televised.

Reuters

From film to fashion, Dubai bids to be creative capital for Arab world

DUBAI, 13 April — Move over, Cairo, Beirut and Casablanca. Dubai is launching a drive to become one of the Arab world's top centres for art, design, film and fashion - areas that have traditionally been dominated by old Arab cities outside the Gulf.

Success is not certain. The wealthy emirate is much better known as a trading and banking hub and luxury shopping destination than as a centre for the arts. It lacks the established cities' centuries of history and culture.

But Dubai has advantages which the old cities can find it hard to provide: security, cosmopolitan lifestyles and comprehensive travel links to the rest of the Arab world.

It is throwing hundreds of millions of dollars and the latest technology into its effort, using state-linked companies to develop the project in the same way that it's successfully jump-started other industries.

"We want to encourage local and emerging talent from within the region," said Amina Al Rustamani, group chief executive of TECOM Investments, a business park operator owned by Dubai ruler Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid al-Maktoum.

Other cities have allowed neighbourhoods of artists and designers to emerge over decades. Dubai is not leaving that to chance; TECOM is creating a purpose-built 21 million square foot (2 million square metre) area called the Dubai Design District.

Tenants of the district are to include galleries, studios, workshops, boutique stores and museums, plus office and residential space. The first phase, to open this year, will cost 4 billion dirhams (£744 million). TECOM says over 220 companies have agreed to take part.

The Dubai Design and Fashion Council, a state-funded body, plans to set up a design school with students from around the world. One of the school's specialties will be Islamic design.

The council intends to act as an incubator for new design businesses, providing technical support and advice. Eventually, Dubai state funds could be invested in some of the businesses, along with private sector money.

To some, Dubai's top-down approach to culture may seem stifling or sterile. But executives see no contradiction; they argue that just as the emirate has attracted traders and bankers from the region by giving them an environment in which they can prosper, it can lure artists, designers and film makers.

Malek Sultan Al Malek, chief executive of TECOM Business Parks, said Dubai's design drive followed naturally from its growth in other areas - for example, growth of its information technology and media sectors has spurred demand for designers.— *Reuters*

Toil and trouble: researchers link Shakespeare to disputed play

*Christian Van Nieuwerburgh places a symbolic quill in the hand of a statue of William Shakespeare, marking the 450th anniversary of his birth inside Holy Trinity Church in Stratford-upon-Avon, in this file photo taken on 26 April, 2014. —*REUTERS

WASHINGTON, 13 April — "This is the short and the long of it," as William Shakespeare wrote in "The Merry Wives of Windsor."

A play called "Double Falsehood" published in 1728 by a man who claimed it was based on a lost Shakespeare play but has long been dismissed as a forgery may indeed be the real deal.

University of Texas researchers have unveiled a sophisticated new study of "Double Falsehood" that used text-analysing software that helped create a "psychological signature" of the playwright.

"I am quite confident that Shakespeare had a direct hand in writing 'Double Falsehood.' Put me down for 97 percent confident," University of Texas social psychologist James Pennebaker, co-author of the study published in the journal Psychological Science, said on Friday.

"Double Falsehood" was published by Shakespeare expert Lewis Theobald, who said it was based on Shakespearean manuscripts later destroyed in a fire. Many experts considered it an original work by Theobald that he sought to pass off as Shakespearean. The lost play is thought to be "The History of Cardenio."

Recent scholarship has reopened the debate. In 2010, Nottingham University literary expert Brean Hammond said he was convinced the play was Shakespearean.

Pennebaker and fellow University of Texas social psychologist Ryan Boyd examined 33 Shakespearean plays, 12 by Theobald and nine by John Fletcher, Shakespeare's occasional collaborator. The texts were scrutinized for the use of pronouns, articles and prepositions, words relating to emotions, family, sensory perception and religion and other qualities.

In doing so, the researchers formulated a psychological signature for each author.

"We find that the profile of this play very closely matches the psychological profile of Shakespeare, and also find some parts where the psychological profile is very close to Fletcher," Boyd said.

"Really, there's just very, very little similarity to Theobald to the point that it is practically impossible that he wrote it," Boyd said.

Pennebaker noted that Theobald was considered to be "orderly, structured, detailed and rigid" and his language matched that profile. "The writing of 'Double Falsehood' suggested that the author was reasonably sociable, more relaxed, and educated, someone like Shakespeare," Pennebaker added.

Boyd suspects this is not the final word on the matter.

Reuters

India's Mirza climbs to top of doubles ranking

NEW YORK, 13 April— Sania Mirza became the first Indian to climb to the top of the WTA doubles ranking after she teamed up with Swiss great Martina Hingis to claim the Family Circle Cup title.

The 28-year-old won her third successive doubles title with Hingis, following triumphs in Indian Wells and Miami, to achieve the top ranking milestone.

"When you start off as a child playing tennis, you dream of being No 1 in the world. It's a dream for every person; very few get there. I feel extremely honoured to be No 1, it's something that I've worked for all my life," Mirza said in a statement.

"I hope this makes girls in India believe that anything is possible; we can achieve anything we want if we put our mind and body to it."

Mirza had once been tipped for success as a singles player after she became the first Indian to win a WTA singles title in 2005. She followed up her success in her hometown of Hyderabad by reaching the fourth round of the US Open in 2005 and two years later broke into the top 30.

Micromax Indian Aces' Sania Mirza of India arrives on court for her warm-up at the International Premier Tennis League (IPTL) in Singapore, on 3 Dec, 2014.
REUTERS

But from then on her singles career went into freefall, with injuries taking a toll.

On the doubles court, however, her career prospered as she became the first Indian woman to claim a grand slam title when she partnered Mahesh Bhupathi to the 2009 Australian Open mixed doubles crown.

When the new WTA rankings are released on Monday, Mirza's run of winning 14 successive doubles matches with Hingis will see her leapfrog Italians Sara Errani and Roberta Vinci at the top of the standings.

"It is a truly remarkable accomplishment for Sania Mirza to become the first Indian woman to reach the WTA World No1 doubles ranking," WTA Chairman and CEO Stacey Allaster said.

"Sania has attained many milestones throughout her successful career and this achievement is a fitting recognition of her talent, dedication and success.

"I am sure Sania will continue to create history and inspire our ever-growing fan base in India and the wider Asia-Pacific region."

Only three other Asian women have achieved the top WTA doubles ranking: Japan's Ai Sugiyama, China's Peng Shuai and Taipei's Hsieh Su-wei.

Leander Paes and Bhupathi are the only other Indians to achieve number one rankings in tennis when they dominated men's doubles in the late 1990s.—*Reuters*

mitv Myanmar International

(14-4-2015 07:00 am~ 15-4-2015 07:00 am) MST

- Myanmar Traditional Thingyan Festival (Live)
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- A Visit To Ye
- News
- Rakhine's Incense Grinding Ceremony
- Thingyan Dance
- A Historic Town: 9 Pagodas
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- Skillful Marionette Perfomance of New Generation Atrtistes
- Dhamma School
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- Myanmar Traditional Identity (EP- 2) Myanmar Chinthe (Myanmar Lion)
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- [Doctor][Painter]
- News
- Herbal Medicine By Thurein (Ta Bin Dine Mya Nan) (Vitis)
- News
- Young with Colour
- Natural Mineral Water

MRTV News Channel in Brief

(14-4-2015, Tuesday)

6:00 am
- Paritta by Venerable Mingun Sayadaw

6:30 am
- Physical Exercise

6:45 am
- Documentary

7:00 am
- News / Weather Report

7:30 am
- Head Line News

8:00 am
- News / International News

8:35 am
- The Nine precept

9:00 am
- Yangon Thingyan Festival (Live)

9:40 am
- Pathein Thingyan Festival (Delay)

10:10 noon
- Nay Pyi Taw Thingyan Festival (Live)

11:20 pm
- Mandalay Thingyan Festival (Live)

12:00 pm
- News / Internationl News / Weather Report

2:30 pm
- Head Line News

3:00 pm
- Yangon Thingyan Festival (Live)

3:50 pm
- Sittway Thingyan Festival (Delay)

4:00 pm
- Pathein Thingyan Festival (Live)

4:50 pm
- Monyar Thingyan Festival (Delay)

5:20 pm
- Mandalay Thingyan Festival (Live)

6:15 pm
- Songs of Thingyan Festival

7:00 pm
- News

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THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

11th Waning Day of Tagu 1376 ME

Tuesday, 14 April, 2015

Ayeyawady United, Yadanabon FC to play one more group match each

YANGON, 13 April — Fourth group match of the AFC Cup will take place on 15 April (Akyat Day of Maha Thingyan Festival).

Ayeyawady United FC will meet with New Radiant SC of Maldives at Youth Training Centre in Thuwunna, here, at 3.30 pm on 15 April while Yadanabon FC will vie with Global FC of the Philippines in the Philippines at 6.30 pm local time on the same day. Yadanabon stands third with three points in one win and two losses. In the first leg, Yadanabon beat Global 2-0 at home.

South China (Hong Kong) stands first with nine points, followed by Pahang (Malaysia) with four points and Global (the Philippines) one point.

Ayeyawady United FC stands with five points in one win and two draws in the first leg matches. Bandung of Indonesia leads the group with seven points. In the first leg, Ayeyawady routed New Radiant 3-0.

Shine Htet Zaw

European roundup — Barca lead cut while United thump City

Barcelona's Luis Suarez is seen after the end of their Spanish first division soccer match against Sevilla at Ramon Sanchez Pizjuan stadium in Seville, 11 April, 2015.
REUTERS

LONDON, 13 April — The Spanish title race was invigorated by Barcelona dropping points but the championships are all but sewn up in England and Germany after contrasting wins for Chelsea and Bayern Munich.

Manchester United humbled Manchester City 4-2 in the continent's big derby of the weekend.

SPAIN

Barcelona's lead at the top of La Liga was cut to two points as they squandered a two-goal advantage to draw 2-2 at Sevilla while Real Madrid powered their way to a 3-0 home win over Eibar. Neymar set up Argentine Lionel Messi for Barca's first goal and the Brazilian then converted a perfect free kick but a determined Sevilla, who are now unbeaten in 32 home games, never gave up.

Cristiano Ronaldo continued his hot streak with the opening goal as second-placed Real won while Antoine Griezmann came to the rescue of Atletico Madrid, who are third, with his second of the game after 78 minutes earning the champions a 2-2 draw at Malaga.

ENGLAND

Chelsea are seven points clear at the top of the Premier League after a fortunate late 1-0 win at strugglers Queens Park Rangers but the story of the weekend was Manchester United's 4-2 thumping of Manchester City.

Third-placed United moved four points above their badly faltering derby rivals in fourth and a point behind second-placed Arsenal, who recorded an eighth league win in a row with a 1-0 success at lowly Burnley thanks to Aaron Ramsey's strike.

Leicester City boosted their once improbable hopes of avoiding the drop with a late 3-2 win at stuttering West Bromwich Albion.

GERMANY

Bayern Munich edged closer to a third successive Bundesliga title after the top four all won, leaving the Bavarians 10 points clear with six matches to play.

Bayern beat Eintracht Frankfurt 3-0 with two goals from Robert Lewandowski and one from Thomas Mueller. Bayern have 70 points from 28 games, with VfL Wolfsburg on 60, Borussia Moenchengladbach on 53 after beating Borussia Dortmund 3-1 and Bayer Leverkusen on 51. There is then a 10-point gap to fifth-placed Schalke 04.

ITALY

Runaway leaders Juventus saw their lead cut to 12 points after they suffered a shock 1-0 defeat at bottom club Parma.

Argentine teenager Jose Mauri scored the only goal for Parma, declared bankrupt in March.

Juventus stayed on 70 points while Lazio moved into second place, going above AS Roma, after they thumped Empoli 4-0 for their eighth consecutive Serie A win.

FRANCE

Monaco moved up to third in the Ligue 1 standings after a goal by Anthony Martial and Bernardo Silva's double earned them a 3-0 win at Caen. Monaco, who travel to Juventus for a Champions League quarter-final first leg on Tuesday, have 58 points from 32 games and lead fourth-placed Olympique de Marseille by one point. OM lost 1-0 at Girondins de Bordeaux.

Paris St Germain, who beat Bastia 4-0 in the League Cup final on Saturday, top the table with 62 points and have a game in hand.

NETHERLANDS

Champions Ajax Amsterdam stayed in the Dutch league title race for at least another week as they won 2-0 at Heracles Almelo and delayed the coronation of PSV Eindhoven.

Second-placed Ajax, who have won the last four titles, cut PSV's lead to 10 points with four rounds of the season left.

PSV, who beat PEC Zwolle 3-1, will win the championship next Saturday if they beat Heerenveen at home.—*Reuters*

Manchester United's Chris Smalling scores the fourth goal against Manchester City during their Barclays Premier League at Old Trafford on 12 April, 2015.
REUTERS

Pirlo dilemma for Juve coach Allegri

MILAN, 13 April — Juventus coach Massimiliano Allegri faces a tricky dilemma for their Champions League clash against AS Monaco as he tries to decide whether to field Andrea Pirlo after the playmaker's recovery from injury.

Pirlo has not played since he suffered a calf strain against Borussia Dortmund seven weeks ago and, at 35, it could be a risky move to throw him straight into Tuesday's quarter-final first leg in Turin.

Although he retains the ability to change a game with a single slide-rule pass or majestic free kick, the odd sign of vulnerability has crept into his game especially when trying to play his way out of a tight spot near his own penalty area.

On the other hand, Saturday's shock Serie A defeat against bottom-of-the-table Parma, when Juventus rested a number of regular players, has suggested their strength in depth may not be quite as impressive as pundits previously thought.

Juventus are also missing their other key mid fielder Paul Pogba and, facing Monaco's miserly defence, Allegri is likely to need all the creativity he can muster to supply attacking duo Carlos Tevez and Alvaro Morata. Juventus, Italy's most successful team domestically, are attempting to reach the Champions League semi-finals for the first time since 2002/03.

In the meantime, they have spent one season in Serie B after being demoted in the wake of the Calciopoli match-fixing scandal and then several seasons struggling to re-establish themselves among the Serie A elite.

Now, they are once more the dominant force in Italian football and are well on course for a fourth successive Serie A title with a 12-point lead at the top despite Saturday's setback.

The form book points to a win for Juventus, who have not lost any of their last 11 European games at home and have only been beaten once in 16 European matches since the new Juventus Stadium was opened in 2011.—*Reuters*

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