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# It is necessary to settle disputes between employers and workers based on commiseration in accordance with the labour dispute settlement law and related by laws

NAY PYI TAW, 1 May—*The following is an unofficial translation of the message sent by President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Agga Maha Thayay Sithu, Agga Maha Thiri Thudhamma U Thein Sein on the occasion of the Workers' Day which falls on 1 May 2015.*

**Esteemed workers,**

I would like to extend my greetings and honour to workers, who are an important force for Myanmar, by wishing you physical and mental wellbeing on the occasion of world workers' day designated in honour of workers across the world on 1 May, 2015.

As 1 May is designated as workers' day to honour workers across the world and ceremonies to honour workers are held every year, it is an auspicious and significant day for all workers in Myanmar.

**Esteemed workers,**

As nowadays is the time when an emphasis has been placed upon creation of decent job opportunities for citizens in every country, the government of Myanmar in implementing reform measures has also given priority to providing decent jobs to everyone with the aim of socioeconomic development of the people and poverty reduction.

*(See page 2)*

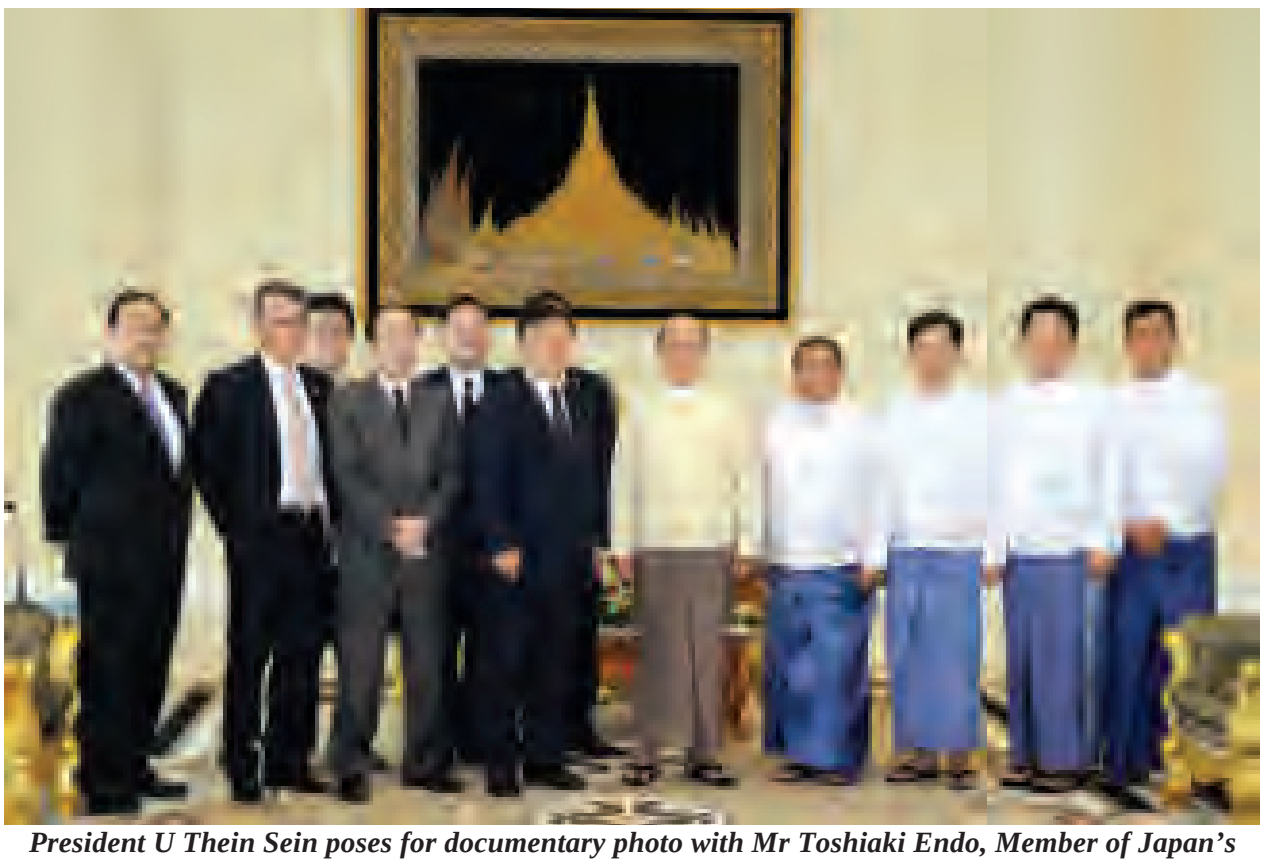
# Myanmar, Japan to promote cooperation in development of sports sector

NAY PYI TAW, 30 April—President U Thein Sein received a delegation Thursday led by Mr Toshiaki Endo, Member of Japan's House of Representatives and Chief Secretary, Diet Members' League for the Promotion of the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games, at the Presidential Palace.

They discussed promotion of cooperation in Myanmar's sports sector, incorporation of sports training with education, and development of human resources.

Also present at the call were union ministers U Wunna Maung Lwin, U Tin Naing Thein, U Tint Hsan and U Ye Htut, and officials.

*MNA*



***President U Thein Sein poses for documentary photo with Mr Toshiaki Endo, Member of Japan's House of Representatives and Chief Secretary, Diet Members' League for Promotion of Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games.*—MNA**

## Myanma Gems Emporium to run from 24 June to 6 July

YANGON, 30 April — The Ministry of Mines announced Thursday it will hold the 52nd Myanma Gems Emporium from 24 June to 6 July in Nay Pyi Taw, inviting local and foreign merchants.

The central committee from 1 May will begin scrutinizing jade lots to be displayed at the emporium.

Myanmar citizens operating government-approved mining and gem product businesses, as well as members of the Myanmar Gems Entrepreneurs Association, can visit the emporium, according to the Ministry of Mines.

Foreign merchants can register to visit the emporium at the ministry's website www.mge.gov.mm.

Last year's Gems Emporium generated a record US $3.4 billion and saw the successful auction of 6,007 of 7,454 jade lots, 126 out of 436 gem lots and 224 of the total 342 pearl lots, according to the ministry.

Over 4,000 traders from Thailand, China, Hong Kong, and Japan attended last year's emporium, according to organizers.

Myanmar has started to hold annual gem sales since 1964.

*GNLM*

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# HONOURING THE WORKERS' DAY

# It is necessary to settle disputes between...

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In doing so, priority has been given to employing the labour force in Myanmar systematically and beneficially, employing those who wish to work in decent workplaces, nurturing disciplined and competently skilled workers and qualified human resource development essential for building a modern nation.

Now we are in 2015, having left 2014 behind. The year 2015 may be an important year in transition for new political, economic and social landscapes in Myanmar and it is an important period for major sectors, including the emergence of a strong labour market after achieving economic development in Myanmar. At a time like this, the skills, experience, knowledge and efforts of Myanmar workers are priceless forces for the country.

As you may all know, the ASEAN Economic Community will be established this year in the region where Myanmar is located. Under these circumstances, skilled workers in the ASEAN region will be able to work in freedom across the region according to the free flow of skilled labour.

In the process for changing the ASEAN region, due to favourable conditions including taking step-by-step reform measures for economic development of Myanmar in respective sectors, invitation of local and foreign investment after policy relaxation, development of Dawei, Thilawa and Kyaukphyu Special Economic Zones, and the geographical location of Myanmar between populous and large markets of China and India, and in an economic corridor of great potential, it can be seen that foreign investment in Myanmar has been increasing, with potential for a further increase in the pipeline.

Under the market economic system of today, a large amount of foreign investment has flowed into Myanmar and the government has given priority to making the best use of labour resources, increasing productivity and developing job opportunities, while measures are being taken for skill development of workers compatible with modern technological advances.

Similarly, industrial zones are emerging across the country and job opportunities are available for Myanmar citizens in emerging factories, workshops and enterprises because the government is offering assistance for development of industries, manufacturing enterprises and service enterprises of local entrepreneurs as a measure to promote the private sector.

Under such circumstances, the government has amended, annulled and drafted labour laws compatible with the times for development of fair labour practices between workers and employers, aiming at socioeconomic development of all workers by enabling them to enjoy their legitimate rights and creating stable and peaceful workplaces.

Similarly, labour organizations and employer organizations have been allowed to form independently under the labour organization law enacted in 2011, and a total of 1,651 labour and employer organizations, including 1,621 labour organizations and 31 employer organizations, have been formed as of 31 March, 2015, while some labour organizations have formed federations in accordance with the law.

**Esteemed workers,**

While more job opportunities are available due to many new factories, workshops and enterprises in Myanmar today on the one hand, on the other, disputes between workers and employers and demonstrations have inevitably arisen. Under such circumstances, there will be negative impacts on the economy of the country unless these disputes can be handled properly or can be reduced in accordance with the law, because manufacturing industries and livelihood of workers' families will be hurt, foreign investment will be hindered and expansion plans of local entrepreneurs will be delayed.

If disputes between employers and workers are settled according to the appropriate laws and by-laws, workplaces will be peaceful without hindrances. It is necessary to settle disputes between employers and workers based on commiseration in accordance with the labour dispute settlement law and related by-laws. If they are settled in accordance with the wish of individuals neglecting the law, this will seriously hurt productivity as well as the interests of both employers and workers.

It is also necessary for employers to build peaceful, safe and healthy work environments by taking into account corporate social responsibility and promoting a system that prevents damage to the social environment, without considering only profits in running their businesses. Only then can a contribution be made to the economic development of the country through a healthy and competent labour force.

Amid changing circumstances in Myanmar, worksite safety and health play an important role. It is necessary to nurture a highly competent and healthy labour force to make the best use of increasing local and foreign investment, resulting from step-by-step and sector-wide reform measures for economic development of Myanmar, and invitation of local and foreign investment through relaxation of policies.

**Esteemed workers,**

The workers are asking for a minimum wage to be set. It is more appropriate to reach agreement on the rate between the employers and employees in the private sector. After some disagreements on this issue, the government has formed the National Committee to facilitate setting a minimum wage and has been holding trilateral talks between the government, employers and employees.

In this measure, foreign agencies such as the International Labour Organization and the International Organization for Migration, as well as local organizations such as the Myanmar Development Resource Institute and the Myanmar Marketing Research and Development Co., Ltd, are working together to set the minimum wage.

The Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security has formed groups of representatives from among employers, employees and experts in respective states and regions, and has been surveying incomes and general expenditure of living costs of households in some 108 townships under different business categories. Local officials are discussing the possible setting of minimum wages based on the survey results and advice from the labour organizations.

The negotiation process took time, as the detailed facts are needed in the calculation of the requirements of workers and their family members, current salaries, living costs, variation of these costs, commodity prices, inflation, appropriate social status and fundamental requirements.

If the minimum wage were to be set at a high level, production costs would increase. As a consequence, the workforce might be substituted with mechanical power, leading to high unemployment on one hand. On the other hand, industries would be shut down amid increasing wages. These negative impacts would hit the workforce, and high wages would become a hurdle for foreign investment.

**Esteemed workers,**

The number of migrant workers is now increasing as the destination countries have better economic development, employment opportunities and social status. Meanwhile, international migration plays a key part in poverty alleviation and in creating opportunities for economic development of the country. Therefore, the government is taking necessary measures for Myanmar migrant workers to have labour rights in respective countries by appointing diplomats for these workers.

Moreover, supporting centres have been set up in states and regions to protect the rights of migrant workers and to give them accurate information. These centres provide 24-hour services in Nay Pyi Taw and Yangon.

These centres are helping workers fully enjoy labour rights, a peaceful working atmosphere, capacity development, safety measures, and healthcare, while helping them find local and foreign jobs which are appropriate for their skills, expertise, experiences and capacities. Employment exhibitions are also held in major cities as one-stop centres where both employers and employees can sign employment contracts.

**Esteemed workers,**

The social welfare programme is playing a key role in enhancing the capacities and health of workers who are the driving force for economic development of the country. As the social welfare programme is important for the workers, it is a support scheme for them.

In accordance with the new Social Security Law which took effect on 1 April 2014, the insurance system for workers is part of the social security programme adopted by the government. The social welfare programme of the government will play a part in the development of social economy of the people and poverty-alleviation programmes. It will also supply all Myanmar workers with health and security measures, through the upgrading of hospitals for workers and social welfare clinics, and through cooperation with local and foreign health facilities. The programme also includes mobile clinics for work sites.

**Esteemed Workers,**

In accordance with the procedure of the International Labour Organization, the government is implementing reduction of forced labour, rural development programmes and poverty alleviation to support the reform process of the government. Formation of organizations and social dialogue is allowed. Issues concerning Myanmar migrant workers can be addressed in accordance with international practices.

The government is also combating human trafficking, promoting social welfare and fundamental social protection, reviewing and modifying outdated labour laws, setting minimum wages for safety measures of workers, compiling the list of workforce and child labour, collecting the data of fresh graduates preparing for jobs, developing the labour market, strengthening the organizations of employees and employers, developing the skills and capabilities of workers, enhancing small- and medium-sized enterprises, creating job opportunities, attracting responsible investment and improving the socio-economic lives of the workers.

On this 2015 May Day occasion, all the workers are urged to cooperate with the government to reach the goals of these efforts.

**Under the market economic system of today, a large amount of foreign investment has flowed into Myanmar and the government has given priority to making the best use of labour resources, increasing productivity and developing job opportunities, while measures are being taken for skill development of workers compatible with modern technological advances.**

*Speaker of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw and Pyithu Hluttaw Thura U Shwe Mann being seen off at Yangon International Airport by officials.*—MNA

# Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann pays goodwill visit to U.S.

YANGON, 30 April — At the invitation of Speaker of the House of Representatives of the U.S. Mr John Boehner, Speaker of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw and Pyithu Hluttaw Thura U Shwe Mann left for the United States of America on Wednesday night.

The speaker and party were seen off at Yangon International Airport by Deputy Speaker of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw and Pyithu Hluttaw U Nanda Kyaw Swa, Chief Minister of Yangon Region U Myint Swe, Chairman of Pyithu Hluttaw Business and Trade Development Committee U Maung Maung Thein, Speaker of Yangon Region Hluttaw U Sein Tin Win, Deputy Speaker U Tin Aung and officials of the US Embassy.

The speaker was accompanied by U Hla Myint Oo, U Win Than, Dr Win Myint and U Thein Tun, chairmen and members of the Pyithu Hluttaw committees and officials of the Pyithu Hluttaw Office.—*MNA*

# Dy commander-in-chief hosts dinner to Malaysian chief of army

NAY PYI TAW, 30 April — Vice-Senior General Soe Win, Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services and Commander-in-Chief (Army), and his wife Daw Than Than Nwe hosted a dinner to a Malaysian delegation led by Chief of Army General Tan Sri Raja Mohamed Affandi bin Raja Mohamed Noor and his wife, here on 29 April. After the deputy commander-in-chief extended greetings, the Malaysian chief of army spoke words of thanks.

The dinner was accompanied by entertainment performed by the Myawady music band playing songs and dances that represented the cultures of the two countries.

*Myawady*

# 5th ACMMC concludes in Nay Pyi Taw

NAY PYI TAW, 30 April — The 5th ASEAN Chiefs of Military Medicine Conference-5th ACMMC hosted by Myanmar was held at the Thingaha Hotel in Nay Pyi Taw on Thursday.

Present were Chief of General Staff (Army, Navy and Air) General Hla Htay Win, senior officers from the office of the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services, the commander of the Nay Pyi Taw Command, representatives of medical corps from ASEAN countries and military attachés.

General Hla Htay Win delivered a speech at the conference while Director Brig-Gen Soe Win of Directorate of Medical Services extended greetings to the representatives.

Then, General Hla Htay Win and party and the representatives posed for documentary photographs.

Afterwards, the plenary session of the conference started. The discussions focused on the theme of the conference "Military medical service: Benefits to community" and public service of military medical services, cooperation in public services and sharing medical knowledge.

In the afternoon session, the director of Directorate of Medical Service handed over the emblem of the conference to Col Joseph M Acosta of the Philippines, which will host the 6th ACMMC and the conference concluded.

*Myawady*

*Chief of General Staff (Army, Navy and Air) General Hla Htay Win delivers speech at 5th ASEAN Chiefs of Military Medicine Conference.*—MYAWADY

# Myanmar, Australia focus on development cooperation

NAY PYI TAW, 30 April — A coordination meeting on Second Myanmar-Australia high level consultation on development cooperation was held at the Lake Garden Hotel, here, on Thursday, with an address by Union Minister for National Planning and Economic Development Dr Kan Zaw.

First Assistant Secretary Mr Craig Chittick of South East Asia Mainland and Regional Division, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade also spoke on the occasion.

Deputy Minister for NPED Daw Lei Lei Thein discussed development strategies of Myanmar and plans, Mr Craig Chittick, development policies of Australia, plans of Australia to provide assistance to development of Myanmar in coming year, and Counsellor Nick Cumpston of Development Cooperation, assistance programmes for Myanmar.—*MNA*

*Second Myanmar-Australia high level consultation on development cooperation in progress in Nay Pyi Taw.*—MNA

# Illegal drugs worth K13.466 billion seized

NAY PYI TAW, 30 April — A joint operation team at Wantarpin checkpoint in Mongla township stopped and searched a vehicle driven by U Armay Shin leading to Kengtung on 28 April and found 63,800 stimulant tablets bearing WY letters worth K 1.276 billion and 53 kilograms of ICE worth K 12.19 billion under the driver's seat and in the fuel tank, and two mobile handsets.

According to preliminary interrogation, the vehicle had been driven from Mongpuak to Mongla by a local and the suspect was asked to drive the car from Mongla to Kengtung before trafficking the illegal drugs to the other country and some local organizations were found to have involved in the case.

The suspect was handed over to authorities and investigation is being launched into case to uncover people and organizations involved behind the scene.—*Myawady*

# Knowledge on population and census disseminated to people

HINTHADA, 30 April — The Township General Administration Department held a census seminar at its hall in Hinthada, Ayeyawady Region, on 28 April.

Departmental officials, members of social organizations and ward and village representatives shared knowledge about how to conduct, and utilize data from, censuses.

With the assistance of UNFPA and civic social organizations, seminars were also held in Pyapon, Myaungmya and Maubin districts. A plan is under way to hold similar seminars in the entire Ayeyawady Region by May.

*Kyaw Kyaw (Hinthada)*

# Toddy chairs, tables marketable in Tatkon Tsp

TATKON, 30 April— Traditional chairs, tables and beds made of toddy-palm products are on sale along the Yangon-Mandalay Highway roadside between Okshitkon and Nyaunglunt villages in Tatkon Township.

Local residents make the products to earn income for their families. They purchase toddy-palms as raw materials to produce chairs, beds and tables. They spend at least 1,500 for one chair.

They sell single seat chairs for K3,000 each, double seats for K5,000, single beds for K4,000 and double beds for K5,000.

*Tin Soe Lwin (Tatkon)*

# Storm destroys houses, school and buildings in Kyaukdaga Tsp

KYAUKDAGA, 30 April — Powerful winds hit rural and urban areas in Kyaukdaga Township, Bago Region, on 27 April afternoon, damaging a number of homes.

The storm tore roofing from the Basic Education Primary School, 10 houses and one Hindu temple in Inpatle village, 25 houses in Ywathit village, four each in Nyaunggon and Chaungkaw villages and one in Myakyuntha village.

An ox was struck by lightning during the storm in Gawya village. Local people and members of social organizations cleared debris in the township.—*Myo Oo (Kyaukdaga)*

**TODAY'S MYANMAR NEWS SITES**

# Two new transformers installed in Meiktila

***Electricians install 200-KVA transformer in Meiktila for supplying electricity at full capacity to local residents.***

MEIKTILA, 30 April — Under the arrangements of Mandalay Region Electricity Supply Corporation, electricians and engineers have installed one transformer each on 1st and 6th streets in Pyithaya Ward, Meiktila, Mandalay Region.

"The 200-KVA transformers will improve supply of electricity for local consumption at full capacity," the township electrical engineer said. "The transformers will distribute electricity to the people from an 11KV power line.

"As a result, more than 450 houses will enjoy full capacity of electricity."

The newly-installed transformers came into operation as of 27 April.

*Chan Thar (Meiktila)*

# IRD officials clarify issuing of vouchers with receipt number for customers

NAY PYI TAW, 30 April — The Internal Revenue Department under the Ministry of Finance gave talks on issuing of vouchers with receipt number for customers to restaurant and hotel owners at the hall of Pyinmana Township General Administration Department, Nay Pyi Taw Council Area, on 29 April.

Township Administrator U Myo Naing made an opening address. Head of Township Internal Revenue Department Daw Hla Hla San and Staff Officer U Win Ko Ko clarified issuance of receipt numbers to the entrepreneurs and replied to queries raised by businessmen.

*Shwe KoKKo*

# International IDEA officials visit Ottara District Election Sub-commission

NAY PYI TAW, 30 April — The International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA) visited Ottara District Election Sub-commission in Nay Pyi Taw Council Area on 28 April.

Director-General U Tin Tun of Union Election Commission and officials held talks with the international intergovernmental organization on matters related to the 2015 elections.

It was also attended by senior adviser Ms Carine Jaquet from France, project manager Mr Gregory, technical manager Mr Petrer Wolf of Austria, Chairman of Nay Pyi Taw Election Sub-commission U Aung Htet Kyaw and Assistant Director U Kyaw Min Zaw.—*Shwe Ye Yint*

# Faculty members, staff receive computer training

NAY PYI TAW, 30 April — The basic computer and Internet course was kicked off at the information technology department of Yezin University of Agriculture in Nay Pyi Taw Council Area on 27 April.

"Computer science is being taught to students of the Yezin University of Agriculture, so a similar course was given to faculty members and staff for their friendliness in basic computer science," the university's rector Dr Myo Kywe said. "More training courses will be given to them."

"As it is a basic course, teachers from the technology department will teach typing, Adobe Pagemaker and Excel subjects to the trainees," Head of Information Technology Department U Wunna Aung said. Moreover, the instructors will share knowledge about using the Internet and e-mail.

Altogether 46 trainees are attending the course from 27 April to 15 May.

*July Moe; Photo; Chit Thamee*

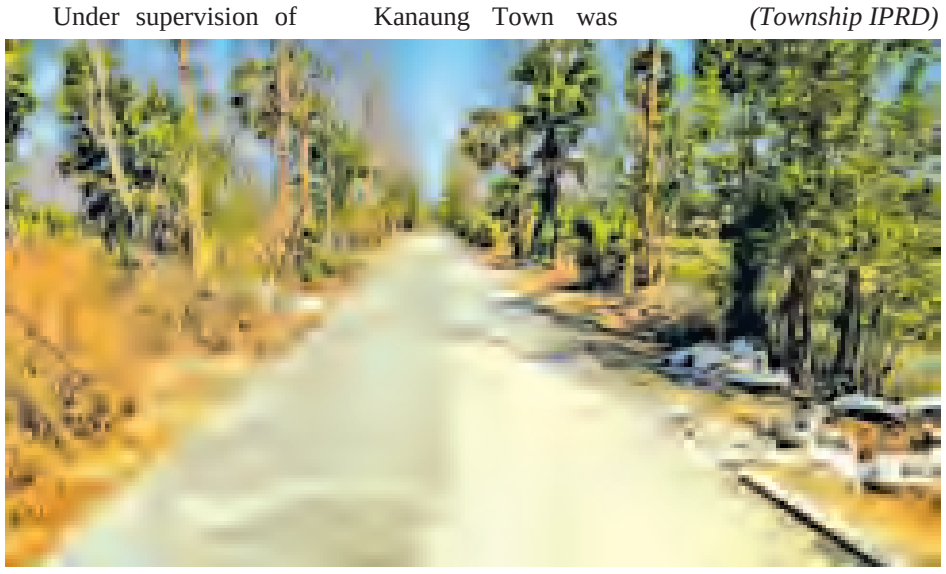
# Kanaung Town to get more than 3,000-foot-long concrete road

MYANAUNG, 30 April— Myanaung Township Department of Rural Development in Ayeyawady Region is resurfacing the Myanaung-Kanaung road with concrete in fiscal 2014-15.

Under supervision of officials of the Township Department of Rural Development, the 3,900-foot-long and 12-foot-wide road is being covered with concrete to increase the durability of the road, particularly during heavy rains.

Kanaung Town was formed with five wards on 3 September, 1973. The local authorities opened the administrative office on 15 October, 2014 for carrying out development tasks of the town.

*Win Bo (Township IPRD)*



# New high school opens in Yebyu Township

DAWEI, 30 April—A ceremony to inaugurate Basic Education High School was held in Nyinhtwe village in Yebyu Township, Taninthayi Region, on 29 April.

Region Chief Minister U Myat Ko unveiled an archway at the school and a bronze plaque commemorating the opening.

Winner Construction run by U Nyi Nyi Maung was assigned duty to construct the two-storey school building worth US $163,536.

*Po Shwe Thun (Dawei)*

# Midwifery course concludes in Ngazun Township

NGAZUN, 30 April— The latest graduating class from the Ministry of Health midwifery course received their certificates at the hall of Township Hospital in Ngazun Township, Mandalay Region, on 27 April.

Head of Township Health Department Dr Aung San spoke to the graduates about the importance of maternal and child health services in rural areas.

Mandalay Region Hluttaw MP U Kyaw Tin and officials presented the graduates with their certificates.

The head of Township Health Department, assistant surgeons, health assistance and officials gave practical and theoretical courses to trainees from 25 October 2014 to 27 April 2015.

*Thet Naung Oo (Ngazun)*

# MCWA members attend healthcare provider course

YANGON, 29 April— Yangon East District Maternal and Child Welfare Supervisory Committee and District Health Department conducted the new generation maternal and pediatric healthcare provider course at the hall of Township General Administration Department in Thingangyun Township on 27 April.

Chairperson of the supervisory committee Daw Nway Nway Lin spoke about duty and functions of maternal and pediatric healthcare providers.

Five course instructors gave lectures to 70 MCWA members from 14 townships of the district at the two-day course.—*Aung Than (Mingala Taungnyunt)*

# Vietnam marks 40th anniversary of war's end with call for further struggle

HO CHI MINH CITY, 30 April — Vietnam on Thursday marked the 40th anniversary of the toppling of the former US-backed government in Saigon and the country's reunification with a ceremony in what is now Ho Chi Minh City, at which Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung urged younger generations to "carry on the glorious revolutionary cause of their predecessors" by building up the country.

Speaking at the ceremony attended by top Communist Party leaders, war veterans and others, Dung called communist forces' resounding victory in what he called the "great war of resistance" against the United States "a glorious chapter in our great history of national construction and defence."

"With that victory, we accomplished a historic mission of liberating the South and reunifying the country, bringing Vietnam into a new era — the era of independence and reunification — and building the socialist Vietnam into a strong nation with wealthy people, democratic, just and civilized society."

Recalling how the United States propped up anti-communist South Vietnamese governments throughout the 1960s and early 1970s, Dung said, "US imperialists imposed neocolonial regime to turn South Vietnam into a US military base, brutally repressed the revolution in the South and waged devastating war in the North. They committed countless barbarous crimes, causing immeasurable losses and pains to our people and country."

"However, the people of Viet Nam did not fear," he said, echoing independence hero Ho Chi Minh's famous refrain: "nothing is more precious than independence and freedom."

"We would rather endure and sacrifice than lose the independence and be slaves," he said.

Dung attributed what he also called "the 1975 Great Spring Victory" partly to "brilliant and creative" political and military leadership, support from friendly countries like China and the Soviet Union, ardent patriotism, and "the fighting and winning spirit of our people's armed forces."

Since the war's end, Dung said, reunified Vietnam has succeeded in overcoming a host of challenges, including military ones like its brief-but-bloody border war with China in 1979 that followed the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia in which the genocidal Khmer Rouge was ousted from power.

He made no direct reference to Vietnam's current conflict with China over the Spratly and Paracel islands in the South China Sea except to stress that his country remains "determined to safeguarding independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity to be worthy of the noble sacrifice of our comrades, fellow heroes and martyrs."

After three decades of building up a "socialist oriented market-economy" through reforms, Dung said Vietnam has "recorded great achievements," transforming itself from an underdeveloped country to a middle-income developing one that has attracted an impressive $256 billion worth of foreign investment and boasts an annual average growth of 7 percent. He also cited achievements in economic infrastructure, social progress and social security, justice and rule of law, poverty alleviation, rural building, electrification and healthcare.

But the prime minister voiced worries over shortcomings such as corruption, the widening gap between rich and poor, environmental degradation, and failure to "create a platform to transform our country into an industrial nation."

"The growth quality, business environment and the economy's competitiveness remained limited. The socialist-oriented market institutions have not really become strong driving force for socio-economic development. The quality of human resources and socio-economic infrastructure has yet met the requirements," he said.

Adding to the woes, he said "the political system was not reformed comprehensively," while there has been "degradation in political ideology, ethics and lifestyle of a number of cadres and party members."

Dung called on Vietnamese to "join hands together to bring into full play our patriotism spirit; step up the comprehensive reform process; strengthen our great national unity; to build a strong party, state and political system, ensure political and social stability, and promote rapid and sustainable socio-economic development, thus creating a more solid foundation to soon turn our country into an industrial and modern nation."

*Kyodo News*

***Photo shows a scene from a ceremony marking the 40th anniversary of the fall of Saigon, now Ho Chi Minh City, and the end of the Vietnam War, in Ho Chi Minh City on 30 April, 2015. —KYODO NEWS***

***Vietnamese Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung delivers a speech in a ceremony marking the 40th anniversary of the fall of Saigon, now Ho Chi Minh City, and the end of Vietnam War, in Ho Chi Minh City on 30 April, 2015.—KYODO NEWS***

# Philippines may seek clemency anew for drug convict in Indonesia

***A protester holds a placard calling for justice for Filipina drug convict Mary Jane Veloso during a protest outside the presidential palace in Manila on 29 April, 2015.—REUTERS***

MANILA, 30 April — The Philippines may renew its appeal for clemency for a Filipina drug convict granted a temporary reprieve from a death sentence in Indonesia, depending on the outcome of a related human trafficking case, a foreign ministry spokesman said on Thursday.

Mary Jane Veloso, 30, was spared from the firing squad after officials in Manila asked Indonesian President Jokowi Widodo to allow her to give evidence to an investigation into the network that allegedly recruited her. "Everything will depend on the outcome of the investigation and its conclusion, which will help determine and identify those responsible in drug trafficking and human smuggling," foreign ministry spokesman Charles Jose told a news conference.

"If we are able to file charges and convict them and establish that Mary Jane is a victim, that's the time we could request again for clemency."

Manila has sought clemency for Veloso twice, in 2010 and this month before her execution.

Widodo, who ignored appeals from Brazil and Australia when the execution of eight other drug convicts went ahead on Wednesday, has said the reprieve for Veloso was "not a cancellation but a postponement".

But Philippine officials are hoping the developments in Manila will influence Indonesia to reconsider the death sentence.

Representatives from the Philippine embassy in Jakarta are due to meet Indonesian legal officials next week to find out terms and conditions of the reprieve granted to Veloso, Jose said.

Philippine President Benigno Aquino told reporters he has asked the Justice Department to speed up the legal process to prosecute people responsible for Veloso's situation, particularly her alleged recruiter, Maria Cristina Sergio.

Sergio, who has sought police protection after receiving death threats, denies she recruited Veloso and gave her a suitcase stuffed with drugs, her lawyer Precy Acosta said. "There's still no case against her, she is under police protective custody," she said.

Justice Secretary Leila de Lima said Sergio was facing human trafficking, illegal recruitment and fraud complaints and it would take 60 days to complete the preliminary investigation.

*Reuters*

# Japan PM Abe in historic speech vows to uphold past war statements

WASHINGTON, 30 April — Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, in a landmark speech to the US Congress on Wednesday, said he will stick to statements by his predecessors expressing "deep remorse" over Japan's wartime behavior.

Abe admitted that Japan's actions "brought suffering to the peoples" in other Asian countries before and during World War II, but his speech, delivered in English, did not contain a straightforward apology for Japanese wartime aggression.

In the speech at the Hall of the House of Representatives, the Japanese leader also pitched his policy of empowering women while soliciting US lawmakers' cooperation so that Japan, the United States and 10 other countries can move forward in concluding a US-led Pacific free trade initiative. Abe became the first Japanese leader to address a joint session of the US Congress, and the spotlight fell on his choice of words regarding wartime history amid speculation his phrasing will foreshadow the statement he issues this summer on the 70th anniversary of Japan's surrender in the war. "I offer with profound respect my eternal condolences to the souls of all American people that were lost during World War II," Abe told the audience, which included an American held by Japan as a prisoner of war. "History is harsh. What is done cannot be undone," said Abe, who visited the World War II Memorial in downtown Washington before he came to Congress. "With deep repentance in my heart, I stood there in silent prayers for some time," he said.

US Vice President Joe Biden commended Abe for stating Japan's responsibility for the war, describing the speech as "very graceful" and "much appreciated." Abe said Japanese must not avert their eyes from the suffering Japan brought to people in other Asian countries. "I will uphold the views expressed by the previous prime ministers in this regard."

Abe was thought to be referring to a 1995 statement in which then Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama expressed feelings of "deep remorse" and a "heartfelt apology" for the damage and suffering Japan caused, especially to people in other Asian countries, and to a similar statement by Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi 10 years later which used the same language.—*Kyodo News*

***Prime Minister Shinzo Abe***

# Kits to design toy robots from spare parts

***Turning spare bits into a creative toy. OffBits is all about recycling spare bits and pieces and making them into fun, original toys for a fresh take on creativity and play.***

TEL-AVIV, 30 April — The leftover screws from the shelving unit you just built, the extra nuts and bolts from the bicycle you just fixed, or the studs and fasteners you just didn't want to throw away all have a new future, thanks to an Israeli toy design team.

The creators behind the OffBits, the open-source robot toys that encourage you to tinker, are hoping to add a new sense of creativity to the toy-building community.

With the tagline "the art of spare parts,"the OffBits is all about taking those leftover bits and pieces at the bottom of your toolbox and making them into fun, original toys. It's about re-imagining common bits and pieces as parts of an artistic toy.

"We want people to look at a screw and see a foot," co-founder Avner Goren, tells ISRAEL21c. "We want people to look at the same things in a very different way and ask, 'What part could that be?' 'What could we do with it?' 'Where can I add it?' In LEGO, you don't have that thought process. You finish building your model and then you need a new game."

The cute OffBits robots were designed to be redesigned. The team spent two years fine-tuning the product, testing it on live audiences at the Mini Maker Faire festival of invention in Jerusalem.

While it may seem strange to buy a small box of little screws and odd pieces, Goren says the OffBits Starter Kits, which contain custom parts and connectors, are your entry into a world of unlimited creativity.

**Open-source crowdfunding community**

To get word out about the new game in town, the OffBits team has launched a Kickstarter crowdfunding campaign. Within the first week, the global community of BitStarters helped the seven startup entrepreneurs cruise past the halfway mark to their $15,000 goal.

"The crowdfunding community goes hand-in-hand with our idea for open-source. We want a community of creative collaboration where new ideas and designs are shared," says Goren. "We want to get to early adopters, to people who want to try new things first before critical mass accepts it. And Kickstarter is a shopping mall of early adopters who are open to new ideas."

LEGO and Meccano have the lion's share of the building toy market. But The OffBits – aimed at both children and adults – could find its own niche in the toy market for build-it-yourself model robots.

The upcycled bits in the four starter packs come with instructions to make specific robot models. But builders are expected to add pieces and personalize the characters.

"Each time you stumble upon an abandoned screw, bolt, spring or some such, on it goes to your OFFBIT, becoming a new leg, a different head, a jaunty hat or a radioactive antenna," reads the Kickstarter blurb. "OFFBITS are endlessly re-designable, extendable and customizable, and only you can make them YOUR way!"

The OffBits team is made up of Goren; Roy Barazani, co-founder and chief designer; Shlomi Eiger, product designer; Yair Yona, social platform whiz; Liron Sabag, graphic designer; Gal Olevson, content writer; and Ilya Klachick Trunov, software developer.

The OffBits actually began as an "art project exploring individuality and self-expression in modern society" by Barazani.

"I have always been fascinated and challenged by the possibility of finding new uses and combinations that even the original designers had not thought of. Everything around us can be re-imagined and become an original creation," says Barazani.

Starter Kits begin at $18 and prices jump up to $750 for a 14K-gold OffBit. Once the initial funding goal is reached, new extension packs will also be sold including car parts, animals and "wackier robots."

"We want to change the way people look at toys and play with them," says Goren.—*GNLM*

## Japan, China, S Korea adopt 5-year environmental action plan

SHANGHAI, 30 April — Japan, China and South Korea adopted on Thursday an action plan for jointly tackling environmental issues over the next five years, even as effective trilateral cooperation in other fields remains elusive due to political constraints.

The environment ministers from the three countries agreed to work closely in helping China reduce the density of PM2.5, harmful particles that are smaller than 2.5 microns in diameter, and other air pollutants.

The action plan for 2015-2019 was endorsed by the ministers in Shanghai, under which, among other points, they will set up working groups to conduct together scientific research on measures against air pollution and share expertise among them on monitoring technologies.

Japanese Environment Minister Yoshio Mochizuki and his Chinese and South Korean counterparts, Chen Jining and Yoon Seong Kyu, discussed nine priority areas of cooperation in the action plan, also including climate change, biodiversity and management of chemicals.—*Kyodo News*

## Kyodo poll finds nearly half opposed to Japan-US defence guidelines

TOKYO, 30 April — Nearly half of people surveyed were opposed to the revised Japan-US defence cooperation guidelines announced earlier this week, a *Kyodo News* poll found on Thursday.

While 47.9 percent said they were against the guidelines, 35.5 percent supported it, according to the telephone survey conducted on Wednesday and Thursday.

In the survey, the approval rating for the Cabinet of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe stood at 52.7 percent, down 2.7 percentage points from the previous poll.

On Abe's bid to enact legislation for Japan to play a greater security role based on the revised guidelines, 48.4 percent were opposed to his doing so during the ongoing parliamentary session through June, almost unchanged from the preceding survey.—*Kyodo News*

# Noninvasive, early detection of stomach cancer

TEL-AVIV, 30 April — A potentially quick, simple, inexpensive and non-invasive method for identifying people at risk of stomach (gastric) cancer and finding tumours at an earlier stage has been announced by Prof Hossam Haick at the Technion-Israel Institute of Technology.

Haick, a professor of chemical engineering at the Technion's Russell Berrie Nanotechnology Institute, developed the nanotech breath-analysis system Na-Nose to detect a range of illnesses. The latest study proved its effectiveness in predicting and diagnosing gastric cancer.

Writing in the prestigious journal *Gut*, Haick and his lab team describe how they took 968 breath samples from 484 patients, including 99 known to have gastric cancer.

They analyzed each sample twice — once using a standard gas chromatography-mass spectrometry method (GCMS) and again with Haick's nanoarray technology combined with a pattern-recognition algorithm — for Helicobacter pylori, a bacterium known to increase the risk for stomach cancer.

The tests showed that patients with cancer as well as those at high risk had distinctive "breath prints."

The nanoarray analysis allowed the researchers to distinguish between patients with gastric cancer, people with precancerous stomach lesions, and healthy individuals, based on the concentrations of eight specific substances (out of 130) in the oral cavity. The method had 73 percent sensitivity, 98% specificity and 92% accuracy.

The diagnosis is accurate regardless of other factors such as age, sex, smoking habits, alcohol consumption and the use of anti-oxidant drugs.

**Catching cancer early**

This innovative stomach cancer-detection technology has significant advantages over the existing detection methods that are more invasive and less capable of finding tumors in the earliest stages, according to *Gut*.

Gastric cancer, one of the most deadly forms of cancer, is ordinarily diagnosed via endoscopy, which requires inserting a tube into the esophagus. Patient must fast and receive an intravenous sedative before the procedure.

Though the disease develops in a series of well-defined steps, there is currently no effective, reliable and non-invasive screening test for catching these changes early on, when treatment can be most effective.

Haick's Na-Nose can detect premalignant lesions when healthy cells have just started becoming cancerous.

The study, published in *Gut* as part of the doctoral thesis of Haick's student Haitham Amal, was conducted in conjunction with a Latvian research group headed by Prof. Marcis Leja, based on the largest population sample ever in a trial of this type.

In order to assess the accuracy and effectiveness of the breath-analysis nanotechnology for stomach cancer diagnosis, a wide-scale clinical trial is currently under way in Europe involving thousands of participants who have cancerous or pre-cancerous tumours.

***Prof Hossam Haick of the Technion, Israel's 'electronic nose' pioneer, shows how nanotechnology can improve and simplify diagnosis of an often deadly cancer.***

"Nanoarray analysis could provide the missing non-invasive screening tool for [gastric cancer] and related precancerous lesions as well as for surveillance of the latter," the study report concludes.

Haick also is working on related advances such as the Sniff-Phone mobile diagnostic tool and a portable pneumonia diagnostic kit.

ISRAEL21c previously reported on the Israeli company Exalenz Bioscience, which introduced its BreathID Hp diagnostic device to detect H pylori bacteria through breath samples.

According to the Centers for Disease Control, about two-thirds of the world population is affected by the H. pylori bacteria, which cause peptic ulcers and gastric inflammation in addition to its association with stomach cancer. Until BreathID was introduced to the market in 2013, the most common way to detect this type of bacteria was a blood test.

*GNLM*

PERSPECTIVES

Friday, 1 May, 2015

## May Day brings global awareness to workers plight

By *Kyaw Thura*

**May Day, also known as Worker's Day or Labour Day, is celebrated on 1 May every year with the aim of promoting and encouraging labour organizations across the world.**

**The day has an interesting story behind it. In the late 19th century, workers often toiled in unsafe environments more than 10 hours a day, prompting a labour movement to swing into action and demand an eight-hour working day alongside better working conditions.**

**It was on 1 May, 1886, that hundreds of thousands of workers across the United States started to go on strike, followed by brutal police crackdowns on demonstrators. Three days later, demonstrators gathered at Haymarket Square in Chicago to discuss police brutality. To make matters worse, an unidentified person threw a bomb at security police, who as a result opened fire on the crowd, killing some protesters.**

**Since then, labour activists have commemorated the day, aiming to bring global awareness to workers' rights and plights and eradicate imperialism and capitalism. In addition, May Day is a time for us to ensure that working conditions are no longer dismal and dangerous and that wages are not low.**

**Without workers, the world will never see improvement. In fact, workers are those who make the world go round. Indeed, all of us are workers in some way or other.**

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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.***

# Accounting: a driver of corporate growth and then of national economic growth

*Tin Shein; CEO, MICPA*

These days much has been talked and written about the economic development of the developing countries. Many theories of economic development, past and present, have been advocated by economists for adoption by those countries. As far as I can remember, they cited as crucial factors in economic growth industrialization, natural resources, foreign investment, education, etc. Though I am only a professional accountant, I have no doubt that these factors are the drivers of economic growth, as economists say. As we all know, most of the now economically advanced countries, both in the West and the Far East, are industrialized countries. However rich a country may be in natural resources, unless it has a well developed industrial base, it does not have much hope of rapid economic progress as compared with the country where such an industrial base has been established. It is common knowledge that an industrialized country can turn what natural resources and raw materials it possesses into finished products that can fetch much higher prices on world markets than when they are exported as raw materials. Other factors, equally important as they are, may contribute toward the economic development in their own ways. However, I must confess that as I am not myself an economist, the factors I have mentioned above as crucial to economic growth may not be complete and there may be other factors as important that I am not aware of. Anyway I would like to add to the above list "accounting", which may be included in the factor of education. Personally speaking, I have not a shadow of doubt that those are the drivers of economic growth over the past centuries for most of the present economies of America, Canada, and Europe in the West and China and Japan in the Far East.

Now I would like to explain why I think "accounting" plays a vital role in the economic growth of the corporate world, which in turn would lead in its own way to the economic growth of the country. As most of us will know, accounting keeps track of the daily business transactions and records of the corporate bodies. Then the professional accountants will translate those accounting data into meaningful financial statements by using their technical expertise. The financial statements show their operational results in terms of profit and loss as well as their financial status at the end of the fiscal year. By making a detailed study of the financial statements, the shareholders and stakeholders as well as prospective investors, both local and foreign alike, will surely be able to assess the financial health of respective corporate bodies. Moreover, they show how much capital has been invested, how much profit or loss has been accumulated over the years, whether or not it has the potential to continue as a going concern in the long term in terms of financial and operational performance, how much debt has been incurred, how much is receivable from the debtors, whether it is solvent or not, how much are the assets worth—in fact, the net worth, either surplus or deficit, of the whole corporate body (that is, total assets—total liabilities) can be known at a glance. As we all know, it is commonly acknowledged that without efficient and effective financial management and control that can be provided only by accounting professionals, no commercial enterprises of any kind can be run successfully in this highly competitive world of multinationals. A business enterprise which is run without proper financial control and management will no doubt be like a boat without a rudder that is set adrift in a stormy, turbulent sea. Without a rudder to guide it, it will go in any direction that the winds blow and will never reach the destination that has been set.

Much emphasis has been placed on the foreign investment as one of the important factors in rapid economic development. But foreign investors, who are much shrewder than we think, will not come in and make their investments blindly in our country. It is more than likely that they will first explore the accounting culture of our corporate world. They will undoubtedly probe if the corporate bodies follow the international accounting standards (IAS) and international financial reporting standards (IFRS) in preparing their financial statements, showing transparency, and accountability as well as a true and fair view of their financial status as of the end of the fiscal year. Of course, accounting culture is one of the factors they will seek out as part of the economic and social environment and situation, which are politically and socially stable and free from all kinds of internal strife and conflict that are damaging to the prospects of their capital investment in the country. They will also find out if our country has sound banking and Internet-connected communications systems, as well as a body of free-market-oriented corporate and tax laws, which are the key to their successful business operations. Foreign investors are most interested in whether there are adequate, creditable corporate laws that allow repatriation of profits earned from their investments in any type of industries.

What is more, for management's part, they may make a detailed analysis of their operational results and financial position with the help of the professional accountant, as shown by their financial statements, and plan for expansion of their business activities by diversifying into new promising lines of business. Towards this end, management has to make budgetary projections of economic benefits likely to be derived from business expansion and diversification in the long run, based on the financial statements. Here, too, the professional accountant's input is needed. Thus, decisions may be taken by management on whether to raise funds needed for expansion and diversification either by borrowing long-term loans from the banks or by issurance of new shares or stocks via the Stock Exchange. All these things are made possible only by the professional accountant by using management accounting techniques of analysis, which can, of course, contribute much to the growth of the corporate bodies, thereby promoting the growth of our national economy, too. From all this it is clear how important are the role of "accounting" and that of the professional accountant as drivers of economic growth of the corporate world. There is no denying that the economic growth of the corporate bodies will create more job opportunities and, as a consequence, greater wealth for all in the country, which in turn will provide a good source of tax revenues for the Government. So with the growth of the corporate world, our national economy will grow proportionately, too, because the growth of the corporate bodies and that of our national economy are intertwined with and interdependent on each other. In this context, we have a Myanmar saying: "As the water level of the pond rises, so does the lotus." Another saying is: "The stalks of the reefs depend on the island for their existence and vice versa."

Now there comes the crucial question of how and where these professional accountants are churned out to successfully handle the accounting and financial side of the business affairs of the corporate bodies. To answer this question, I would like to give a brief account of the Myanmar Institute of Certified Public Accountants (MICPA) that churns out the professional accountants to meet the needs of the growing number of business enterprises which have sprung up in the wake of the opening up of the economy to private investments, local and foreign alike.

**MICPA**

The accounting profession dates back to the days of British rule in Myanmar. The British system of accounting, which itself is a legacy of the British rule, has been followed throughout the years from pre-independence days. Up until recent times, before the International Accounting Standards and International Standards on Auditing were introduced, the so-called generally accepted accounting and auditing standards were usually adopted by all state-owned commercial enterprises and private commercial enterprises in Myanmar.

As regards the accounting profession in Myanmar, under the Burma Auditors' Rules of 1956, the 2-year Registered Accountant (RA) courses were opened, to which matriculates and University graduates were admitted. Those who passed the final RA exam ware awarded the RA certificates and permitted to practice accounting and auditing after serving a prescribed period of articleship with the registered audit firms.

*(To be continued)*

# Myanmar government, people donate foodstuffs, personal goods for earthquake victims of Nepal

YANGON, 30 April — A special aircraft of Myanmar Tatmadaw will transport foodstuffs and personal goods donated by Myanmar government and people from Mingaladon Airbase on 1 May to provide them to the earthquake victims through Nepalese government.

According to the Yangon Region Relief and Resettlement Department, the aircraft will carry 240 boxes of instant noodle, 39 boxes of assorted cereal products, 27 boxes of instant coffee packages, 26 boxes of wafer, three boxes of candy, 80 cards of purified drinking water bottles, three boxes of clothes, 35 bales of blankets, 20 bales of T-shirt and other donations weighing 6,010 kilograms.

*MNA*

***Tatmadawmen loading personal goods and fodstuff on board the special aircraft to provide them to Nepalese earthquake victims.*—MNA**

# Realtors gather to strengthen business networks in Myanmar property market

**By *Ye Myint***

YANGON, 30 April — Real estate agents, brokers and other industry figures from across the country gathered Thursday in Yangon for the Myanmar Real Estate Services Association's first annual general meeting.

The meeting is aimed at building and strengthening networks among the country and region's real estate industry businesses, U Khin Maung Than, chairman of the association, told the Global New Light of Myanmar.

"We have threes objectives—to encourage the government to issue licenses for real estate brokers, to draft a Real Estate Law and to build a business network with realty associations in other ASEAN member countries— to be implemented in future."

The association has not yet started drafting the proposed law, which would be the first of its kind in Myanmar, and is still at the planning stage of selecting those who should be involved in the process, the chairman added.

Since the start of this year, the overheated property market has cooled with sales slumping, spurring the view that Yangon's real estate boom is about to end.

Despite such predictions, sale and rental prices for apartments and houses in the Yangon's main townships and suburbs remain unchanged.

On 5 April, the government announced new income tax rates on property transactions with reductions following the approval of the Parliament. Thanks to the reductions, agents and market observers predicted the cooling property market will be alive again.

MERSA member U Aung Tin said there are positive signs despite the current sluggish state of Yangon's property market.

"The country's real estate market is expected to grow again, as the country is also expecting to see economic growth and development in the years ahead," he said. He also highlighted the importance of public-private partnership for property market stability with the establishments of low-cost housing by the government in cooperation with developers.

The MRESA, a non-governmental organization representing those working in the real estate profession, was founded in 2012. With a membership of 3,604, so far 19 regional associations have been formed in the country's regions and states including Nay Pyi Taw except Chin State where a property association is expected to be formed next month.

*GNLM*

*The Myanmar Real Estate Services Association holds its first annual meeting in Yangon on Thursday.* — PHOTO: YE MYINT

# Samsung aids programme to teach out-of-school children

**By *Khaing Thanda Lwin***

***A mobile education bus that is equipped with Samsung tablets and television donated by Samsung Electronics to Myanmar Mobile Education Project.***
**PHOTO: KHAING THANDA LWIN**

YANGON, 30 April — Samsung Electronics pledged more than US $50,000 worth of assistance Thursday to a local non-profit organization dedicated to providing an education to children unable to attend school.

The donation covers a mobile education bus equipped with the South Korean manufacturing giant's electronic devices such as television and tablets, as well as one-year salaries for teachers of the Myanmar Mobile Education Project (MyME).

"We believe this donation is to provide a modern and innovative environment for the students and to further enhance the learning process," Samsung head of Marketing Mr Richard See said at a donation ceremony in Yangon on that day.

"We hope our efforts will have long lasting value to MyME and create positive impact on students".

Since 2014, MyME has provided an education and outreach programme via mobile classrooms to out-of-school children.

The organization has four buses for mobile schools, including a car donated by Samsung.

"Currently more than 20 teachers are providing education services to over 400 youths in Yangon and Mandalay regions, mostly to children working at teashops and restaurants," said Director U Tin Maung Maung Aye of MyME.

A teacher said, "The teaching programme is classified into three levels — beginner level, level I and level II. The syllabus includes basic literacy in beginner level, English language skills, maths, hygiene and social dealing in level I, and a computer and Internet course, and vocational training in level II."

"We designed all courses to develop critical thinking skills through innovative, interactive instruction," the director of MyME said. "MyME is educating youths every day, especially in the evening when children finish their work."

"We have no big difficulties, but our main difficulty is that teachers have to negotiate schedules, as the students' free times are different," U Tin Maung Maung Aye told the media at the donation ceremony.

*GNLM*

# Marchers protest police violence in Baltimore, New York

BALTIMORE, 30 April — Protesters marched against police violence in cities from New York to Denver on Wednesday, and a large demonstration in Baltimore ended peacefully two days after rioting over the death of a black man injured in police custody.

The protests were the latest actions against racial profiling and police use of lethal force sparked by the deaths of African-American men in Cleveland; Ferguson, Missouri; New York and elsewhere in the past year.

New York City police arrested more than 60 people as protesters roved in separate groups through Manhattan, blocking traffic in a few areas. Smaller protests occurred in Boston, Houston, Ferguson, Missouri, Washington, DC, Seattle and a handful of demonstrators were arrested in Denver.

In Baltimore, 3,000 National Guard troops and police stood by to enforce a 10 pm curfew as thousands of peaceful marchers converged on city hall. The march capped a day of calm in a city that two days earlier saw its worst rioting in decades.

Protesters in the mostly black city of Baltimore sought answers about the fate of Freddie Gray, 25, who died after suffering spinal injuries while in police custody. Police are due on Friday to give their findings on Gray's death to prosecutors but said no information will be made public.

*Protesters against police violence stop traffic at a major intersection in the Chinatown neighbourhood as they begin a march towards the White House in Washington, on 29 April, 2015. The marchers joined the cause of those in Baltimore who said they seek answers about the fate of Freddie Gray, who died after suffering spinal injuries while in police custody.*—REUTERS

"Can't stop, won't stop, put killer cops in cell blocks," chanted protesters in the biggest march in Baltimore since Gray died on 19 April, a week after his arrest and injury.

Nineteen buildings and dozens of cars burned, stores were looted and 20 officers were hurt in Baltimore on Monday in a spasm of violence hours after Gray's funeral.

"This is for everyone who died wrongly at the hands of police," said Noy Brown-Frisby, a 35-year-old hairstylist who attended Wednesday's march with her young daughter.

But she recognized that high crime in the city of 620,000 people complicates relations with the police.

"There is so much tension. The crime is so high that when there is interaction between police and the community it becomes volatile," she said.

In New York City, police on scooters used batons to try to keep protesters on sidewalks and arrested people who moved into traffic.

The demonstrations from Union Square to Times Square and elsewhere, were reminiscent of similar demonstrations in December after a grand jury decided against charges in the case of Eric Garner, an unarmed black man who died after a police officer put him in a chokehold.

Many Baltimore citizens were hoping to find out the details of Gray's death on Friday when police have said they would conclude their investigation. "The best (outcome) would be one where the officers were disciplined and officials realized what happened and owned up to their wrongdoing," said Larry Little, 22, a Baltimore resident who joined the march on Wednesday.

Gray was arrested on 12 April after fleeing from police in a high-crime area. He was carrying a switchblade knife. He died a week later.

But police said on Wednesday that information would be turned over to the state attorney's office and could not be made public because prosecutors still have to decide whether to bring charges.

The US Department of Justice is conducting a separate probe into possible civil rights violations in Gray's death.

*The Washington Post* reported that a prisoner who was in the same van as Gray, but who could not see him, heard him banging against the walls and believed he was intentionally trying to injure himself. The newspaper cited a police document.

With police and National Guard troops patrolling Baltimore's streets on Wednesday, schools reopened and business resumed. Baltimore's Major League Baseball team, the Orioles, played the Chicago White Sox in an empty stadium, a sign of the tenuous security situation.

Police have arrested close to 270 people since Monday, 18 of them on Wednesday. Police Commissioner Anthony Batts said more than 100 people had been released without being charged, because officials could not keep up with the paperwork, but he said charges would be brought later.

The violence in Baltimore prompted national figures — from the new US Attorney General Loretta Lynch to Democratic presidential hopeful Hillary Clinton — to weigh in and vow to work on improving law enforcement and criminal justice in minority communities nationwide.

Lynch, sworn in as attorney general on Monday, called Baltimore's riots "senseless acts of violence" that are counterproductive to the ultimate goal of "developing a respectful conversation within the Baltimore community and across the nation about the way our law enforcement officers interact" with residents.

The Baltimore neighbourhood that saw the worst of the violence was already filled with many burned-out buildings and vacant lots that had not been rebuilt since the 1968 riots that followed the assassination of civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr.—*Reuters*

*A person is arrested by police officers near Union Square, on 29 April, 2015, in New York. People gathered to protest the death of Freddie Gray, a Baltimore man who was critically injured in police custody.*—REUTERS

# Britain told UN monitors of active Iran nuclear procurement

UNITED NATIONS, 30 April — Britain has informed a United Nations sanctions panel of an active Iranian nuclear procurement network linked to two blacklisted firms, according to a confidential report by the panel seen by *Reuters*.

The existence of such a network could add to Western concerns over whether Teheran can be trusted to adhere to a nuclear deal due by 30 June in which it would agree to restrict sensitive nuclear work in exchange for sanctions relief.

Talks between six major powers and Teheran are approaching the final stages after they hammered out a preliminary agreement on 2 April, with Iran committing to reduce the number of centrifuges it operates and other long-term nuclear limitations.

*Negotiators of Iran and six world powers hold meeting on Iranian nuclear deal at the historic basement of Palais Coburg hotel in Vienna on 24 April, 2015.*—REUTERS

"The UK government informed the Panel on 20 April 2015 that it 'is aware of an active Iranian nuclear procurement network which has been associated with Iran's Centrifuge Technology Company (TESA) and Kalay Electric Company (KEC)'," the Panel of Experts said in its annual report. The panel monitors Iran's compliance with the UN sanctions regime.

KEC is under UN Security Council sanctions while TESA is under US and European Union sanctions due to their suspected links to banned Iranian nuclear activities.

Iran, which is has been under sanctions for years, has a long history of illicit nuclear procurement using front companies and other methods of skirting sanctions.

That has enabled it to develop a substantial atomic programme in spite of aggressive international efforts to curtail it, UN diplomats say. But analysts and Western intelligence officials say sanctions have slowed the development of Teheran's nuclear programme.

The United States and the International Atomic Energy Agency have repeatedly said that Teheran has so far complied with the terms of a limited agreement struck in November 2013 between Iran and the six powers involving some reductions in its nuclear activities, including enrichment. The panel's document did not contain further details on the British report.

Nuclear enrichment centrifuges are used to purify uranium for use as fuel for power plants or, if purified to a very high level, in weapons.

Teheran denies allegations from Western powers and their allies that it is amassing the capability to produce nuclear weapons under cover of a civilian atomic energy programme.

The panel said that the British information about the Iranian procurement network was received too recently for it to conduct an independent investigation of the allegations.

UN sanctions in place since 2006 bar Teheran from pursuing sensitive nuclear activities, including uranium enrichment, as well as ballistic missile work. There are also US and EU sanctions on Iran, which have crippled its economy.

Officials at the UN missions of Britain and Iran were not immediately available for comment.

The panel said it had received no new reports from UN member states of confirmed cases of non-compliance involving Iranian nuclear procurement. However, it cautioned that the lack of such reports could be due to multiple reasons.

*Reuters*

## Demands for Assad's ouster fuel Syria bloodshed: Iran foreign minister

New York, 30 April — Western and Arab demands for the ouster of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad have fueled years of unnecessary bloodshed as they have prevented negotiations on a political settlement, Iran's foreign minister said on Wednesday.

Iran's top diplomat, Mohammad Javad Zarif, also rejected suggestions that Islamic State militants have been able to attract new recruits because of abuses by Assad's military in the four-year-long civil war.

"People who are accusing the government of Syria, and who are saying the government of Syria has the blood of so many people on its hands should go back and do a bit of soul-searching and tell themselves what prevented a ceasefire in Syria a few years ago," said Zarif, who is in New York for a UN meeting on the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

"The only thing that prevented a ceasefire ... was a precondition" that Assad not be part of any transitional government in Syria, Zarif said at New York University. European Union foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini on Tuesday said a successful nuclear deal between Teheran and six world powers could open the door to Iran playing a constructive role in resolving regional crises. Zarif suggested Iran, an ally of Assad's, should be party of any talks on Syria. "Others were trying to exclude Iran, to their own detriment," he said.

A 2012 peace conference involving Syrian government and opposition groups, the United States Russia and United Nations produced the "Geneva Communique," which called for a political transition but left Assad's fate ambiguous.

Iran did not sign on to the communique and was excluded from the January 2014 "Geneva II" meeting. Zarif said outsiders deciding that Assad should not be part of any political process was a mistake.

"You cannot tell (Syrians) that this person should not be a part of your future, the other person should not be a part of your future," he said. "This will prevent a negotiation from taking place."

*Reuters*

# Heavy fighting in Yemen, Saudi Arabia trains tribal fighters

*A member of the Southern Resistance Committees takes position during clashes with Houthi fighters in Yemen's southern city of Aden on 29 April, 2015.*—Reuters

Aden / Doha, 30 April — Saudi-led air strikes hit five Yemeni provinces as fighting raged in the southern city of Aden on Wednesday, and sources in the region said the kingdom was training armed tribesmen to fight the Iran-allied Houthi group.

Houthi rebels' tanks and snipers killed at least 12 civilians overnight in Yemen's Aden as they advanced toward the centre of the city, residents said, and a Saudi-led coalition airdropped arms to anti-Houthi fighters in the city of Taiz.

The Houthis took the capital Sanaa in September, demanding a more inclusive government, and swept south, rattling top world oil exporter Saudi Arabia and its allies, who fear what they see as expanding Iranian influence in the region. Arab coalition air strikes have, over the last month, backed local fighters in Aden and nationwide battling Shi'ite Houthis.

Heavy clashes shook the Khor Maksar district in Aden, seen as the main bulwark against the Houthis, and dozens of families fled the district on Wednesday.

"The world, the coalition and the United Nations need to step in urgently to save our neighbourhood, which has truly become a disaster area after this indiscriminate shelling," resident Ali Mohammed Yahya said.

About 200 km (120 miles) to the north, Arab aircraft dropped weapons for tribal and Islamist militiamen fighting the Houthis in the city of Taiz.

Talks between the Houthis and exiled, Riyadh-based President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi collapsed in early April and he fled. Chaos then set in as the Iran-allied Houthis fought their way south, battling loyalist army units, regional tribes and al-Qaeda militants.

Sources in the region told *Reuters* Saudi Arabia had trained Yemeni armed tribesmen to fight the Houthis, in a sign of its growing involvement in the country's ground war after a month of air operations.

Three hundred tribal fighters trained across Yemen's border with the kingdom were deployed this week back to their home area in the Sirwah district of central Marib province and made gains against the Houthis, a Yemeni official source told *Reuters*.

"You cannot win a war against the Houthis from the air — you need to send ground forces in, but now there's a programme to train tribal fighters on the border," said a Doha-based military source familiar with the matter.

Despite weeks of bombing, the Houthis have retained their dominant position on battle fronts across Yemen, and no visible progress has been made towards peace talks.

Yemen's government in exile said it would request membership in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), a powerful grouping of Sunni Arab Gulf monarchies, the country's spokesman Rajeh Badi said by telephone from Qatar.

Officials from the Saudi-backed government live mostly in Riyadh and have little influence on the ground in Yemen.

The Arabian peninsula's only republic, Yemen has for decades been at the sidelines of decision-making in the region, but the move may bind its future more closely to its richer neighbours.

Impoverished and strife-torn even before the war, Yemen is now mired in a humanitarian catastrophe, as 300,000 people have been displaced by the conflict and 12 million are short of food.

The World Health Organization said on Tuesday 1,244 people were reported killed and 5,044 wounded in Yemen in the month up to Wednesday.—*Reuters*

# Libya's Benghazi, cradle of anti-Gaddafi revolt, torn by chaos that followed

Benghazi, (Libya), 30 April — When Libyan government forces and Islamist militants battled with artillery guns right in his district, Khalil al-Barassi knew it was time to pack up. He moved his family into an abandoned schoolhouse, where they live on aid from the Red Crescent, while the city around them falls to pieces.

After a year of war, Libya's second-largest city Benghazi is divided into areas controlled by forces loyal to one of two rival Libyan governments, and areas held by Islamist fighters led by the group Washington blames for the 2012 attack that killed its ambassador.

The city was the birthplace of the revolt that toppled dictator Muammar Gaddafi in 2011, with residents who pride themselves on a willingness to rise up and defend themselves from exploitation.

But with rockets crashing daily into its boulevards, neighbourhoods reduced to rubble and around a tenth of its 1 million people made homeless, Benghazi has now become one of the worst examples of the chaos that followed Gaddafi's downfall.

*A general view of homes damaged after clashes between members of the Libyan pro-government forces, backed by the locals, and Shura Council of Libyan Revolutionaries, an alliance of former anti-Gaddafi rebels who have joined forces with Islamist group Ansar al-Sharia, in Benghazi on 1 April, 2015.*—Reuters

As elsewhere in Libya, armed groups have lined up behind the two rival governments. In Benghazi, one government backs a Gaddafi-era army general and the other backs the Islamists.

Both pay fighters out of central revenues under a system set up after Gaddafi's downfall, which saw scores of armed groups placed on the public payroll, effectively subsidizing civil war from the country's oil exports.

Some of Benghazi's 90,000 displaced people have moved in with relatives living in safer areas. Others, like Barassi with his wife and four children, have moved into schools, empty now that the fighting has prevented them from opening.

"Rockets hit the buildings in our street," said Barassi whose family has been sleeping for ten months on blankets in a rundown school packed with some 15 other families sharing classrooms. Electricity is sporadic.

"It's bad here but I cannot afford to rent a flat," said the 47-year who depends on aid from the Red Crescent and a small salary as a soldier guarding a hospital.

The battle for the city started a year ago when retired army general Khalifa Haftar launched his own war against Ansar al-Sharia, the militant group blamed by Washington for the 11 September 2012 assault on a US diplomatic mission that killed four Americans including ambassador Christopher Stevens. Last month, Libya's internationally recognized parliament, which is based out of an eastern town after being forced out of the capital Tripoli by a rival government, appointed Haftar as its top army commander.

So far, the Benghazi fighting has been inconclusive, with both sides relying on poorly-trained "brigades" of fighters who confront each other with outdated weapons such as Toyota trucks mounted with heavy guns.

Haftar's army forces have used air support to help win back territory from Islamist fighters, including the airport area, eastern districts and several barracks that had been overrun last summer.

But despite almost daily army pushes, Islamists are still holed up in the port area in the city center, where Barassi lived before he had to flee, and in some western districts. Street battles go back and forth while army helicopters open fire.

"Whenever we approach their strongholds the terrorists fire rockets on residential districts," said Fadhl al-Hassi, an army commander. The Islamist camp denies this.

In a city where virtually everyone has access to weapons, neighbours — armed but wearing civilian clothes — have joined pro-army forces to help dismantle Ansar al-Sharia checkpoints.—*Reuters*

# Climbing to reopen on Everest after quake, avalanche

KATHMANDU, 30 April — Climbing will reopen on Mount Everest next week after damage to routes caused by avalanches that were set off by a huge earthquake, one of which killed 18 climbers at base camp, senior officials said on Thursday.

"Next week, expeditions will continue," said Tulsi Prasad Gautam, chief of the mountaineering department at the tourism ministry.

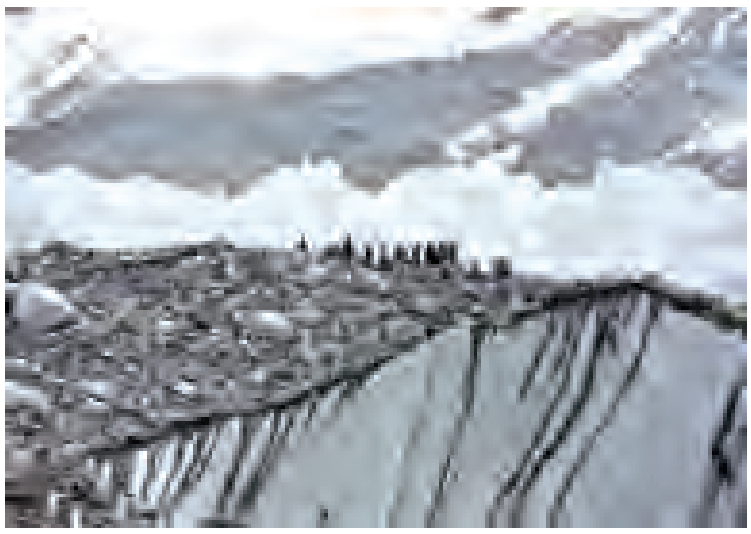
At an informal meeting of officials and climbing groups, it was agreed that there was "no additional risk" to climbers as a result of the earthquake, which has killed thousands of people in Nepal.

A team called the Icefall Doctors would within one week fix the route through the treacherous Khumbu icefalls, taken by climbers scaling the south side of Everest on Nepali territory, Gautam told *Reuters*.

A massive avalanche unleashed by Saturday's 7.8 magnitude quake wiped out a swath of Everest base camp, killing 18 climbers and sherpa mountain guides and injuring more than 60.

Many climbers have abandoned their ascent of Everest, the world's tallest peak at 8,850 m (29,035 feet).

Others have, however, hunkered down in hope of pressing ahead despite the humanitarian tragedy unfolding in Nepal, where more than 5,000 people have died in the quake and its aftermath.



***Trekkers stand in Everest Base camp, approximately 5,300 metres (17,388 ft) above sea level, in Solukhumbu District, Nepal, in this file picture taken on 6 May, 2014.*—REUTERS**

Gautam said that 60-70 foreign climbers remained at base camp, but expected climbers to regroup and more than 350 to try to reach the summit. With their local sherpa mountain guides, some 700 would scale Everest in total, he said, a normal number for the spring season.

Gautam said that most of the ropes buried under avalanche snow on the Khumbu icefalls would be pulled out and used.

If it was not possible to use the old ropes, new ropes and ladders would be laid that have already been brought to Everest base camp.

The mountaineeering department is also considering extending the season into early June for those holding 90-day permits to climb Everest. Typically the monsoon sets in on or after 1 June, with heavy cloud cover making climbing impossible.

Ang Tshering Sherpa, head of the Nepal Mountaineering Association, confirmed that the Icefall Doctors were working on the route up to the advanced camps from which climbers mount their final assault on the summit.

*Reuters*

# Abe writes to Putin to inform him of absence from WWII ceremony

TOKYO, 30 April — Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has sent a letter to Russian President Vladimir Putin to tell him he will not be able to attend a 9 May ceremony in Moscow to mark the 70th anniversary of the end of World War II in Europe, Japan's top government spokesman said on Thursday.

"The letter conveyed (Abe's) intention to skip the ceremony due to a schedule conflict," Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga said at a news conference. Suga declined to elaborate further on the substance of the letter.

On Tuesday, Suga said that Abe, who was invited to the ceremony, has decided to skip it to attend to Diet and other affairs after returning from an eight-day official trip to the United States through 3 May.

Ambassador to Russia Chikahito Harada will represent Japan on Abe's behalf.

Japan has invited Putin for a visit but it was put off last year due to Russia's annexation of the Crimean region of Ukraine, an act condemned by Tokyo and other members of the international community. Suga said the rescheduling of Putin's visit has yet to be decided.

Given Russia's involvement in the Ukraine crisis, US President Barack Obama has decided not to take part in the 9 May ceremony. South Korean President Park Geun-hye is also unlikely to attend.

In contrast, Chinese President Xi Jinping plans to attend and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un is also reportedly planning to do so.—*Kyodo News*

# Ex-AUM cult member sentenced to life in prison over 1995 sarin attack

TOKYO, 30 April — A former AUM Shinrikyo cult member was sentenced on Thursday to life in prison for his involvement in the group's 1995 sarin nerve gas attack on the Tokyo subway system.

The Tokyo District Court handed down the ruling on Katsuya Takahashi, 57, in the first case tried before a combination of lay and professional judges over the terror attack, which killed 13 and left more than 6,000 people injured.

Prosecutors had sought life imprisonment for Takahashi, who was indicted on murder and other charges for allegedly acting as a driver for one of the cult members when he released the deadly agent in subway cars on 20 March, 1995. Takahashi had pleaded not guilty, saying he did not know sarin would be used.

Captured in Tokyo in June 2012 after 17 years on the run, Takahashi was the last to be arrested among the AUM Shinrikyo members put on a special wanted list after the subway attack, which was masterminded by cult founder Shoko Asahara.

During his trial before six citizen and three professional judges, 27 people, including six death row inmates, testified.

Yoshihiro Inoue, 45, a cult supervisor, said he told Takahashi that sarin would be released, a claim strongly denied by the defendant.

With attention focused on whether the word "sarin" had been used during a meeting at which Takahashi was present before the subway attack, two of nine witnesses who attended the meeting said the word sarin was indeed used.

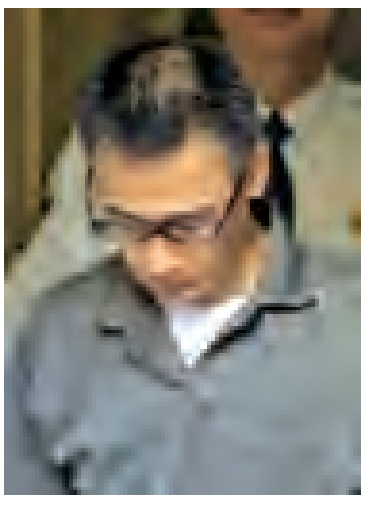


***Photo shows Katsuya Takahashi, a former member of the AUM Shinrikyo cult who has been indicted on murder and other charges for allegedly acting as a driver for one of the cult members who released the deadly sarin nerve gas in Tokyo subway cars in March 1995.***
**KYODO NEWS**

Tomomitsu Niimi, a 51-year-old death row inmate, said participants had used the word the "thing."

During the trial, Takahashi described Asahara as "guru," suggesting that he was still under the influence of the founder's teachings. Asahara, 60, whose real name is Chizuo Matsumoto, was convicted and is on death row.

All the other AUM members who offered transportation in the subway attack have been sentenced to life imprisonment or death.—*Kyodo News*

# Vietnam buys submarine-launched land attack missiles to deter China

HONG KONG, 30 April — Vietnam is arming its expanding submarine fleet with land attack missiles that could be capable of reaching Chinese coastal cities.

The independent Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) recently updated data on its website to show Vietnam's acquisition of the Russian-made land attack variant of the Klub missile for its state-of-the-art Kilo attack submarines.

SIPRI arms researcher Siemon Wezeman said the entry was based on an earlier but little-noticed filing Vietnam made last year to the United Nations' register of conventional arms.

Regional military attaches and analysts see the missiles as a further sign of Vietnam's determination to counter the rise of China's military and part of a broader trend of Asian countries re-arming amid rising territorial tensions.

The chice of weapon is a more assertive one than the anti-shipping missiles Vietnam was expected to obtain.

While those would potentially target Chinese ships and submarines in the South China Sea, the land attack weapons are capable of precision strikes at a range of 300 kilometres, making China's coastal cities potential targets in any conflict.

Carl Thayer, an expert on Vietnam's military at the Australian Defence Force Academy, said the move was a "massive shift" beyond more routine anti-ship tactics.

"They've given themselves a much more powerful deterrent that complicates China's strategic calculations," he said, adding he was surprised by the move.

Vietnam is the first Southeast Asian nation to arm its submarine fleet with a land attack missile.

The Vietnamese defence and foreign ministries have yet to respond to questions submitted by *Reuters*. Vietnamese military officials have previously described Vietnam's arms build-up, including the submarine purchases, as defensive.

Moscow-based Almaz-Antey, parent company of the missiles' manufacturer Novator, declined to comment on any weapon sales to Vietnam.

Rather than risk an attack on cities such as Shanghai, it is more likely Vietnam would see closer ports and airfields, such as the naval base at Sanya on China's Hainan Island and facilities on land reclamations China is building in the South China Sea, as potential targets, Thayer said.

While communist parties rule both Vietnam and China, Hanoi has long been wary of China, especially over Beijing's claims to most of the potentially oil-rich South China Sea.

Beijing's placement of an oil rig in waters claimed by Vietnam last year sparked riots in Vietnam and infuriated Hanoi's leadership. Its coast guard ships and fishing boats were routinely chased away by larger Chinese ships during the stand-off.

The two navies routinely eye each other over disputed holdings in the sea's Spratly islands, which straddle some of the world's busiest shipping lanes.

Before obtaining the latest weapons, Hanoi's previous land attack capabilities were limited to a handful of ageing Scud missiles and more limited weapons fired by Russian-built *Su-30* aircraft.—*Reuters*

# CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

## MV JAI KRISHNA VOY NO ( )

Consignees of cargo carried on MV JAI KRISHNA VOY NO ( ) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 2.5.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.I.P.T-2 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.

**SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT**
**MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY**
**AGENT FOR: M/S RK SHIPPING & TRADING PTE LTD**

Phone No: 2301186

# CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

## MV SINAR BIAK VOY NO (432N)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV SINAR BIAK VOY NO (432N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 1.5.2015 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.

**SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT**
**MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY**
**AGENT FOR: M/S SAMUDERA SHIPPING LINE**

Phone No: 2301185

# CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

## MV BC SANFRANCISCO VOY NO (004W)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV BC SANFRANCISCO VOY NO (004W) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 1.5.2015 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.

**SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT**
**MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY**
**AGENT FOR: M/S OOCL SHIPPING LINES**

Phone No: 2301185

## Centre for Human Resource Development (Yangon University of Foreign Languages) Invitation for Application to Foreign Language Courses

The Centre for Human Resource Development (Yangon University of Foreign Languages) will open evening courses on Chinese, English, French, German, Japanese, Korean, Russian, Thai and Myanmar.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Commencement date of course | : | 18-5-2015 |
| Commencement date for submission of applications | : | 12-5-2015 |
| Closing date for applications | : | 15-5-2015 (For English language the day on which the targeted number of applicants is reached) |
| Application to be submitted to | : | Yangon University of Foreign Languages |
| Days on which classes held | : | Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays |
| Time | : | 5:20 — 7:00 p.m. |
| Documents required | : | Certificate of Matriculation (or) Marks Certificate (or) Degree Certificate (Both Original and copy are required) |
| Enquiry | : | Student's Affairs Section, YUFL |

Phone: 514372 (Ext -*809)

Application must be submitted in person.

**THE REPUBLIC OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR**
**MINISTRY OF ENERGY**
**MYANMA OIL AND GAS ENTERPRISE**
**( INVITATION FOR OPEN TENDER )**
**(7/2015)**

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

| Sr.No | Tender No | Description | Remark |
|---|---|---|---|
| (1) | IFB-003(15-16) | NDT Service for 10" Toe River Crossing Gas Pipe Line by HDD Rig (3200) Ft | US$ |
| (2) | IFB-004(15-16) | NDT Service for 12" Hlaing River Crossing Gas Pipe Line by HDD Rig (3200) Ft | US$ |
| (3) | IFB-005(15-16) | Electrical Spares for $D_3$ $T_2$ SR Rigs (29) Items | US$ |
| (4) | IFB-006(15-16) | Spares for Cummins KTA 2300 C 1050 Engine (7) Items | US$ |
| (5) | IFB-007(15-16) | Spares for GM 6V 71 Engine (4) Items | US$ |
| (6) | IFB-008(15-16) | Spares for GM 6V 53 Engine (4) Items | US$ |

Tender Closing Date & Time - 25-5-2015, 16:30 Hr

Tender Document shall be available during office hours commencing from 27th April, 2015 at the Finance Department, Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise, No(44) Complex, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar.

Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise
Ph.+9567 -411097/411206

## WEATHER REPORT

**FORECAST VALID UNTIL EVENING OF THE 1st May, 2015:** Rain or thundershowers are likely to be scattered in Upper Sagaing and Taninthayi Regions, Kachin, Shan and Mon States, isolated in Lower Sagaing and Mandalay Regions Chin, Rakhine and Kayin States, partly cloudy in the remaining Regions and States. Degree of certainty is (60%).
**OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS:** Continuation of rain or thundershowers in the Northern Myanmar areas.

# Brazilian executed in Indonesia unaware what was happening until end

SYDNEY, 30 April — A Brazilian man executed in Indonesia for drug trafficking who was diagnosed with schizophrenia and bipolar disorder did not understand what was happening to him until his final moments, a priest assigned as his spiritual adviser told Australia's ABC radio on Thursday.

Rodrigo Muxfeldt Gularte was among eight people convicted of drug offences from several countries who were executed shortly after midnight on Wednesday morning.

Brazil had made repeated personal pleas for Indonesia to commute his sentence on humanitarian grounds, citing his mental illness.

Father Charlie Burrows, a local priest who accompanied Gularte in his final hours, told ABC he thought he had prepared the Brazilian for the execution.

"I thought I'd got him ready, that he was going to be put in chains, because he didn't like being touched ... I said to him, well I'm 72, when you get up to heaven you'll know where I'm going to live, prepare a garden or something," Burrows said.

Gularte was calm as he was handcuffed by warders but became agitated when he was handed over to police outside the jail who put leg chains on him, Burrows said.

"I thought he'd got the message he was to be executed but ... when the chains started to go on, he said to me, 'Oh father, am I being executed?'," Burrows said.

Burrows, who witnessed the execution of another Brazilian prisoner in January, said Gularte continued to hear voices in his final days telling him everything would be fine.

"He believes the voices more than he does anybody else," he said.

Gularte was caught entering Indonesia in 2004 with six kilograms of cocaine hidden in surf boards, and was sentenced to death in 2005.

The 42-year-old's family presented several doctors' reports to the Indonesian authorities attesting to his mental illness, and Brazilian President Dilma Rousseff had made personal pleas on his behalf. Rousseff recalled Brazil's ambassador to Jakarta after the first execution in January.

Burrows joined other spiritual advisers and family members in a tent near the field on the prison island of Nusakambangan where the executions took place. They heard the men singing before shots rang out simultaneously and were comforted that there were no subsequent single shots that would have indicated one of the prisoners needed to be shot in the head.

Burrows said all eight men refused blindfolds and were handcuffed at the front to allow them to shake hands with a large number of warders who had gathered outside.

"They might have seen the executioners in very dark colours; it was a very dark night," Burrows said. "They only had flashlights on the prisoners, and when we were going to meet them we were falling over stones because of the dark."—*Reuters*

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# India, Japan sign action plan for investment, trade promotion

MUMBAI, 30 April — India and Japan on Thursday signed an action agenda for bilateral investment and trade promotion.

The action agenda, signed in New Delhi by Indian Commerce Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and visiting Japanese Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry Yoichi Miyazawa, focuses on further strengthening bilateral trade relations.

Miyazawa said it contains five key items including the development of select townships in India as Japanese industrial townships, promotion of investment and infrastructure development, and further development and cooperation in information technology.

He also mentioned that the signing of the action agenda marks a further improvement in the trade relationship between the two countries and follows up Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Japan last year.

The Indian commerce minister said that the signing is in line with Modi's vision of "Made in India." She added that the interaction with the Japanese trade minister also involved a strong partnership and dialogue between the private sectors of the two countries represented by a strong delegation of corporate chiefs from both sides.

*Kyodo News*

# Alabama Shakes rock their way to top of Billboard 200

*Brittany Howard of the band ''Alabama Shakes'' plays at the Coachella Valley Music and Arts Festival in Indio, California on 10 April, 2015.—*Reuters

Los Angeles, 30 April — Southern rockers Alabama Shakes scored their first chart-topping album on the weekly US Billboard 200 chart on Wednesday.

"Sound & Color," the second album by the band, sold 91,000 albums, 27,000 songs and was streamed 3.6 million times, totalling 96,000 units according to figures from Nielsen SoundScan.

The album's success comes after the band was one of the standouts from the annual Coachella 3-day music festival in Southern California earlier this month. The soundtrack to Universal Pictures' April blockbuster "Furious 7" held its spot at No 2, selling 62,000 units, while rapper Yelawolf's new album "Love Story" debuted at No 3 with 58,000 units.

The Billboard 200 chart tallies album sales, song sales (10 songs equal one album) and streaming activity (1,500 streams equal one album).

No other new entries cracked into the top ten of the Billboard 200 chart this week, and last week's chart-topper, Shawn Mendes' "Handwritten," dropped to No 17.

On the Digital Songs charts, which measures online download sales, Wiz Khalifa and Charlie Puth's "See You Again," the tribute to late actor Paul Walker on the "Furious 7" soundtrack, held steady at No. 1 with 316,000 downloads sold last week.

*Reuters*

# Ex-fiance of Sofia Vergara defends lawsuit over frozen embryos

Los Angeles, 30 April — The ex-fiance of actress Sofia Vergara, one of the stars of the hit ABC comedy "Modern Family", has defended his lawsuit seeking to take two frozen embryos the couple created before separating.

In a *New York Times* column published on Wednesday, businessman Nick Loeb said that after the pair split in 2014, he sought to take the embryos to have them carried to term — assuming all financial and custodial responsibility — but she refused.

"When we create embryos for the purpose of life, should we not define them as life, rather than as property?" he wrote.

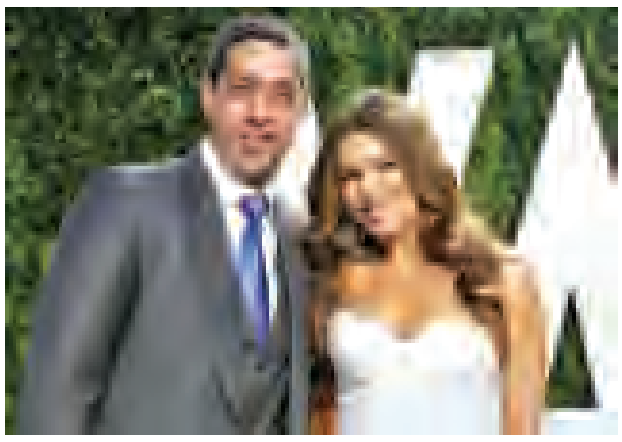
Representatives for the Colombian-born Vergara, who last September earned the distinction of being the highest paid US television actress for three consecutive years, could not be immediately reached for comment.

Loeb said he decided to write the op-ed after news of the case, which he filed in Santa Monica, California last August, recently broke in the media.

Son of former US ambassador John L Loeb Jr, Loeb said he and Vergara agreed to attempt in vitro fertilization and have a surrogate bear children from their embryos. He said the couple's first two attempts were unsuccessful, so they created two more embryos in 2013, both female.

Vergara's lawyer, Fred Silberberg, told *People* magazine in a statement earlier this month that she intended to keep the embryos frozen.

"Vergara, who has happily moved on with her life, is content to leave the embryos frozen indefinitely as she has no desire to have children with her ex, which should be understandable given the circumstances," he said in the statement.



*Actress Sofia Vergara and Nick Loeb arrive at the 2012 Vanity Fair Oscar party in West Hollywood, California on 26 Feb, 2012.—*Reuters

In Wednesday's column, Loeb wrote the two had signed an agreement stipulating the embryos could only be used if both parties consented. He is seeking to have that form voided. Loeb said he intends to move on and build a new family, but added: "That doesn't mean I should let the two lives I have already created be destroyed or sit in a freezer until the end of time."

"Hot Pursuit," a comedy starring Vergara and actress Reese Witherspoon is set to open next week.

*Reuters*

## One Direction's new songs will be like Oasis': Liam Payne

Los Angeles, 30 April — One Direction member Liam Payne has said the songs in the group's new album will have similar feel as 1990s British pop band Oasis'. "The boys we've been writing with have come up with some great, great songs. Kind of like, a bit Oasis-y, almost, which is ace. I love that!" Payne said.

The 21-year-old singer indicated a mellower vibe for the upcoming album, which will follow 2014's "FOUR", reported *Entertainment Weekly.*

"The songs have come out a bit more chill because I think we want this to be quite a long-lasting album that you can listen to any time. Anytime you can thrown on an Ed (Sheeran) song and it can always make sense. We're trying to do that," he said.—*PTI*

# 'Granny hair' vogue: women embrace trend by going many shades of grey

New York, 30 April — While many people try to hide their grey hair, spending hours eradicating the signs of advancing age, going grey may no longer mean reaching out for the dye bottle as "granny hair" is in vogue.

Fashion designers such as Jean-Paul Gaultier, Chanel and Gareth Pugh have all styled their models with silver hair and many have since followed suit.

Spotted on celebrities such as Lady Gaga, Pink, Rihanna, Nicole Ritchie and Kelly Osborne, the grey, white or lavender trend has been embraced by women worldwide with thousands posting pictures on social media sites under "#grannyhair".

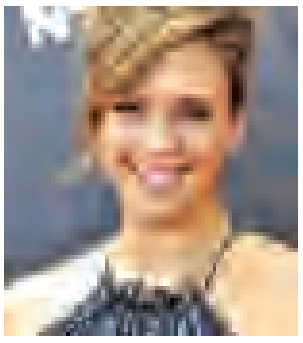
"Granny hair is basically silver hair, any tone of grey in your hair: steel grey, silvery grey, really, really white, platinum-ish with either violet or silver undertones," New York hair stylist Jan-Marie Arteca said. "That's the trend."

Many fashion blogs and magazines say the look is the "hottest" hair colour trend for 2015 while website boredpanda asked women to post pictures of their "granny hair" on a page that has since been viewed over 500,000 times.

"I love the grey. Ever since I first saw it in a magazine, I was fascinated," Jackie, 27, said at the Jeff Chastain Parlor salon during an appointment to dye her dark brown hair grey.

"It's like something that comes out, like a spark." The process can be long however, taking at least two hours to bleach the natural hair and then add the new colour. For Jackie, it took seven hours — three bleaches and two colour applications — to complete the look.

"Granny hair" does not come cheap — costing from $200 up to $700, depending on hair colour and condition. Touch-ups are required about every four weeks.—*Reuters*



***Hollywood beauty Jessica Alba***

# I have made people cry: Jessica Alba

Los Angeles, 30 April — Hollywood beauty Jessica Alba says she is not always the nicest boss when it comes to her billion-dollar business empire, the Honest Company.

Featured on the cover of *More* magazine, the 34-year-old "Sin City" star shared she is all business when work needs to get done, reported E!Online.

"Sometimes I'm a little more iron fist than velvet glove. I'm straight to the point. I've made people cry," she said.

Standing by her leadership practises, the actress believes sometimes showing tough love is necessary, but she's working on being a bit more understanding.

"I have to say, 'This isn't personal'. This is what needs to get done, and it's just as simple as that. And… We're not crying anymore'. I'm learning to tone myself down," she added.—*PTI*

## Japan actor Watanabe feels honoured over Tony nomination

***Japanese actor Ken Watanabe attends a Press conference at New York's Lincoln Centre Theater on 29 April, 2015, as he was nominated for the Tony Award for Best Performance by an Actor in a Leading Role in a Musical. Watanabe, who is starring in "The King and I", said he is proud of being selected as one of five nominees. The award ceremony will be held on 7 June.—*Kyodo News**

New York, 30 April — Japanese actor Ken Watanabe said on Wednesday he feels honoured after being nominated the previous day for a Tony Award for his role in the Broadway musical "The King and I."

"It is truly an honour to be recognized as one of the five (nominees in the Best Leading Actor in a Musical prize)," Watanabe, said in Japanese at a press conference at the Lincoln Center Theater in New York, where the show is on.

"The King and I" itself earned nominations in nine categories of the awards, the winners of which will be announced on 7 June.

In the musical set in the 19th century in what is now Thailand, Watanabe plays the king of Siam, who develops a bond with teacher Anna Leonowens, who is invited to the country to teach his children English.

After the opening of the musical in mid-April, Watanabe received scathing remarks about his English skills, but he said in the press conference, "You don't have to be a native speaker. (What is important is) to make sure the meaning can be conveyed." Commenting on how rare it is for a Japanese actor to be chosen for a lead role in a Broadway musical, Watanabe said, "I was chosen because they wanted something different," adding sometimes differences can help spark new things.

*Kyodo News*

# Bosnian artists plan Cold War museum in Tito's secret bunker

*Visitors enter a bunker at the entrance of which is an art installation, in Konjic, Bosnia and Herzegovina, on 24 April, 2015. —*REUTERS

KONJIC, (Bosnia), 30 April — A group of Bosnian artists plan to turn a former atomic-bomb bunker, once the best kept secret of socialist Yugoslavia, into a vast museum dedicated to the Cold War.

A labyrinth of tunnels, dark chambers and heavy steel doors, the Atomic War Shelter built by Yugoslav leader Josip Broz Tito has hosted art exhibitions since 2011. But now the artists plan something new.

"We want to make a Museum of the Cold War, a hybrid museum that will be both military and artistic," said Edo Hozic, who has driven efforts to open the shelter to the public. "Once inside, we'll travel through time."

Built 280 m (920 ft) below ground over 6,500 square feet (604 square metres), the shelter is almost invisible to passersby outside the town of Konjic in southern Bosnia, 40 km (25 miles) from Sarajevo.

Tito, who led former Yugoslavia from the end of World War Two until his death in 1980, exploited the Cold War to balance the country between East and West and build alliances worldwide.

The shelter's existence became public when Yugoslavia fell apart in war in the 1990s and it became the military property of independent Bosnia. It has since been turned over to an ammunition factory in Konjic, which wants to use two of its storage sites, though the bunker itself is a national heritage site.

Last week, Hozic opened the Third Biennale of Contemporary Art in the bunker, with works by 25 artists focussing this year on alternative ways of life during the Cold War, such as anti-war protests and the environmental and women's movements.

One display, the Time Chamber by British artist Delaine Le Bas, featured candles and 1960s music in a chamber turned into a hippie room complete with Flower Power garments.

"The art works cover the period of the Cold War, everything that this bunker slept through during its long isolation," Hozic said. The proposal to create a museum has been submitted to the government, and ministers have given verbal support.

Albanian artist Helidon Gjergji said: "I think it's a visionary idea (that) should be a role model for others."

Bosnian soldiers, who would once have guarded the top secret site from prying eyes, now watch over art work lining its walls.

"The project would lose sense if the army was not present," said Sandra Miljevic-Hozic, the chief coordinator of the project and Hozic's wife. —*Reuters*

## mitv Myanmar International

(1-5-2015 07:00 am~ 2-5-2015 07:00 am) MST

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## MRTV Entertainment Channel

(1-5-2015, Friday)

**6:00 am**
• Mono Classical Songs
**6:55 am**
• Fashion Show
**7:05 am**
• TV Drama Series
**7:50 am**
• TV Drama Series
**8:25 am**
• Musical Programme
**8:35 am**
• Myanmar Video
**9:20 am**
• ASEAN China Cultural Show
**9:55 am**
• Musical Programme
**10:05 am**
• Myanmar Video

# US movie theater shares may lose steam despite blockbusters

NEW YORK, 30 April— US movie theater stocks are unlikely to continue their blistering run despite a wave of popular first-quarter titles and the expected success of "The Avengers" sequel and "Star Wars" in the coming months. Shares of major names such as AMC Entertainment Holdings, Carmike Cinemas and Cinemark Holdings are all sharply outpacing the broader US stock market. But that success may signal limited room for the shares to rise further, even if company results come in ahead of expectations.

"No one anticipated the box office would do so well in the first quarter, but by now the good news has been priced in," said David Miller, managing director at Topeka Capital Markets in Los Angeles. "It's hard to see further upside from here." Studios typically do not release major films in the first quarter, but runaway successes such as "American Sniper" and "Fifty Shades of Grey" coaxed back audiences after a disappointing 2014, which featured the weakest summer box office since 1997, according to box office data company Rentrak.

The total US box office gross in the first quarter rose 2.85 percent from the previous year to reach $2.47 billion, according to Rentrak. Despite oft-voiced concerns that video streaming services like Netflix could lure consumers from theaters, that impact has yet to manifest itself, analysts said. The 2014 slowdown was attributed to a weak slate of films.

AMC, scheduled to report after the market closes on Wednesday, is expected to post first-quarter earnings growth of 37.2 percent and revenue growth of 5.4 percent, according to Thomson Reuters data. Those expectations have contributed to the stock rising 23.7 percent year-to-date, well above the S&P's 2.7 percent rise.

AMC has a price-to-earnings ratio of 25.82, which exceeds the 18.67 ratio of its entertainment industry peers. StarMine's measurement of intrinsic value — which looks at anticipated growth over the next decade — calculates that AMC should trade at $25.42, 21.6 percent below its Tuesday closing price.

*Actors Robert Downey Jr (R) and Jeremy Renner (L) pose with NYSE President Thomas Farley after ringing the opening bell of the New York Stock Exchange to promote the film Avengers: Age of Ultron in New York on 27 April, 2015. —*REUTERS

Carmike Cinemas and Cinemark Holdings, which will report in early May, are seen posting strong revenue growth for the quarter. But the shares of both are up more than 20 percent in 2015, giving them elevated P/E ratios. Carmike, which *Reuters* in March reported was exploring a potential sale, would need to fall 45 percent to trade at what StarMine estimates is its intrinsic valuation.

Regal Entertainment Group, which in October also said it was considering strategic options, has a market capitalization and quarterly sales roughly similar to AMC, but unlike its peers, it is expected to see sales and earnings fall in the first quarter. — *Reuters*

# British soldiers dig to unearth history of Waterloo

WATERLOO, (Belgium), 30 April — British army veterans and serving troops, some of them wounded in recent campaigns, are working alongside archaeologists to unearth the history of the Battle of Waterloo from a soldier's perspective, 200 years on.

The battle of 18 June, 1815, saw British and Prussian forces defeat Napoleon's French in what is now Belgium, dealing the final blow to the empire he had established, at a cost of almost 50,000 dead or wounded on both sides.

"Waterloo Uncovered", the first major international archaeological project at the battlefield, was developed by 37-year-old former soldier Mark Evans, himself diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder after serving seven months in Afghanistan in 2008. Evans found studying archaeology, even the historic battles of the past, to be a welcome reprieve.

"You're consumed, your mind is just... every day, every night, every waking, sleeping hour, you're living in Afghanistan. And you just sometimes need something to switch that focus," he told *Reuters* Television.

At Hougoumont Farm, which Evans's former regiment, the Coldstream Guards, helped to defend against the first assault of the battle, soldiers and veterans now dig alongside archaeologists from Britain, Belgium, France and Germany.

"They've been there, they've seen it," Evans said. "A different time and a different place, but they understand the confusion; they understand how ground is so important to cover and to make into advances."

Metal detectors and digging have so far uncovered coins, buttons, and English and French musket balls that the project's lead archaeologist, Tony Pollard, believes to be from the first shots fired during the battle.—*Reuters*

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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Friday, 1 May, 2015

# Mayweather, Pacquiao trade compliments not shots

Las Vegas, 30 April — Floyd Mayweather Jr and Manny Pacquiao appeared more focussed on conserving energy and downplaying animosity than stirring the pot for their upcoming mega-fight as the two boxers eased their way through a low-key media conference on Wednesday.

Back in the same room for the first time since 11 March when they came together to promote Saturday's welterweight championship bout, the two fighters traded compliments rather than jabs and even shared a laugh during the traditional 'stare-down' photo opportunity.

"This fight sells itself, I don't have to do that," the undefeated Mayweather (47-0) told reporters of taunting his opponent.

"This fight is not good versus evil, (it's) one fighter who is at the top going against another fighter at the top." Any buzz surrounding the event was sucked out of the glitzy MGM Grand Ka theatre as a dozen other people involved in the fight promotion took turns at the microphone before Mayweather and Pacquiao finally had a chance to speak.

Even Pacquiao manager Freddie Roach, who can normally be counted on for a provocative comment, offered up a bland cliche.

*Undefeated WBC/WBA welterweight champion Floyd Mayweather Jr (L) of the US and WBO welterweight champion Manny Pacquiao of the Philippines pose with the WBC championship belt during a final news conference at the MGM Grand Arena in Las Vegas, Nevada on 29 April, 2015.—*Reuters

"Floyd, I wish you the best of luck, Manny I wish you the best of luck, may the best man win," Roach told a wall of over 100 television cameras and hundreds of reporters before quickly taking his seat.

The boxers' fashion sense was as contrasting as their styles in the ring.

The attacking Pacquiao arrived on stage dressed sharply in a blazer and trousers while Mayweather, recognized as one of the best defensive fighters of all-time, chose his 'Money Team' track suit.

But their messages were uniform, with both men thanking God and everyone involved for what is expected to be the biggest grossing prize fight ever.

"It's nothing personal ... just doing our jobs trying to put our names in boxing history," said Pacquiao.

With Mayweather and Pacquiao subdued, promoters and broadcast giants HBO and Showtime, who share the pay-per-view rights, tried to provide a few fireworks by trumpeting their fighters and all things connected to them as the gold medal standard.

Those shots, however, were mostly duds and Mayweather put the spotlight where it belonged.

"It's about the two fighters," he said. "I believe in my skills, I believe I am going to be victorious.

"I went to training camp expecting I was going to win this fight and I'm pretty sure he did the same. It is an intriguing matchup."—*Reuters*

## Djokovic pulls out of Madrid to rest before French Open

*Novak Djokovic of Serbia reacts after defeating Tomas Berdych of the Czech Republic during their final tennis match at the Monte Carlo Masters in Monaco on 19 April, 2015.—*Reuters

Madrid, 30 April — World number one Novak Djokovic has withdrawn from next week's Madrid Open for a second consecutive year to rest before the Rome Masters and the French Open, organizers of the clay Masters event said on Wednesday.

"The Serb announced that ... he will take time out to rest before continuing with his planned calendar at the Rome and Roland Garros tournaments," a statement on the Madrid Open's official site (www.madrid-open.com) said.

Djokovic has been in imperious form this year, following up his triumph at the Australian Open with victories at the Masters events in Miami, Indian Wells and Monte Carlo.

With Rafa Nadal yet to get back to top form after illness and injury, many expect Djokovic to end the Spaniard's reign on clay at the French Open, the only one of the four slams the Serb has yet to conquer.

*Reuters*

# Chelsea on brink of title after win at Leicester

London, 30 April — Chelsea came from behind to beat Leicester City 3-1 on Wednesday and move to within one win of clinching the Premier League title for the first time in five years.

Chelsea were labelled as "boring" by Arsenal fans during the 0-0 London derby on Sunday and they were below par against a Leicester side chasing a fifth successive league win to boost their chances of survival in the top flight.

Marc Albrighton fired Leicester ahead in first-half stoppage time but Didier Drogba equalized soon after the restart before late goals from John Terry and Ramires ensured Chelsea will seal the title with victory against Crystal Palace on Sunday.

Chelsea have 80 points from 34 games with last season's champions Manchester City second on 67. Third-placed Arsenal also have 67 but they have played a game more.

Leicester remained 17th with 31 points from 34 games, one point ahead of 18th-placed Sunderland but Nigel Pearson's side have played a game more.

"I think maybe we are scared to win the league," Drogba told Sky Sports. "Two wins and then we get the trophy but this one was difficult. We have to give credit to Leicester.

"In the second half we came back and we wanted to make sure the game against Crystal Palace is the one that gives us the league.

"We don't get enough credit. We are top of the league, we have the most points and people find us boring."—*Reuters*

*John Terry celebrates with team mates after scoring the second goal for Chelsea during their Barclays Premier League at King Power Stadium on 29 April, 2015.—*Reuters

# Real keep heat on Barca after Almeria stroll

Madrid, 30 April — Real Madrid kept alive their hopes of overhauling La Liga leaders Barcelona when a James Rodriguez stunner set up a serene 3-0 home victory over struggling Almeria on Wednesday.

Barca, chasing a fifth Spanish league title in seven years, thrashed Getafe 6-0 at the Nou Camp on Tuesday and have a two-point advantage over their arch-rivals with four matches remaining.

Champions Atletico Madrid stayed on course to secure third place and an automatic spot in the Champions League when Fernando Torres came off the bench and scored a thrilling breakaway goal to clinch a 1-0 win at Villarreal.

Torres nicked the ball away from a defender near the halfway line 16 minutes from time, sped towards the penalty area and rounded goalkeeper Sergio Asenjo before slotting into the net.

Barca have 84 points, with Real on 82 and Atletico 75, six ahead of Sevilla, who won 3-1 at La Liga debutants Eibar to climb above Valencia into fourth.

Valencia can reclaim Spain's fourth Champions League berth, which carries a place in qualifying for Europe's elite club competition, if they avoid defeat at mid-table Rayo Vallecano on Thursday.

Almeria held out until the stroke of halftime at the Bernabeu when Rodriguez pounced on a loose ball and lashed a shot into the top corner from just outside the penalty area.

*Real Madrid's Fabio Coentrao (L) and Almeria's Edgar Mendez fight for the ball during their Spanish first division soccer match at Santiago Bernabeu stadium in Madrid, Spain on 29 April, 2015.—*Reuters

The European champions, depleted by injuries, doubled their lead soon after halftime when Mauro Dos Santos diverted the ball into his own net under pressure from La Liga top scorer Cristiano Ronaldo.

The Portuguese forward failed to add to his tally and stayed on 39 for the season, one more than Barca's Lionel Messi who struck twice on Tuesday.

Full back Alvaro Arbeloa netted a rare goal to make it 3-0 five minutes from time, his third in 167 La Liga games for Real, when he turned the ball past goalkeeper Ruben Martinez from a Javier Hernandez centre.

"We are not sure that Barca will drop any points but we are certain that we can win our last four games," Real coach Carlo Ancelotti told a news conference.

"Now we begin a very important phase of the season, when every game is the most important," added the Italian, whose side face a tough trip to Sevilla on Saturday and play at Juventus in their Champions League semi-final, first leg three days later.

Malaga's hopes of catching sixth-placed Villarreal and securing a place in the Europa League suffered a setback when they lost 1-0 at Celta Vigo.

Elche pulled away from the relegation zone and dealt a stinging blow to Deportivo La Coruna when they thumped the visiting Galician side 4-0.

Deportivo are 18th, two points behind Almeria and four ahead of 19th-placed Granada, who host Espanyol on Thursday.

Cordoba, beaten 1-0 at Levante on Tuesday, are five points adrift at the bottom and on the brink of relegation.—*Reuters*

Editorial Section — (+95) (01)8604529, Fax — (01) 8604305
Advertisement & Circulation — (+95) (01) 8604532
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