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# President extols virtues of modern fruit and vegetable cultivation techniques during visit to cold storage facility

*President U Thein Sein views export quality Seintalone mango of Myanmar Shwe Fruit Company.*—MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 12 May—Experts from the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation will work with local farmers to share modern farming technology and establish training schools, President U Thein Sein told officials Tuesday during a trip to Ottarathiri Township.

The president visited a modern cold storage facility of Myanmar New Ayeya Company and processing of export Seintalone mango at a 900-acre farm in an irrigated area of Setsetyo Dam. There, he stressed the need to apply modern techniques in cultivation of fruits and vegetables, as well as packaging and transport for export products.

He urged farmers to carry out integrated farming, as agriculture and livestock breeding are interrelated, and reduce the use of pesticides and fertilizers, adding that farmers are required to register export fruits and vegetables.

Union Minister U Myint Hlaing and officials of Myanmar Shwe Fruit Company briefed the president on processing of Seintalone mango for exportation, as well as the situation of foreign markets.

Chairman of the Yaksawk Township Mango Producers Association U Myint Oo and Chairman of the Sagaing Region Mango Producers Association U Kyaw Myint reported on region-wide cultivation of mango plants and fruits.

The president inspected a cold storage vehicle of KOSPA Company, which transports mango fruits and products.

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## Myanmar Railways holds third public consultation meeting on Yangon circle rail upgrading

**By *Ye Myint***

YANGON, 12 May — Myanmar Railways held a public consultation meeting Tuesday on the upgrading of Yangon's circular line, bringing together government and private sector representatives, as well as residents affected by the project.

The meeting was the third public consultation on the project, with officials explaining ongoing works and the results of environmental and social impact assessments for the eastern side of the 47-kilometre Yangon circular railway.

Two earlier meetings focusing on the western side of the 39-station railway were held last year.

The latest meeting was aimed at creating a better understanding of the project among affected persons, while taking their voices into consideration before it is implemented, said U Tun Aung Thin, general manager (Lower Myanmar) of Myanmar Railways.

Public consultation for the western side, comprising the 24-km Danyingon-Yangon-Ma Hlwa Gone section, has finished, the general manager said, adding that the consultation for the eastern side excludes the section from Yangon Station to Pazundaung Station, which will be improved under the Yangon-Mandalay railway upgrading project.

The general manager said the circular railway project aims to increase train speeds to 60 km per hour, ensure punctuality of the service and security for passengers and residents near the line, while attracting more passengers, thereby helping reduce traffic congestion in the city.

*(See page 2)*

## Union demands recruitment firms pay compensation over sunken Russian trawler

**By *Aye Min Soe***

YANGON, 12 May — The Myanmar Seafarers' Union will demand compensation from recruitment companies who placed seafarers aboard a Russian trawler that sank on 1 April, leaving 16 dead and another four missing, presumed dead.

An official of the union said it will take steps to get compensation from the companies for the 42 Myanmar sailors, 22 of whom were rescued, and their families. It will also seek to censure the recruitment firms for placing the sailors on a trawler instead of a shipping liner.

The Directorate of Marine Administration of Myanmar has suspended a number of seafarer recruitment and placement services companies as of 3 April for failing to tell the authorities that the sailors were placed on an unauthorised ship.

The Dalniy Vostok, which sank in the western Pacific off Russia with 132 crew members aboard, was not listed with Myanmar's 161 registered SRPS companies operating services for 4,703 foreign liners, according to the DMA.

The families of those sailors who died have been offered compensation of 1 million roubles (US $18,600) by the Russian government.— *GNLM*

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw

# Pyidaungsu Hluttaw gives green light to $400m loan from World Bank

NAY PYI TAW, 12 May — Pyidaungsu Hluttaw on Tuesday approved borrowing US$400 million loan from the World Bank.

U Nu, a member of Joint Public Accounts Committee, suggested the loan should be agreed as the Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Rural Development is carrying out compulsory services for livelihoods of rural populace, while it is promoting the capabilities of government staff, the early response system to natural disaster and the emergency management.

He added that the ministry needs the loans to expand implementation of people-centered projects for rural people.

Daw Khin San Hlaing, MP from Pale Township constituency, said service charge of 0.7 percent on the loan for more than 30 years will cost millions of dollar, adding that the loans should be used effectively.

U Kyaw Khaing Win, a member of Pyithu Hluttaw's Banks and Financial Development Committee, said the management of the World Bank has agreed the proposed plans which will be implemented by this loan.

He also urged the ministry should submit the criteria and reasons to the Hluttaw for implementing the projects in selected townships.

Deputy Minister for Livestock, Fisheries and Rural Development U Tin Ngwe and Deputy Minister for National Planning and Economic Development Daw Lei Lei Thein discussed on the suggestions of MPs.—*MNA*

***Representatives of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw agree US$400 million loan from World Bank.***
**MNA**

Pyithu Hluttaw

# No discrimination against degree holders of universities of distance education, according to chairman of UCSB

NAY PYI TAW, 12 May — Deputy Minister for Livestock, Fisheries and Rural Development U Khin Maung Aye explained arrangements for water supply at the Pyithu Hluttaw session on Tuesday.

The government was able to build 4,268 water supply facilities for 3,949 villages in 2014-2015 fiscal year and a total of 3,957 water supply facilities for 3,662 villages in 2015-2016 fiscal year, the deputy minister said.

Another question at the session concerning discrimination against graduates from universities of distance education, Chairman of Union Civil Services Board U Kyaw Thu said that the board has never discriminate between degree-holders of universities of distance education and those of other universities in its written tests, interviews and all those who are qualified for good civil servants are chosen for government posts.

For the question whether the government has plans to extend the pension age of experienced rectors, professors, teachers and law officers, Chairman U Kyaw Thu said that pension age of civil servants in Myanmar has been designated based on requirements of Myanmar as well as on those of other ASEAN countries and extension of pension age in Myanmar may result in fewer opportunities for promotion of civil servants while it will encourage youth employment. The chairman said it is inappropriate for Myanmar to extend the pension age at the moment.

The session put on record the proposal by a representative to amend the anti-human trafficking law.

Representative at the session were also informed at the session of the appointment of U Ko Ko Naing (Retired Maj-Gen) as a member to the Pyithu Hluttaw Legal and Special Cases Assessment Commission.—*MNA*

Amyotha Hluttaw

# Amyotha Hlutaw discusses agricultural issues

NAY PYI TAW, 12 May — Amyotha Hlutaw session on Tuesday focused on questions on agriculture sector and Deputy Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation U Ohn Than responded to the questions.

One of the representatives asked whether the government has plans to suspend one year to repay agricultural loans in Kyangin and Myanaung Townships in Ayeyawady Region as farmers there did not earn enough from failed crops due to shortages of rainwater and adverse weather conditions.

Deputy Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation U Ohn Than said that Myanmar Agricultural Development Bank may suspend loans when crops are damaged due to natural disasters and losses are reported to the bank on time. Although the bank can suspend loans with the recommendation of local authorities at different levels, new loans will not be available for farmers who fail to repay their old loans under the rules and regulations of the bank, the deputy minister added.

In addition, the farmers may be subjected to interests and fines as Myanmar Agricultural Development Bank has to borrow money from Myanma Economic Bank to issue loans for farmers, according to the deputy minister.

Concerning the questions to fulfill requirements for the central agricultural farm in Mahlaing in Meiktila District, the deputy minister said that it is impossible to irrigate the farm form Konte Dam as it is located at a place higher than the dam. A hand pump well is being used for small scale agriculture in the farm, according to the deputy minister who added that a dry lake in the farm will be repaired before the coming rainy season.

As for the lease of farmland, the deputy minister said that it is possible to rent land according to the provision of the farmland law.

*MNA*

# State Councillor and Secretary General of China's State Council donates computers to Nay Pyi Taw BEHS No 7, visits Bagan NyaungU

NAY PYI TAW, 12 May—Mr Yang Jing, State Councillor and Secretary General of the China's State Council and party arrived at No 7 Basic Education High School in Zabuthiri Township on Tuesday.

After conversing with students, the guests donated 23 sets of computer, 23 laser printers, seven scanners, six projectors, 10 sets of epidiascopes, 15 sets of potable players, three DVDs and 15 white boards and sports gears to officials of the school.

The Chinese guests visited the Gems Museum of Myanmar Gems Enterprise and viewed jewellery displayed at the museum.

In the afternoon, they left for Bagan NyaungU and paid homage to Shwezigon, Ananda and Thabbyinnyu pagodas and made cash donations.

At Nanmyint Tower, they enjoyed scenic beauty of sunset in Bagan.

*MNA*

***State Councillor and Secretary General of China's State Council Mr Yang Jing presents list of donation to Nay Pyi Taw BEHS No 7.*—MNA**

# Myanmar Railways holds third public . . .

*(from page 1)*

In his presentation of EIA and SIA processes, U Tin Aung Moe of the Japan International Cooperation Agency's study team, which is providing technical assistance to MR for the project, said no land seizures are needed to implement the project.

According to a social survey tracked along the eastern side, the team identified 10 buildings and two kitchen plantations in which 48 of 63 affected persons need to be relocated, the official said.

One of the 48, shopkeeper U Thant Zin, expressed his hope that he would be properly compensated for the relocation.

The MR general manager said the upgrading project for the loop network is expected to start following the public consultations.

*GNLM*

# President extols virtues of modern fruit and vegetable cultivation...

*(from page 1)*

Myanmar Shwe Fruit Company exports Myanmar-grown Seintalone mango, watermelon and muskmelon to Singapore, Hong Kong, Dubai and Malaysia daily. At present, the company plans to export 10 tons of Seintalone mangoes a day.

The president received Singapore's Attorney-General Mr V K Rajah, SC and party at the Credentials Hall of the Presidential Palace, here, the same day to hold talks on cooperation in legal affairs between the two countries.

They also discussed rule of law, sending Myanmar scholarship students to study international law to Singapore, and human resources development in Myanmar's legal sector.

*MNA*

***President U Thein Sein poses documentary photo with Singapore's Attorney-General Mr V K Rajah, SC.***
**MNA**

# Vice President Dr Sai Mauk Kham praises 2015 basic literacy movement

***Vice Preisdent Dr Sai Mauk Kham meets local residents at teaching session at literacy campaign in Hinthada Township.—MNA***

NAY PYI TAW, 12 May—Vice President Dr Sai Mauk Kham on Tuesday attended the 2015 launch ceremony of the basic literacy movement in Hinthada Township, Ayeyawady Region.

The ceremony was attended by union ministers, the chief minister of the region, parliamentary representatives, departmental heads, academics, students, NGOs and education partnership organizations.

The vice president said the ceremony was aimed at encouraging teachers and students from Hinthada University who took part in the literacy movement.

Dr Sai Mauk Kham said the literacy rate is directly proportional to the prosperity of a country, urging the promotion of literacy for the benefit of the economy and society as a whole.

Myanmar initiated the first literacy movement in Meiktila, Mandalay Region, during the 1964 summer school holidays, and has won awards from the International Literacy Movement in 1971 and 1983.

The government resumed the literacy movement in 2013. More than 2,000 teachers and university students taught more than 22,000 illiterates that year, and more than 4,600 volunteers taught nearly 50,000 illiterates.

In 2015, more than 3,000 volunteer university teachers and students have been teaching reading and writing to more than 26,000 people, with the programme running from 1 April to 15 May across the country.

Following the vice president's address, the Chief Minister of Ayeyawady region U Thein Aung and Education Union Minister Dr Daw Khin San Yi gave speeches about the movement.

The vice president and government officials then visited Hinthada Public Hospital and looked around medical wards and an operating theatre.—*MNA*

## Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw meets State Councillor and Secretary General of China's State Council

NAY PYI TAW, 12 May—Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw Thura U Shwe Mann received State Councillor and Secretary General of the China's State Council Mr Yang Jing and party at Zabuthiri Hall of the Hluttaw Complex, here, on Tuesday.

They exchanged views on bilateral ties and cooperation between Myanmar and China.

Also present at the call were Pyithu Hluttaw committee chairmen Thura U Aye Myint, U Maung Maung Thein, U Thein Zaw, U Thein Swe and U Hla Myint Oo, member of Legal Affairs and Special Cases Assessment Commission and officials of the Hluttaw Office. The Chinese delegation was accompanied by Chinese Ambassador Mr Yang Houlan.—*MNA*

***Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann holds talks with State Councillor and Secretary General of China's State Council Mr Yang Jing.—MNA***

## Farming workshop promotes climate-friendly agriculture

NAY PYI TAW, 12 May—A climate-friendly agriculture (CFA) course began at the agricultural station in Kyaukchet village in Zeyathiri Township on 11 May morning.

Department of Agriculture Deputy Director U Htin Aung Shein gave lectures on water conservation and grass management, use of natural fertilizers, selection of quality seeds and protection of farmers' rights.

Altogether 39 trainees are attending the course until 15 May.—*Ko Pauk (Okkar Myay)*

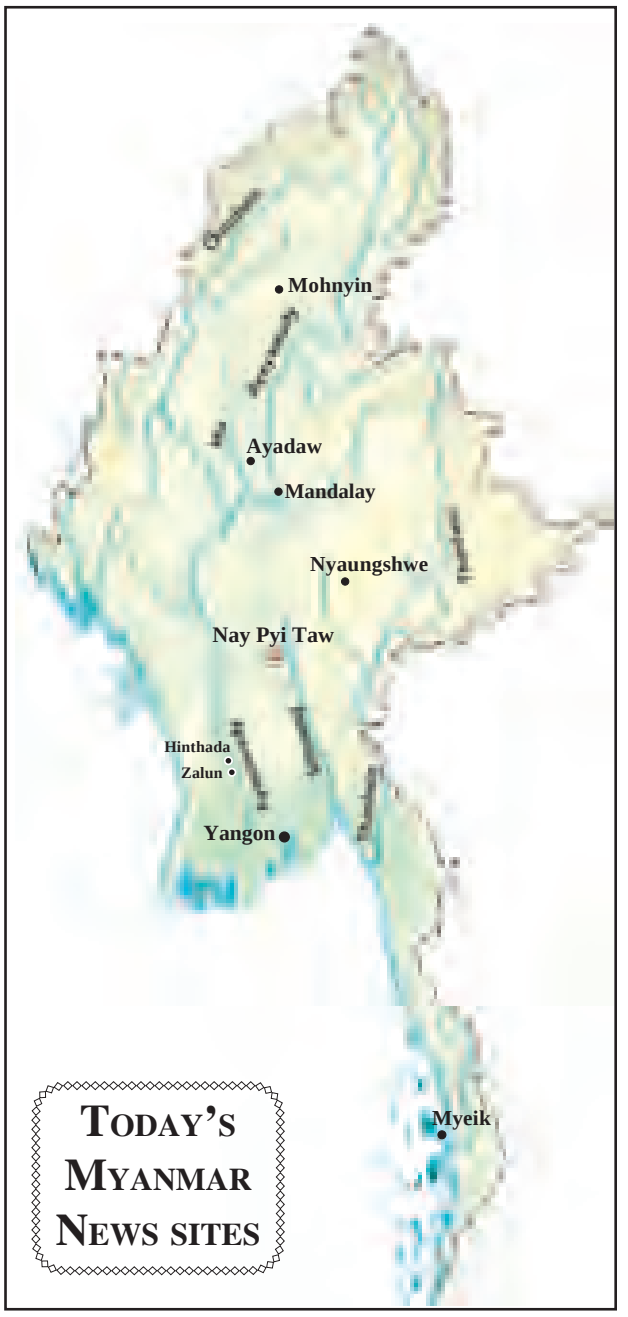
***Shwehsandaw Pagoda Board of Trustees in Pyay, Bago Region, will hold 4th cash donation at the sacred tooth relic chamber on the platform on 24 May morning to spend the fund on maintenance of the pagoda, expansion of platform and construction of new Dhammayon.***
**GNLM-017**

## Roadwork for inter-village link reaches completion in Myeik Tsp

MYEIK, 12 May—Myeik Township Department of Rural Development has completed construction of the Pathaung-Shantaung-Salun inter-village road.

The Township Department of Rural Development commissioned Yoe Mann Ah Company to build the road, providing K60.97 million for the task.

The road provides 4,000 local residents year-round access to Myeik, Taninthayi and Kyunsu townships.—*Myint Oo (Myeik)*




TODAY'S MYANMAR NEWS SITES

## Erosion destroys bridge on Mohnyin-Kadu laterite road

MOHNYIN, 12 May—The 40-foot-long Okkhon-Pyin Bridge on Mohnyin-Kadu laterite road in Kachin State was destroyed by erosion of the creek one year after its completion.

As the authorities have not yet built a new bridge, local residents will face transport difficulties in the coming rainy season.

"An engineer from Township Development Affairs Committee built the bridge with K12.8 million from the Department of Rural Development, but the bridge and approach structures were eroded by the creek in the last monsoon," a local resident said.

An official of the Department of Rural Development said it submitted a report on the loss of the bridge in erosion to the Kachin State Department of Rural Development.—*GNLM-001*

## New library opens in Hinthada Township

HINTHADA, 12 May—A new library opened in Kyettuywaygyi Village, Hinthada Township, on 9 May.

Abbot of the village monastery U Pandita, Township Administrator U Tin Aung Win and Daw Aye Aye Mar of Hinthada District Information and Public Relations Department formally opened the Panditayama library.

Daw Aye Aye Mar of the district IPRD gave talks on development of the library while writers shared their knowledge about literary works.

Abbot Bhaddanta Pandita and local residents donated K7 million for construction of a 27-foot-long and 19-foot-wide library building.—*Kyaw Kyaw (Hinthada)*

# Kachin State Gov't to take action against contractors for unfinished construction works

MOHNYIN, 12 May—The Kachin State government will take action against construction contractors that fail to complete projects satisfactorily, state finance minister U Nyunt Aung told district and Mohnyin Township departmental officials at a meeting on 7 May.

He said companies must take responsibility for damage they cause in the course of construction work, while government officials must submit reports to keep their superiors informed of the status of projects.

The minister said action would be taken against companies that do not finish projects within three months of the schedule completion date.

A 300-foot-long and 30-foot-wide reinforced concrete bridge for which the Kachin State government paid Thein Than Htay Company K1,049.7 million from the fiscal 2014-15 budget remains less than 50 percent complete, he said.

Likewise, another company has yet to rebuild two wooden bridges on Mohnyin-Kadu road that were eroded by creeks within a year of their construction.—*GNLM-001*

# Fire brigade members receive uniforms

ZALUN, 12 May—The Ayeyawady Region government provided uniforms to members of the auxiliary fire brigade in Zalun Township on 10 May.

At the Township General Administration Department, Ayeyawady Region Minister for Planning and Economy U Hla Khaing and Township Administrator U Tun Hsan Win presented 1,083 sets of uniforms to fire brigade members.

*Ngwe Than (Township IPRD)*

# Students of Yezin University of Agriculture visit paddy, organic vegetable farms

NYAUNGSHWE, 12 May—A 110-member team comprising students and faculty members from Yezin University of Agriculture visited a farm owned by U Win Shwe in Tilaw village in Nyaungshwe Township, Shan State, on 10 May.

They viewed thriving Palethwe hybrid paddy for production of seeds, cultivation of organic vegetables, use of fertilizers and diverse paddy plantations.

Head of Township Department of Agriculture U Zaw Win Tun explained that the department is supplying hybrid paddy seeds to local farmers at fair prices. He added that organic vegetable plants are safer for consumers.

*Nay Myo Thurein*

# Construction of inter-township roads depends on budget

AYADAW, 12 May—Township authorities and departmental officials held a meeting on plans for construction of inter-township roads and bridges in fiscal 2016-16 in Ayadaw Township, Sagaing Region, on 7 May.

Staff Officer (Civil) U Lwin Myo Than discussed plans to build Myinmu-Ayadaw-Naunggyiaing-Budalin and Monywa-Ayadaw-Shwebo roads for which K3.633 billion has been allocated.

Departmental officials emphasized the need for proper drainage along both sides of the inter-township roads.

Chairman of Township Development Committee U Tin Tun focused on construction of the local roads with conduits. District Engineer (Civil) Daw Htwe Nge Myint explained funds will be allotted for construction of roads and bridges depending on the budget in the coming fiscal year after holding meetings with construction companies.

*Township IPRD*

# Vets provide eye drop vaccination for livestock

DAWEI, 12 May—The government gives encouragement to development of poultry farming tasks to increase income of rural people.

Under the arrangement of Taninthayi Region Livestock Breeding and Veterinary Department, veterinarians administered the $I_2$ eye drop to poultry to protect them from new castle disease in rural areas.

A veterinarian team led by Head of Dawei District LBVD Dr Tin Htay and Head of Launglon Township Department Dr Thein Zaw and staff provided the $I_2$ eye drop free of charge to more than 2,500 hens in Wedi village and more than 3,500 hens in Sakhangyi village on 10 May.

*Po Shwe Thun (Dawei)*

# New naval base is Philippine military's top priority — armed forces chief

*Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) Chief of Staff Gregorio Pio Catapang shows some images of the structures being built by China at the disputed islands during a news conference at the AFP headquarters in Manila on 20 April, 2015.—*Reuters

Puerto Princesa City, (Philippines), 12 May — The Philippine military's top priority is to build a naval base on the country's western coastline, opposite the disputed Spratly islands, although the plans have been delayed by funding bottlenecks, the Philippine armed forces chief told *Reuters*.

General Gregorio Catapang said US, Japanese and Vietnamese naval vessels would be allowed to make port calls once the facility at Oyster Bay on the Philippine island of Palawan was finished.

Developing the island paradise into a military facility could exacerbate tensions with China, which claims sovereignty over almost the entire South China Sea, including the Spratlys. The Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei and Taiwan also claim parts of the vital waterway.

Palawan, part of the main Philippine island chain, is about 160 km (100 miles) from the Spratlys, where China's rapid land reclamation around seven reefs is causing alarm among some Asian countries and drawing increasing criticism from Washington.

"We feel this is the number one priority because of the emerging security situation," Catapang said in an interview late on Monday at a military base in the Palawan capital, Puerto Princesa City, after taking reporters to a Philippine-held island in the Spratlys.

"As soon as we have the money, we will pour resources there," he said.

China last month offered a detailed defence of its reclamation in the Spratlys, saying the new islands would provide civilian services such as weather forecasting and search and rescue facilities that would benefit other countries.

Catapang said 800 million pesos ($18 million) was needed for the initial development of the naval facility and then 5 billion pesos to turn it into a major operating base.

While plans had been drawn up, they were stalled by a lack of funds, he said.

"There is nothing there yet, we are still constructing an access road and upgrading the water and oil depots that would service ships. There's still much work to do," he said.

Japan, which is helping Manila boost its maritime capabilities, might fund infrastructure around the base but not the facility itself, a Japanese source with knowledge of the plan said earlier this year.

Washington has asked for access to Philippine military bases in eight locations to rotate troops, aircraft and ships for training as Washington shifts more of its forces to Asia, Catapang said last month.

Security ties between the Philippines and Vietnam are also growing in light of China's assertiveness. The Philippine navy has said it planned to base two former US Coast Guard cutters at Oyster Bay, a sheltered cove within the much larger Ulugan Bay, once the facility was finished.

*Reuters*

*Amos Yee eats a banana as he arrives with his father to the State Courts for a pre-trial conference in Singapore on 17 April, 2015.—*Reuters

## Singaporean teen found guilty of offending Christians

Singapore, 12 May — A Singapore court on Tuesday found a teenager guilty of offending Christians and spreading an obscene image in an online post that also carried comments celebrating the death of former prime minister Lee Kuan Yew.

However the prosecution dropped a harassment charge against Amos Yee, 16, for his comments about Lee, the widely respected founder of modern Singapore who died in March.

The prosecution also said neither a fine nor prison term would be suitable, partly because of Yee's age.

Yee faces up to three years in jail on the charge of wounding religious or racial feelings of others. He has been held on remand since bail was set on April 30 at S$30,000 ($22,455). It was not immediately clear when sentence would be passed.

The case has reignited concerns about censorship and social controls in the Asian financial hub and has drawn criticism from human rights activists.

Yee was arrested and charged in March with harassment, obscenity and insulting a religious group for the comments he made on social media. He pleaded not guilty to the last two charges.—*Reuters*

# Four killed, buildings collapse in fresh Nepal earthquake

Kathmandu, 12 May — At least four people were killed in a central Nepal town on Tuesday after a 7.3 earthquake shook the Himalayan nation, just weeks after a devastating temblor killed more than 8,000 people and damaged hundreds of thousands of buildings.

The four people died in Chautara in Sindhupalchowk district, north of the capital Kathmandu, after several buildings collapsed, a spokesman for the International Organization for Migration said.

Separately, a district official there said 12 people had been injured in Sindhupalchowk, which suffered the heaviest death toll in last month's quake. The new temblor also triggered at least three big landslides in the district.

"The latest earthquake has left us shaken. I am still trembling," said the official, Diwakar Koirala.

The US Geological Survey said Tuesday's earthquake was centred 68 km (about 42 miles) west of the town of Namche Bazar, close to Mount Everest and the border with Tibet. A magnitude 7.3 quake, it was felt as far apart as New Delhi and Dhaka, the capital of Bangladesh.

Residents in the Indian town of Siliguri, near the border with Nepal, said chunks of concrete fell off one or two buildings.

*The remains of a lavatory in a collapsed house is pictured after the on 25 April earthquake in Kathmandu on 11 May, 2015.—*Reuters

People in Kathmandu, panic-stricken after the 25 April quake, rushed outdoors, *Reuters* reporters said.

Parents could be seen clutching children tightly and hundreds of people were frantically trying to call relatives on their mobile phones. Shopkeepers closed their shops and the streets were jammed with people rushing to check on their families.

"I'm heading straight home," said Bishal Rai, a man in his 20s, who said he was trying to contact his family in the north of the capital.

The quake's epicenter was close to Everest Base Camp, which was evacuated after an avalanche triggered by last month's quake killed 18 climbers. Mountaineers seeking to scale the world's tallest peak have called off this year's Everest season.

Last month's quake killed at least 8,046 people and injured more than 17,800. It was recorded at 7.8 magnitude, almost six times stronger than Tuesday's quake.

But a 7.3 magnitude earthquake has the potential to cause significant damage and landslides.

The Nepal government was scrambling on Tuesday to assess the damage as the phone network got affected and information was hard to come by.

"We are getting messages that many people have vacated their houses and the temporary shelters," said Ram Prasad Sharma, a home ministry official in Kathmandu. "This is only information we have now."

### Nepal army rescues 117 people stranded in trekking villages after quake

The Nepali army has rescued 117 people from three remote mountain villages north of the capital Kathmandu, including two US citizens who had been searching for a missing relative, a military official said on Tuesday.

The 115 Nepalis and two Americans were evacuated on Monday from Syanjen, Kenjing and Langtang Village, where hundreds of people were killed in a huge landslide and avalanche triggered by last month's earthquake.

All of those rescued were stranded in the three popular trekking villages in Rasuwa district, about 60 km (35 miles) north of Kathmandu, after the 7.8 earthquake struck on 25 April, killing at least 8,046 people and injured more than 17,800.

A series of avalanches and bad weather in the area had slowed the military's efforts to reach those cut off.

"The entire Langtang Valley has turned into a rocky and snowy ruin due to avalanches," Uddhav Bhattarai, Rasuwa's district administrator, told *Reuters*.

On Sunday, the continuing avalanche risk led officials to suspend their search for some 200 bodies believed to be buried beneath the rock and snow in Langtang Village.

As of Monday, 128 bodies had been recovered there.

"Rescuers have been unable to go there to look for bodies since the weekend because avalanches continue to fall and make it dangerous," Bhattarai said.

The US citizens rescued on Monday were with a Nepali guide, a military official said, and were brought to the district capital of Dhunche along with the Nepalis who were rescued.

*Reuters*

# Serbia not interfering in others' internal affairs

BELGRADE, 12 May — Serbia does not interfere in internal affairs of other countries, Serbian Prime Minister Aleksandar Vucic told Belgrade-based daily *Danas*.

Asked to comment on the situation in Macedonia, Vucic said: "We do not interfere in other countries' internal affairs."

The village Divo in Kumanovo, northern Macedonia, saw clashes between Macedonian armed forces and terrorists last week, following an attack on police officers carried out by Albanian terrorists.

In a two-day operation by the Macedonian police forces, eight officers lost their lives, as well as 14 terrorists, while more than 37 policemen were wounded. Macedonian officials stated on Sunday evening that "the most dangerous terrorist group in the region has been eliminated."

Also, as of 5 May, street protests have been held in several Macedonian towns, as the opposition demands the resignation of Prime Minister Gjorge Ivanov.—*Tanjug*

***Serbian Prime Minister Aleksandar Vucic***

# Third blogger hacked to death in Bangladesh — police

DHAKA, 12 May — A blogger was hacked to death by machete-wielding attackers in Bangladesh on Tuesday, the third killing of a critic of religious extremism in the Muslim-majority nation in less than three months.

Ananta Bijoy Das, a blogger who advocated secularism, was attacked by four assailants in the northeastern district of Sylhet on Tuesday morning, senior police official Mohammad Rahamatullah told *Reuters*. Rahamatullah said Das was a 33-year-old banker.

Das wrote for 'Mukto Mona', or free mind, a website propagating rationalism and opposing fundamentalism that was founded by US-based blogger Avijit Roy.

Roy himself was hacked to death in February while returning with his wife from a Dhaka book fair.

His widow, Rafida Bonya Ahmed, suffered head injuries and lost a finger. In an interview with Reuters in the United States published on Monday, Ahmed called her husband's killing "a global act of terrorism".

Religious militants have targeted secularist writers in Bangladesh in recent years, while the government has tried to crack down on hardline Islamist groups seeking to make the South Asian nation of 160 million a sharia-based state.

On 30 March, Washiqur Rahman, another secular blogger who aired his outrage over Roy's death on social media, was killed in similar fashion on a busy street in the capital, Dhaka.

Their deaths followed the similar killing in 2013 of Ahmed Rajib Haider, who backed calls to impose the death penalty on Islamist leaders accused of atrocities in Bangladesh's 1971 war of independence.

*Reuters*

# S Korea's Park calls North's missile launch "serious challenge"

SEOUL, 12 May — South Korean President Park Geun-hye expressed alarm on Tuesday over North Korea's testing of a submarine-launched ballistic missile on the weekend, calling the move a "serious challenge" to stability on the Korean Peninsula and in East Asia.

Park discussed North Korea's missile launch in a meeting with senior aides in charge of foreign affairs and national security, and ordered "watertight preparedness" against Pyongyang's military provocations, the presidential office said.

Park was also quoted as saying that any military provocation from the North will be met with "stern punishment".

Separately, the South Korean Foreign Ministry urged North Korea to honor the UN Security Council resolution banning the North from launching ballistic missiles.

North Korea said on Saturday it successfully test-launched a ballistic missile from a submerged submarine.

The North Korean move has raised concerns in South Korea that Pyongyang could deploy SLBMs in a year or two after completing the last stages of development.

"North Korea should faithfully abide by the UN Security Council resolution," South Korean Foreign Ministry spokesman Noh Kwang Il said during a Press conference.

The UN Security Council adopted a resolution in 2006 condemning North Korea's nuclear tests and banning it from launching ballistic missiles.

South Korea is "mulling various responses with its allies, including the US" over the North's military action, Noh said.

*Kyodo News*

# US announces plan to station Osprey aircraft at Tokyo base

WASHINGTON, 12 May — The US military will deploy *CV-22 Osprey* transport aircraft at Yokota Air Base in a Tokyo suburb beginning in 2017, the Defence Department said on Monday.

The first deployment on the Japanese mainland of the tilt-rotor aircraft, currently used only in Okinawa, is expected to meet opposition from residents living near the base amid lingering concerns over the aircraft's safety.

The US military plans to send three *CV-22s* to Yokota in the second half of 2017 and seven others by 2021, according to the department.

"The *CV-22 Osprey* is a highly advanced aircraft with unique capabilities and an excellent operational safety record," the Pentagon said.

The deployment reflects Washington's "steadfast commitment to defend Japan" and to put its most advanced technologies forward as part of the policy of rebalancing in the Asia-Pacific region, it said.

In Tokyo, Japanese Cabinet ministers on Tuesday stressed the importance of the deployment and sought to allay public fears.

Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida told a news conference that the deployment will "lead to boosting the deterrence of the Japan-US alliance and also contribute to peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific region."

In a nod to the sentiments of local residents, Kishida vowed that the government will "carefully explain" the deployment to local governments near the base and continue efforts to gain their consent.

In a separate Press conference, Defence Minister Gen Nakatani said the *CV-22* is safe to fly.

As part of efforts to ease public concerns, the central government began briefing local government officials about the matter on Tuesday.

"We have received explanations from the US side that night drills and low-altitude training flights no lower than 150 metres will be conducted," Nakatani said.

The *Osprey* has a record of serious accidents including fatalities. A Marine from the crew of an MV-22 was killed in an accident in October last year in the Persian Gulf after the aircraft apparently lost power suddenly, according to the Pentagon. In 2012, crew members were killed and injured in two crashes involving the Osprey in Florida and Morocco.

***Photo taken in July 2014 shows the US military's CV-22 Osprey transport aircraft leaving Yokota Air Base in Tokyo. The United States said on 11 May, 2015 that it will deploy the tilt-rotor aircraft at the base beginning in 2017 amid lingering concerns among local residents over the aircraft's safety. —KYODO NEWS***

The US Marine Corps has already stationed 24 units of the MV-22 at the Futenma Air Station in the southwestern Japan island of Okinawa.

The Japanese government has already said the Ground Self-Defense Force will procure 17 of the Osprey aircraft mainly to enhance defence capability in remote islands.

The US military had originally considered stationing the *CV-22* at Kadena Air Base in Okinawa but the Japanese and US governments have decided that there is a need to lessen the burden on the island prefecture. Home to the bulk of US forces in Japan, Okinawa has yet to resolve a long-stalled plan to relocate the Futenma base to a less crowded area but still within Okinawa.

The local government and community remain opposed to the Japan-US accord on Futenma relocation and want the base outside Okinawa.—*Kyodo News*

PERSPECTIVES

Wednesday, 13 May, 2015

## Myanmar must avoid cowhand status

By *Aung Khin*

**Cowhands are the workers who are hired by the livestock owners to take care of their cattle. In Great Britain, the same meaning is ascribed to the term "cowman." A cowman is also responsible for managing the milking of the herd. However, his role is distinct from that of the dairy farmer who owns the cattle and the milk they produce.**

**In Myanmar tradition, cowhands have to look after the cattle for pasture in the daytime and bring back the herds to the owner in the evening. But they have no rights to the milk from the cows.**

**Buddha compared His learned disciples who go through the motions of religious practice without seriously seeking to liberate themselves from mental defilement with cowhands. These disciples just memorize, recite and teach others the treatises in much the same was as cowhands take care of the cattle without getting any milk or butter.**

**Likewise, Myanmar should not be the hired cowhands in relations with the international community. Neighbouring countries and regional economies are constructing road networks which will pass through Myanmar. This infrastructure should benefit Myanmar. While physical development is usually followed by impacts on the environment, Myanmar should take advantage of this infrastructure.**

**From the tourism industry to the trade sector, and from the education system to human resource issues, Myanmar needs to be ready for upcoming challenges from neighbouring countries. When networks are built, both inflows and outflows can be seen.**

**Myanmar should not lose opportunities through its association with the international community. The development projects should be managed to ensure higher social status for Myanmar's citizens. Just accepting foreign investment, without trying to gain long-term benefits from it, would leave Myanmar with the status of cowhands who have no rights to the dairy products of the cattle they tend.**

### Write for us

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# A short introduction to Community Colleges in some countries

***By Sayar Mya***

**Community Colleges across the world**

A community college is a type of educational institution. The term can have different meanings in different countries.

**Australia**

In Australia, the term community college is not used. Analogous to community colleges are colleges or institutes of **Technical and Further Education (TAFEs);** institutions mostly regulated at state and territory level. There are also an increasing number of private providers of varying social esteem; often these are colloquially called "colleges".

**TAFEs** and other providers carry on the tradition of adult education, which was established in Australia around mid 19th century when evening classes were held to help adults enhance their numeracy and literacy skills. The majority of Australian universities can also be traced back to such forerunners, although obtaining a university charter has always changed their nature. In TAFEs and colleges today, courses are designed for personal development of an individual and/or for employment outcomes. Educational programs cover a variety of topics such as arts, languages, business and lifestyle; and are usually timetabled to be conducted in the evenings or weekends to accommodate people working full-time. Funding for colleges may come from government grants and course fees; and many are not-for-profit organizations. They are located in metropolitan, regional and rural locations of Australia.

Learning offered by TAFEs and colleges has changed over the years. By the 1980s many colleges had recognized a community **need for computer training** and since then thousands of people have been up-skilled through IT courses. The majority of colleges by the late 20th century had also become **Registered Training Organizations;** recognizing the need to offer individuals a nurturing, non-traditional education venue to gain skills that would better prepare them for the workplace and potential job openings. TAFEs and colleges have not traditionally offered bachelor's degrees, instead providing pathway arrangements with universities to continue towards degrees. The American innovation of the associate degree is emerging at some institutions. Certificate courses I to IV, diplomas and advanced diplomas are typically offered, the latter deemed equivalent to an undergraduate qualification, albeit typically in more vocational areas. Recently, some TAFE institutes and private providers have also become **Higher Education** providers in their own right and are now starting to offer bachelor degrees programs.

**Canada**

In Canada, the term community college is not widely used. There are 150 institutions that could be roughly equivalent of the US community college in certain contexts. They are usually referred to simply as "colleges" since in common usage a degree granting institution is almost exclusively a university. In the province of Quebec, even when speaking in English, all colleges are often incorrectly called Cégeps, the French acronym for the public system: "Collège d'enseignement général et professionnel", meaning **"College of General and Vocational Education".** The word College can also refer to a private High School in Quebec.

Colleges are educational institutions providing higher education and tertiary education, granting certificates, and diplomas. Associate's degrees and bachelor's degrees are granted by universities, but, in some courses of study, there may be an agreement between colleges and universities to collaborate on the education requirements toward a degree. Only in Western Canada is the term Associates degree used as in the United States. In other parts of Canada a degree is usually attained as a 4 year study program, and to a much lesser degree now (except in Quebec, where it is the norm), in 3 years.

Each province has its own educational system reflecting the decentralization of the Canadian provinces and therefore of the education system. However, most of the colleges began in the mid-1960s to provide education and training for the then-emerging baby boom generation and for immigrants from around the world who were starting to enter the country.

Canadian community college systems

- **Nova Scotia Community College**
- **New Brunswick Community College**
- **Red River Community College**
- **Ontario colleges**
- **College education in Quebec**

**India**

In India, 98 community colleges are recognized by the **University Grants Commission.** The courses offered by these colleges are diplomas, advance diplomas and certificate courses. The duration of these courses usually range from six months to two years.

**Malaysia**

Community colleges in Malaysia are a network of educational institutions whereby vocational and technical skills training could be provided at all levels for school leavers before they entered the workforce. The community colleges also provide **an infrastructure for rural communities** to gain skills training through short courses as well as providing access to a post-secondary education.

At the moment, most community colleges award qualifications up to Level 3 in the **Malaysian Qualifications Framework (MQF)** (Certificate 3) in both the Skills sector (the Malaysian Skills Certificate) as well as the Vocational and Training sector. However, the numbers of community colleges that are starting to award Level 4 qualifications (Diploma) are increasing. This is two levels below a Bachelor's degree (Level 6 in the **MQF**) and students within the system who intend to further their studies to that level will usually seek entry into Advanced Diploma programs in public universities, polytechnics or accredited private providers.

**Philippines**

In the Philippines, a community school functions as elementary or secondary school at daytime and towards the end of the day convert into a community college. This type of institution offers night classes under the supervision of the same principal, and the same faculty members who are given part-time college teaching load.

The concept of community college dates back to the time of the former **Minister of Education, Culture and Sports (MECS)** that had under its wings the Bureaus of Elementary Education, Secondary Education, Higher Education and Vocational-Technical Education. MECS Secretary wrote in 1971 that a community school is "**a school established in the community, by the community, and for the community itself."**

**United Kingdom (excluding Scotland)**

In the United Kingdom, except for Scotland, a community college is a school which not only provides education for the school age population (11–18) of the locality, but also additional services and education to adults and other members of the community. This education includes but is not limited to sports, adult literacy and lifestyle education. Usually at the age of 16 when students finish their secondary school studies, they move on to a sixth form college where they study for their A-levels (although some secondary schools have integrated sixth forms). After the 2 year A-level period, they may then proceed to a college of further education or a university.

**United States**

In the United States, community colleges, sometimes called junior colleges, technical colleges, two-year colleges, or city colleges, are primarily two-year public institutions providing higher education and lower-level tertiary education, granting certificates, diplomas, and associate's degrees. Many also offer continuing and adult education. After graduating from a community college, some students transfer to a four-year liberal arts college or university for two to three years to complete a bachelor's degree.

Before the 1970s, community colleges in the United States were more commonly referred to as junior colleges, and that term is still used at some institutions. However, the term "junior college" has evolved to describe private two-year institutions, whereas the term "community college" has evolved to describe publicly funded two-year institutions. The name derives from the fact that community colleges primarily attract and accept students from the local community, and are often supported by local tax revenue.

*(To be continued)*

# National Council for Road and Traffic Safety meets

NAY PYI TAW, 12 May — Traffic and road accidents emerge as the major cause of injuries across the world with 22.8 percent, surpassing terrorism, other causes and wars while they result in over 1.2 million death every year, leading to the loss of 3 to 4 percent of GDP, Vice President U Nyan Tun, who also chairs the National Council for Traffic and Road Safety, said at the First Coordination Meeting of the national council held in Nay Pyi Taw on Tuesday.

Myanmar is developing and implementing the traffic and road safety project (2014-2010) in accordance with similar projects of the UN and the ASEAN.

Then, the vice president pointed out that policies, practices, people and participation are essential for the realization of the project and urged attendees of the meeting to draft a national traffic and road safety law.

With increasing number of vehicles in Myanmar, traffic accidents have increased threefold and death from road and traffic accidents have risen fourfold in 2014, compared with the numbers in 2003. Myanmar recorded death form traffic accidents at 6.5 persons in ten thousand people.

Then, vice chairmen of the council Union Ministers Lt-Gen Ko Ko and U Than Htay reported to the meeting on formation of the national council and measures for traffic and road safety.

Then, secretary of the national council Deputy Minister U Chan Maung explained the road and traffic safety project.

Afterwards, members of the national council and region and state transportation ministers explained the measure being taken in respective regions and states.

The meeting concluded with remarks by the vice president. The project aims to reduce death from road and traffic accidents by 50 percent during the project period.

He attended opening of the Asian Men's U-23 Volleyball Championship at Wunna Theikdhi Stadium (B) on Tuesday.

Next, the Vice President cordially greeted athletes and presented certificates of honour to responsible persons of the participating volleyball teams. Then, the Vice President and party enjoyed the match between Myanmar and Maldives which was the first match of tournament.

A total of 16 teams participated in the tournament which is scheduled to be held from 12 to 20 May are divided into four groups. Wunna Theikdhi Stadium (B) is set to host volleyball matches of Group A and Group B while matches of Group C and Group D are held in Wunna Theikdhi Stadium (C).— *MNA*

***Vice President U Nyan Tun delivers speech at coordination meeting of National Council for Road and Traffic Safety.*—MNA**

# Commander-in-Chief visits Serbian president, 204th Air Brigade

NAY PYI TAW, 12 May — Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing met Serbian President Mr Tomislav Nikolic at his office at the Novi dvor on Monday morning.

During the meeting, they discussed maintaining good relations between the two countries and promotion of bilateral ties.

Mr Nikolic also expressed appreciation for Myanmar's assistance whenever it was needed.

Myanmar and Serbia established diplomatic relations in 1950.

Minister of Defence of the Republic of Serbia Mr Bratislav Gasic welcomed the visiting Myanmar commander-in-chief at the parade ground of the ministry before a discussion on military ties between the two countries.

Deputy Minister for Defence Commodore Aung Thaw and Serbian State Secretary in the Ministry of Defence Mr Joran Djordijevic signed an agreement to promote relations between the two militaries.

The senior general and delegation visited Avala Tower, a 204.5 m tall telecommunication tower located on the mountain Avala overlooking Belgrade.

The Myanmar military chief later visited the 204th Air Brigade at Batajnica Air Base.

Chief of the Serbian Army General Staff Ljubisa Dikovic hosted dinner for the Myanmar military delegation at the Members of Parliament Club.

The senior general and party visited the booth of Yogoimport Company in Nikinci and viewed artillery and tanks.

Head of Development Division Mr Mamir Djurkovic hosted a luncheon to the senior general and party.

*Myawady*

# Gov't troops control three more hill posts of Kokang insurgents

NAY PYI TAW, 12 May — Offensive attacks of government troops could seize three important hill posts of Kokang insurgents on Monday and Tuesday.

The insurgents took positions at the eastern hills of Mar Lu village before they were attacked by the military in the first week of April.

The government troops controlled Point 1607 and Point 1709 on Monday, and Point 1742 on the following day. After the attacks, seven bodies of Kokang insurgents were found together with weapons ammunition, while some soldiers were killed and some senior military officers were injured.

The military sources said that the government troops are following the insurgents to be able to restore peace and stability in Laukkai area.—*Myawady*

# Union minister meets special adviser to Japanese PM

YANGON, 12 May— Union Minister for Labour, Employment and Social Security U Aye Myint who is also Chairman of the Dawei Special Industrial Zone Projects Implementation Committee, held talks with Mr Hiroto Izumi, special adviser to the Japanese Prime Minister at the Prime Hill Business Square on Shwedagon Pagoda Road, here, on Tuesday.

They discussed participation of Japan in Dawei SEZ Development Company Ltd (Special Purpose Vehicle-SPV) established by Myanmar and Thailand, sending of two experts by JICA to SPV, feasibility studies for construction of a highway from the SEZ to Myanmar-Thai border, assistance of Japan for drawing an engineering comprehensive strategic plan for Dawei SEZ, and soonest signing of the Memoradum of Intent (MOI) with participation of Myanmar, Thailand and Japan in implementation of SEZ.

*MNA*

# Myanmar, Singapore to cooperate in legal affairs

NAY PYI TAW, 12 May — The Emerging Offences Workshop, jointly organized by the office of the Attorney-General of the Union and the Singapore's Attorney-General office, kicked off at Royal ACE Hotel, here, on Tuesday.

Attorney-General of the Union Dr Tun Shin and Singapore's Attorney-General Mr VK Rajah, SC spoke on the occasion.

In the afternoon, they held talks at the office of the Attorney-General of the Union. Attorney-General of the Union Dr Tun Shin spoke about organization setup of the office of the Attorney-General of the Union, advocate-general offices in regions and states, plan to send outstanding law officers to Singapore to make further studies, and cooperation in legal affairs between Myanmar and Singapore. The Singapore's Attorney-General explained functions of his office in detail.—*MNA*

# IMF mission, Serbian government reach agreement

BELGRADE, 12 May— The IMF mission and the Serbian government reached on Monday an agreement to complete the first review of the precautionary Stand-By Arrangement (SBA) approved to Serbia.

The IMF mission has reached staff-level agreement with the Serbian authorities subject to approval by the IMF Management and Executive Board on the set of policies needed to complete the first review under the precautionary SBA, Zuzana Murgasova, IMF representative, told a press briefing.

The completion of the review will make available additional EUR 146 million, although the Serbian authorities have indicated that they do not intend to draw on the resources available under the arrangement, Murgasova said.

The economic outlook is somewhat improved, she said, stressing that the authorities' steadfast implementation of sound economic policies and structural reforms is essential to foster robust growth in the coming years.

Fiscal performance in the first quarter of 2015 was fully in line with the programme targets, Murgasova said, adding that most of the fiscal consolidation measures underlying the 2015 budget have been implemented as planned.

Serbian Finance Minister Dusan Vujovic expects positive economic growth to be achieved by the end of this year and says that the fiscal consolidation in Serbia has proceeded successfully so far. "The growth projections have been amended from minus 0.5 to zero. The fiscal consolidation is a difficult thing, but so far we have implemented it successfully and it is exceeding all expectations," Vujovic told a Press conference in the Serbian government building after an International Monetary Fund (IMF) mission concluded its official visit to Serbia.

Room is emerging for easing the monetary situation as a result of the success in the fiscal policy, Vujovic said, adding that room is also emerging for financial growth and job creation.

The IMF supports the programme of the Serbian government and the state deficit is below two percent at the end of the first quarter, Vujovic noted.

Privatization to be postponed one year for certain companies

Vujovic stated that the government will respect the deadline for privatization on 31 May, but it will also allow postponement of this process for certain companies up to one year.

Vujovic told a news briefing that the government's goal will be to carry out privatization in the shortest time possible, adding that privatization arrangements are being drafted for every company individually. "Every company will get an extension of deadline as much as it is necessary," Vujovic said.

The privatization process in Serbia is slowed down because ownership issues have been unsolved. "We thought that we would be able to finish the privatization process by 31 May and we wanted to give a chance to all companies to find strategic partners and investors, but it turned out that these processes are much slower here and that we are being hindered at every step by certain things, particularly the ownership and legal issues," Vujovic said.

Since last September, we have been collecting principle offers from investors, and it is believed that that extending the deadline by a year would be a good decision in case of the companies that have good chances of keeping production and export.

Zuzana Murgasova, who heads the International Monetary Fund (IMF) mission to Serbia, said that there was no discussion on Monday about a potential increase of pensions and public sector salaries, and that the goal of the economic programme being implemented by Serbia is fiscal sustainability, which the government has achieved by cutting salary and pension expenditures over the medium term.

Under the cost cuts programme, the total salary and pension expenditures should be reduced to 7 percent and 11 percent of GDP, respectively, Murgasova said at a press conference with Finance Minister Dusan Vujovic, responding to questions about the possibility of salaries and pensions being restored to previous levels.

It will take some time to implement this, Murgasova said, adding that the implementation of all measures must continue in order to achieve these goals.

The government is fully committed to implementing the policy from its programme and we did not discuss any potential increase, Murgasova said.

*Tanjug*

# US rejects notion that Gulf rulers snubbing Obama summit

WASHINGTON, 12 May — The White House scrambled on Monday to counter perceptions that the Saudi king's absence from a summit later this week could undermine US efforts to assure Gulf states it remains committed to their security against Iran.

King Salman's abrupt decision to skip the US-hosted regional talks shows how Gulf rulers, displeased by what they see as US indifference to Iranian meddling in the Arab world, may hesitate to bless any final nuclear deal that President Barack Obama reaches with Teheran.

Some analysts and diplomats in the Middle East and Washington interpreted Salman's decision to stay away from the meeting at the Camp David presidential retreat as a diplomatic snub, despite denials from US and Saudi officials.

Riyadh announced the monarch's no-show on Sunday, only two days after the White House had said he would attend the summit of Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states -- some of which have long doubted Obama's commitment to confronting Iranian backing of Shi'ite Muslim militias across the region.

Crown Prince Mohammed bin Nayef, who has strong ties with the US political and security establishment, will represent Saudi Arabia at the 13-14 May gathering along with Deputy Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, the king's son who serves as the defence minister. Since Salman took power in January, the pair have determined most aspects of Saudi policy.

Only two of the Gulf countries — Kuwait and Qatar — will be represented by their ruling monarchs, while the others are all sending lower-ranking officials.

US officials quickly pushed back against the notion that Gulf Sunni Muslim allies downgraded their attendance to signal dissatisfaction with Obama's diplomacy with Shi'ite Iran ahead of an end-June deadline for a landmark nuclear deal.

The White House announced that Obama had spoken by phone to Salman on Monday, apparently trying to show that relations remained on a solid footing.

Ben Rhodes, Obama's deputy national security adviser, said the administration was convinced that the president would have "the right group of people around the table" at Camp David. "These are the people responsible for the security portfolios," he told reporters in a pre-summit briefing.

The Saudi government said one of the main reasons Salman was skipping the summit was because it overlapped with a five-day humanitarian ceasefire in neighbouring Yemen, where a Saudi-led coalition is waging a bombing campaign against Iran-allied Houthi rebels.

The leading Gulf Arab power has complained for years that Washington does not take its concerns seriously. It thinks a focus on settling the dispute over Teheran's nuclear programme has distracted the United States from more urgent problems and raised questions about broader security commitments to the region.

Seeking to reassure the Gulf allies, White House officials said on Monday the summit would produce announcements on integrating ballistic missile defence systems and increasing joint military exercises.—*Reuters*

# Britain will be constructive but firm with EU: Osborne

***George Osborne arrives at 10 Downing Street as Britain's Prime Minister David Cameron begins to appoint his cabinet after securing a majority goverment, in central London on 8 May, 2015.***
**REUTERS**

BRUSSELS, 12 May— British Finance Minister George Osborne said on Tuesday that the new British government would be constructive but firm in negotiations with other EU partners to reform the European Union before a British referendum on its membership of the bloc.

"(We have) a very clear mandate to improve Britain's relationship with the rest of the EU and to reform the EU so that it creates jobs and increases living standards for all its citizens," Osborne told reporters before a meeting of EU finance ministers in Brussels.

Osborne said no one could be in any doubt that Britain would hold a referendum on its membership of the European Union having conducted negotiations. A vote on membership has been promised by 2017.

"We go into the negotiations aiming to be constructive and engaged, but also resolute and firm and no one should underestimate our determination to succeed for the working people of Britain, indeed the working people of the whole of the European Union."

*Reuters*

# Saudi-led air strikes hit Yemen capital hours before ceasefire

Cairo, 12 May — Saudi-led air strikes pounded the Yemeni capital Sanaa on Tuesday, hours before a five-day truce was set to begin between the alliance of Gulf Arab nations and the Iran-allied Houthi militia which controls much of the country.

Residents said three air strikes hit a base for army units loyal to the Houthis in the north of the capital, sending up a column of smoke.

In the southern port of Aden, witnesses said the alliance bombed Houthi positions, and local armed groups were still fighting the rebels in the city and throughout Yemen's south. On Monday, they also exchanged heavy artillery fire on the border.

Backed by Washington, the Saudi-led coalition has been bombing Houthi rebels and allied army units since 26 March with the aim of restoring exiled President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi.

The ceasefire was set to take effect at 11 pm to allow the shipment of food and medicine to the blockaded country, which aid groups warn faces a humanitarian catastrophe.—*Reuters*

# Drought-hit Southern Africa at risk of food shortage — WFP

*Zimbabwean women harvest maize from a field in a peri-urban suburb of Mabvuku in Harare, on 10 April, 2014—*Reuters

Johannesburg, 12 May — Southern Africa faces possible food shortages over the next few months due to a severe drought in the 'maize belt' of South Africa, where a lack of rain had caused crop failure rates of over 50 percent, the World Food Programme (WFP) said on Monday.

In South Africa, the WFP said maize production was estimated to have dropped by a third compared with last year, putting it on track for a harvest of 9.665 million tonnes, its worst in eight years.

Besides South Africa, which produces more than 40 percent of regional maize, the drought was also likely to hit harvests in southern Angola, Namibia, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Lesotho, Malawi and Madagascar, the UN agency said in a report. The problems in landlocked and impoverished Malawi were compounded by heavy rains and flooding in early January which destroyed crops and roads, it added. Last month's outbreak of anti-foreigner riots in South Africa, in which at least seven were killed and thousands more forced to flee, might also lead to a drop in remittance flows from Africa's most advanced economy, adding to the problems of nearby countries, the WFP said.

"The rains experienced in late March and early April provided some relief to livestock farmers but arrived too late for both staple food and cash crops," the April assessment by the WFP's Food and Nutrition Security Working Group said. "Of great concern is Zimbabwe, which is facing a looming huge food deficit due to imminent widespread crop failure," it added.

Countries in the region were likely to have to supplement their domestic production with increased imports, pushing up the cost of food, the WFP said.

*Reuters*

# Five million Syrians at high risk of explosive weapons — study

Beirut, 12 May — About 5.1 million Syrians are living in areas at high risk from explosive weapons, some of which fail to detonate and so will pose a deadly threat for years to come, aid group Handicap International said.

The global charity examined 78,000 violent incidents in Syria's war between December 2012 and March 2015 and found that more than 80 percent involved highly destructive weapons like rockets, mortars and bombs, rather than light arms. "Syria will inherit the deadly legacy of explosive weapons for years," said Anne Garella, Regional Coordinator of Handicap International.

The conflict is in its fifth year, having killed more than 220,000 people, according to a UN estimate. More than 1.5 million people have been injured, according to the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, an organization that monitors the war.

Diplomatic efforts aimed at finding a political solution have gone nowhere. A range of insurgent groups have been battling the Syrian military and allied fighters. US-led air forces have been bombing ultra hardline Islamic State militants since last summer.

*Ghazal, 4, (L) and Judy, 7, carrying 8-month-old Suhair, react after what activists said was shelling by forces loyal to Syria's President Bashar al-Assad near the Syrian Arab Red Crescent centre in the Douma neighbourhood of Damascus on 6 May, 2015.—*Reuters

The Handicap International study found that three-quarters of the incidents it recorded took place in populated areas like larger towns and cities.

"This suggests that belligerents have no intention of effectively distinguishing between civilians and combatants — which constitutes a violation of international humanitarian law," said the group, which provides aid to disabled people in conflict and disaster zones.

The heavily-populated western provinces of Aleppo, Deraa, Homs, Idlib and Rural Damascus were the most affected, the study found. The research was based news reports, social media and data from the United Nations and non-governmental organizations.

*Reuters*

# Middle East nuclear weapons ban proposal stumbles at UN

United Nations, 12 May — A UN attempt to work out a ban on nuclear weapons in the Middle East was in jeopardy after Egypt complained on Monday about the lack of progress and demanded the resignation of the Finnish coordinator of the initiative.

Western officials said Arab proposals drafted by Egypt for a major nuclear non-proliferation conference at United Nations headquarters in New York could torpedo the process and push Israel to walk away.

Israel neither confirms nor denies the widespread assumption that it controls the Middle East's only nuclear arsenal. Israel, which has never joined the 1970 nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), agreed to take part in NPT meetings Monday as an observer, ending a 20-year absence.

The head of Egypt's delegation, Assistant Foreign Minister Hashim Badr, rejected any suggestion that Cairo was a spoiler and insisted that he wanted to move the process forward, not kill it.

"Egypt has come to New York to secure a conference (on banning nuclear weapons in the Middle East), we want a conference," Badr said in an interview. "This is a key issue for Egypt for a long time, for decades, since 1974-75."

Failure to reach an agreement at the NPT conference could kill the Middle East nuclear ban initiative, diplomats said.

Egypt, in a proposal officially backed by all Arab countries and outlined in a "working paper" submitted by Arab delegations, called for Jaakko Laajava, the UN coordinator for organising the conference, to be dismissed. The 2010 NPT review meeting had called for a Middle East conference in 2012, but it never took place.

Egypt's proposal said UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon should convene a conference on a regional ban of weapons of mass destruction within 180 days after the NPT conference ends on 22 May and demanded that Israel immediately join the NPT as a non-nuclear arms state.

Despite the official backing of Arab delegations, several diplomats, including two Arabs, told *Reuters* that Saudi Arabia, Iraq and United Arab Emirates have reservations about Egypt's proposal. "Egypt wants to be in charge," a diplomat said.

Israel's delegation declined to comment on the proposal.

The Jewish state has said it would consider inspections and controls under the NPT only if was at peace with its Arab neighbours and Iran.

Washington and Israel say it is Iran's nuclear programme that threatens the region. Iran says its programme is peaceful. It is negotiating with world powers to curb it in exchange for the lifting of sanctions.

Finnish diplomat Laajava managed to get Israel, Arab states and Iran to attend a preparatory session in the Swiss city of Glion in October 2013. Western officials cite that as progress.

Washington has not given up hope. "We have seen significant progress in the regional consultations that have taken place," a US official said.

Arab delegates said Israel was not serious about a conference on banning weapons of mass destruction. Israel has conditioned its participation on an agenda being agreed in advance and says it wants to discuss regional security, conventional weapons and the Middle East peace process.—*Reuters*

## ADVERTISEMENT & GENERAL

TRADEMARK CAUTION

NISSAN

THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR
MINISTRY OF ENERGY

(ANNOUNCEMENT)

INVITATION TO OPEN DISCUSSION FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF OFFSHORE SUPPLY BASE JOINT VENTURE

1. Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise (M.O.G.E), a state owned oil and gas company under Ministry of Energy, is responsible for upstream oil and gas industry, both onshore and offshore, in the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.
2. Currently, numerous international oil and gas companies are conducting petroleum exploration and production operations in Myanmar offshore and more new PSC blocks are being awarded by recent bidding round. To support those petroleum operations, Offshore Supply Bases are inevitably required.
3. Thus, Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise would like to invite international and local developers who are interested to construct and operate an Offshore Supply Base and related facilities in Myanmar, jointly with MOGE.
4. The interested local and international companies are cordially invited to come and discuss with MOGE management during the period of 25th May 2015 to 12th June 2015 in office hours, at appropriate appointment.
5. The letter of request for the appointment shall be addressed to;

   **The Managing Director**
   **Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise**
   **Complex 44, Nay Pyi Taw**
   **The Republic of the Union of Myanmar**
   **Tel: 95-67 411055 / 411056**
   **Fax: 95-67 411125 / 411178**
6. For further inquiry for information, please contact the followings:-
   (1) Managing Director, Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar
   Tel: 95-67 411055 / 411056
   Fax: 95-67411125/411178
   email: -mogemd@energy.gov.mm
   pamdoffice@gmail.com
   (2) General Manager, Thaketa Offshore Base, Yangon, Myanmar
   Tel: 95-1 542732 / 450369
   Fax: 95-1 450454
   email: - mogegmtka@energy.gov.mm
   kntun135@gmail.com

## Ministry of Transport
## Myanma Port Authority
## Invitation for Open Tender

1. Myanma Port Authority is desirous to implement the port terminal and port related infrastructure development project at Theinbyu Foreshore Area, Yangon Inner Harbour.
2. Therefore interested Myanmar Citizen Tenderers/ Investors are cordially invited to submit the complete project proposals for the following project:-

   **" Development and Construction of Port Terminal and Port Related Infrastructure Development project at Theinbyu Foreshore Area, Yangon Inner Harbour by BOT basic."**
3. The Tender Documents including Tender Terms and Conditions shall be available to purchase with the price of US$ 500 per set during office hours commencing from 14-5-2015 to 29-5-2015 at Civil Engineering Department, 3rd Floor, Myanma Port Authority (Head Office), No. 10, Pansodan Street, Kyauktada Township, Yangon.
4. The detailed information about Tender can be inquired to the Civil Engineering Department by phone number 01-253358, 01- 387116 (Ext. 305)

**Myanma Port Authority**

# US returns stolen Hanuman monkey god statue to Cambodia

PHNOM PENH, 12 May — The United States on Tuesday returned to Cambodia a statue of Hanuman, the Hindu monkey god, that was looted from the Southeast Asian country decades ago.

At the hand-over ceremony, Cambodian Deputy Prime Minister Sok An said the statue was taken from Prasat Chen temple at the Koh Ker historic site in Preah Vihear Province, his body brutally severed from the pedestal.

It was then transported across the border, shipped to Europe and taken to the United States.

"Now, after his long journey, he is finally back in his homeland," Sok An said.

The statue, which was acquired by the Cleveland Museum of Art in Ohio in 1982, is a 10th century sandstone sculpture which stands 116 centimeters tall and 54 cm wide and depicts the god, with the body of a man and head of a monkey, in a kneeling position.

The statue was reportedly sold twice in Bangkok — in 1968 and 1972 — before it was taken to the United States.

According to Sok An, the Hanuman will join five other Koh Ker statues recently returned from the United States, including the Duryodhana statue from Sotheby's in New York which decided to settle the case after almost two years of legal battle.

Sok An noted that no single country can fight alone against the illicit trade and transfer of ownership of cultural property, saying that joint international efforts are required in tackling such cases that require complex exercise.

Kong Vireak, director of the National Museum of Cambodia in Phnom Penh, said the statue will be sent to the museum on Wednesday for public display.

He said that since 1996, about 60 statue pieces have been returned to Cambodia from different countries and individuals after they were looted during the civil war that lasted from the late 1960s through 1990s.

Chan Tani, Cambodian secretary of state of the Office of the Council of Ministers, said, "The voluntary return of the Hanuman demonstrates the Cleveland Museum of Art's sensitivity to the importance of Koh Ker to the Cambodia people."

He said the development also "highlights the serious looting that has occurred in our country." When asked how many Cambodian statues remain in the United States, he said there are many but could not give a specific number.

William Griswold, director of the Cleveland Museum of Art, said at the ceremony, "We are pleased to welcome a new chapter in our long collaboration with Cambodia."

*Kyodo News*

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**REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST**
**(CONSULTING SERVICES- FIRMS SELECTION)**

**The Republic of the Union of Myanmar**
**Ministry of Electric Power**
**Myanmar Electric Power Project (MEPP)**
**Credit No.: 5306-MM**

**Assignment Title: Myanmar Power Sector Study of Electricity Tariffs and Subsidies Mechanisms**
**Reference No.: MEPE CS-4**

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar has received financing from the World Bank toward the cost of increasing capacity and efficiency of gas fired power generation and strengthening the institutional capacity of the Ministry of Electric Power.

The consulting services ("the Services") include *study of Myanmar Power Sector study of Electricity Tariffs and Subsidies Mechanisms over a period of 12 (Twelve) months.*

The Ministry of Electric Power (MOEP) now invites eligible consulting firms ("Consultants") to indicate their interest in providing the above Services. Interested Consultants should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the Services. The short-listing criteria are:

(i) The interested consultants should have previous experience in the area of electricity tariffs design, analysis and modeling;
(ii) A minimum of 10 years of experience in carrying out consulting services as a consulting firm in the field of assignment; and
(iii) At least 3 contracts of similar nature and complexity, or more complex and relevant, that the firm has successfully completed in the past 10 years.

The attention of interested Consultants is drawn to paragraph 1.9 of the World Bank's *Guidelines: Selection and Employment of Consultants [under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits & Grants] by World Bank Borrowers*, edition: January, 2011 ("Consultant Guidelines"), setting forth the World Bank's policy on conflict of interest.

Consultants may associate with other firms in the form of a joint venture or a sub-consultancy to enhance their qualifications.

A Consultant will be selected in accordance with the Quality- and Cost-Based Selection Method set out in the Consultant Guidelines.

Further information can be obtained at the address below during the 11:00 AM to 16:00 hours on working days.

Expressions of interest must be delivered in a written form to the address below (in person, or by mail, or by fax, or by e-mail) by 16:00 hours of **02 June, 2015.**

**Attention:**
**Director General**
**Department of Electric Power (DEP)**
**Street Address: Building No. 27,**
**Ministry of Electric Power (MOEP)**
**Floor/Ground No.: Ground Floor**
**ZIP Code: 15011**
**Country: The Republic of the Union of Myanmar**
**Tel: +95 (67) 410256**
**Fax: +95 (67) 410256**
**Email: ecoplandep@gmail.com**

**THE REPUBLIC OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR**
**MINISTRY OF ENERGY**
**MYANMA OIL AND GAS ENTERPRISE**
**( INVITATION FOR OPEN TENDER )**
**(8/2015)**

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

| Sr.No | Tender No | Description | Remark |
|---|---|---|---|
| (1) | IFB-009(15-l 6) | Electrical Spares for HDD Rig (46) Items | US$ |
| (2) | IFB-010(15-16) | Spares for Cooper Well Servicing Unit (11) Items | US$ |
| (3) | IFB-011(15-16) | Spares for Rig Engine / Rig Pump Ex HDD Rig (16) Items | US$ |
| (4) | IFB-012(15-16) | Casing Lines (3) Items | US$ |
| (5) | IFB-013(15-16) | Spares for National Drive Group Ex NAT-55 Drilling Rigs (3) Items | US$ |
| (6) | IFB-014(15-16) | Spares for Kenworth Trucks (6) Items | US$ |
| (7) | DMP/L-004(15-16) | 33 KV Current Transformer for GCB (5) Sets | KS |

Tender Closing Date & Time - 9-6-2015, 16:30 Hr

Tender Document shall be available during office hours commencing from 12TH May, 2015 at the Finance Department, Myanma Oil and as Enterprise, No(44) Complex, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar.

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

## WEATHER REPORT

**FORECAST VALID UNTIL EVENING OF THE 13th May, 2015:** Rain or thundershowers are likely to be scattered in Taninthayi Region and Kachin State, isolated in Sagaing and Mandalay Regions, Shan, Chin ,Rakhine and Mon States, weather will be partly cloudy in the remaining Regions and States.

## Mt Hakone's volcanic tremor area streamed live online

TOKYO, 12 May — Volcanic earthquakes continued at Mt Hakone southwest of Tokyo on Monday, while a local government started online streaming from a camera installed in the Owakudani hot springs area subject to an evacuation advisory. The Kanagawa prefectural government said it is responding to requests from tourists and citizens by making a video feed public through a link on its Japanese website from a camera set up by a nature conservation center for the management of an Owakudani trail. An alert for a possible steam eruption remains in effect in Owakudani. By 3 pm, the number of volcanic earthquakes in the area totaled 36 on Monday, including one quake perceptible to humans. On Sunday, a total of 266 volcanic earthquakes were logged, the highest number ever recorded in one day, including six tremors strong enough for people to feel, according to the Japan Meteorological Agency.

*Kyodo News*

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INVITATION FOR OPEN TENDER (3/2015)
[TENDER NO. MPPE/ JET Al / T / 1 (2015 — 2016)]

1. Open Tender is invited for the Myanma Petroleum Products Enterprise, the Ministry of Energy for the supply of JET Al (282,000 bbl ± 10% )
2. Tender Closing Date & Time - 26 - 5 - 2015, 12:00 Hrs
3. Tender Opening Date & Time - 26 - 5 - 2015, 13:00 Hrs
4. Delivery Time - 1st July 2015 to 31st October 2015
5. Tender documents and details are available at the Department of Finance, the Myanma Petroleum Products Enterprise, Nay Pyi Taw, during office hours commencing 11 - 5 -2015 on payment of Myanmar Kyat One Hundred Thousand (Kyat 100,000.) per set.
6. Only bid from tenderer who has purchased tender document officially from the Myanma Petroleum Products Enterprise will be accepted for evaluation.

Managing Director
Myanma Petroleum Products Enterprise
Ministry of Energy, No(6) Complex, Nay Pyi Taw
Contact Phone No.
067-411487/411486/411280

# Lena Dunham stars in Taylor Swift's 'Bad Blood'

Los Angeles, 12 May — Actress Lena Dunham will be seen in pop star Taylor Swift's upcoming video of her latest single "Bad Blood".

On Sunday, hours after revealing that Hailee Steinfeld would play The Trinity in the video, Swift tweeted that Dunham would appear as Lucky Fiori.

Swift, 25, and 28-year-old Dunham's best friendship is a known fact.

The singer recently said in an interview that she wrote "You Are In Love" about Dunham's relationship with Jack Antonoff.—*PTI*

## CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
### MV DAI DUONG SUNRISE VOY NO (-)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV DAI DUONG SUNRISE VOY NO (-) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 13.5.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of S.P.W-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 G LINK EXPRESS PTE LTD.**
Phone No: 2301191/2301178

## CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
### MV ALAM SERI VOY NO ( )

Consignees of cargo carried on MV ALAM SERI VOY NO ( ) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 13.5.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P.L 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 F.H BERTLING CHARTERING & SHIP MANAGEMENT PTE LTD.**
Phone No: 2301186

## CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
### MV SCI KAMAL VOY NO (013E)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV SCI KAMAL VOY NO (013E) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 13.5.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of B.S.W 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: THE SHIPPING CORP. OF INDIA LTD**
Phone No: 2301185

***Actress Lena Dunham will be seen in pop star Taylor Swift's upcoming video of her latest single "Bad Blood".—PTI***

## CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
### MV KULNATEE VOY NO (03/15)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV KULNATEE VOY NO (03/15) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 13.5.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.I.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 KULNATEE CO**
Phone No: 2301186

## CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
### MV MERATUS GORONTALO VOY NO (101N)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV MERATUS GORONTALO VOY NO (101N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 13.5.2015 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 YANG MING LINE**
Phone No: 2301185

## Tom Hanks returns as symbologist Robert Langdon in 'Inferno'

***US actor Tom Hanks walks as he arrives for the photocall of the movie 'Inferno' in downtown Florence on 11 May, 2015.—Reuters***

Florence, (Italy), 12 May — Tom Hanks reprises the role of Harvard symbologist Robert Langdon in the film version of Dan Brown's thriller "Inferno," unlocking more mysterious codes as the world-famous character he describes as "the smartest guy in the room".

"Inferno", which follows on the blockbuster book and film franchise Brown's 2003 religious-themed mystery novel "The Da Vinci Code," centres on the "Divine Comedy," the masterpiece by Italian poet Dante Alighieri.

The plot sees Langdon follow a trail of clues about the poet in a race to save the world's population from a deadly artificial plague.

Principal photography has begun on the film as production gets under way in Italy, with many of the scenes being shot in many of Florence's most renowned buildings and piazzas.

"I like it because ... there is a degree of mystery and at the same time a great amount of predictability that goes along with it," Hanks said during a photo call for the film in Florence on Monday.

Hanks compared the role of Langdon to playing Sherlock Holmes.

"... As a selfish actor, I don't mind playing the smartest guy in the room. I don't get to play the toughest guy, I don't get to play the best-looking or ... the tallest, but I do get to play the smartest guy in the room as Robert Langdon."—*Reuters*

# El Nino has emerged, Asia braces for crop damage

*Drought affected land is seen in the Las Canoas dam near San Francisco Libre on 18 July, 2014.*—REUTERS

SYDNEY, 12 May— In 2009, the El Nino brought the worst drought in four decades to India. It razed wheat fields in Australia and damaged crops across Asia. Food prices surged. A closely watched forecast by Japan on Tuesday confirmed its return this year.

A strong El Nino will roil economies that are heavily dependent on agriculture, particularly India which is already reeling from bad weather. It would also unhinge supply chains of commodities such as rice, corn and palm oil. In fact, the heat is already up in some places in the Asia Pacific. "We've already been hit by a three-month dry spell. We could not plant anything since January. All of us here in Taculen are praying for more rains," said Benny Ramos, a rice farmer in North Cotabato in southern Philippines.

Prayers for rains in Asia, however, may not be answered as weather forecasts show an intensifying El Nino has set in.

The El Nino, or a warming of sea-surface temperatures in the Pacific, can lead to scorching weather across Asia and east Africa but heavy rains and floods in South America.

This year, the El Nino arrived in spring and is likely to continue into autumn, said the Japan Meteorological Agency, which was the first bureau to project the emergence of an El Nino in 2015.

Forecasts in May tend to be more accurate as weather models become more dependable here onwards, said Paul Deane, senior agricultural economist at ANZ Bank, Melbourne.

"Now we are getting to a point that you start having more confidence in those models," he said.

Grain prices have, however, not yet factored in the threat to supplies from an El Nino, largely because similar calls for bad weather in 2014 did not come to pass. In fact, good crops replenished stocks last year.

In the absence of a weather premium, prices of grains such as wheat and rice remain near multi-month lows. Wheat futures Wc1, down a fifth so far this year, are near five-year lows, while Asia rice RI-THBKN5-P1 is at its weakest since June.

The last El Nino led to tens of billions of dollars in economic damages in the Asia Pacific. This year, a strong El Nino could take an even bigger toll in certain countries, analysts said. For India, it would be a double whammy.— *Reuters*

# US female rower readies for solo Pacific Ocean odyssey

WASHINGTON, 12 May — Sonya Baumstein lay in bed one sleepless night and wept softly as she pondered her upcoming attempt to cross the Pacific Ocean alone in a rowboat.

"I was just thinking about the fact that I'm going to be leaving everything that I love for a really long time," Baumstein said of her planned 6,000-mile (9,600 km) odyssey. "And I don't know the consequences."

The 30-year-old from Port Townsend, Washington, has undertaken endurance feats in the past but her journey from Japan to San Francisco, expected to start around 18 May, is her most daunting adventure yet.

The four- to six-month trip is an endeavor no woman has ever accomplished solo.

Despite 16 attempts to row solo across the Pacific, only two men have successfully completed the journey - Frenchmen Gerard d'Aboville in 1991 and Emmanuel Coindre in 2005, according to Ocean Rowing Society records.

"Once she leaves Japan, the next person she'll see will be in San Francisco," said Andrew Cull, the journey's operation manager. "Unless maybe someone in a fishing vessel stops by to say 'Hi' in the middle of the ocean."

Baumstein will take off on her custom-made 23-foot (7 meters), 775-pound (350 kg) boat with 1,200 pounds (544 kg) of freeze-dried food, 180 high-carbohydrate drink supplements and a cache of olive oil that she will consume in hopes of retaining as much weight as possible.

The carbon and kevlar boat weighs in at a light 660 pounds (300 kg) and will have on board an electric water maker that desalinates seawater for drinking.

Baumstein, who was recruited as a rower by the University of Wisconsin-Madison before a car accident derailed her collegiate athletic career, expects to burn to up 10,000 calories a day and has gained 40 pounds (18 kg) for the trip. Her bathroom on board will be a bucket.

She has a team that will aid her from land via satellite phone, she will be tracked by GPS, and will have an emergency beacon in case of trouble, but there will be no support vessel. She will be rowing up to 16 hours a day in a boat without a motor or sail.

*Sonya Baumstein sits in her 23-foot (7.01 meter) carbon and kevlar solo rowboat in this handout picture courtesy of Andrew Cull in Port Townsend, Washington on 12 April, 2015.*
REUTERS

"Sonya's not crazy," said Cull. "She's driven. Maybe a little bit bullheaded. She gets an idea in her head and will do anything necessary to get it done."

Baumstein has a master's degree in non-profit management, yet Cull said she has spent three years doing nothing but preparing for the trip, which is funded largely by commercial sponsors.

The only other woman to attempt to row from Japan to San Francisco was a Briton named Sarah Outen. But she was blown northward and after 149 days ended her 2013 journey in the Aleutian Islands.

That was her second attempt. A tropical storm damaged her boat so severely during her first try a year earlier that she had to abandon the trek.

*Reuters*

## mitv Myanmar International

(13-5-2015 07:00 am~ 14-5-2015 07:00 am)

* News
* Myanmar Charitable Labour Association
* Yatana Theinga City and Shwe Bon Yatanamingalar Palace
* A Monk's Robe
* News
* The Richly Blessed Gem Land
* TECH School
* News
* Local Tour Guide: Pho Khant
* Dhamma School
* Myanmar Harpist
* News
* Myanmar Traditional Toys
* Strolling Along A Memory Link — U Pein Bridge
* News
* Short Trip With Steve (Taungyi Trip)
* Today Myanmar "Gold Letter"
* News
* Myanmar Delicate Artistic Handy Creations — The Making Procedure of Goldsmith
* Up Against The Tide
* News
* Insight Myanmar (Library) (Ep-1) Myanmar Library Survey
* The Iron Rider
* News
* National Literary Icon and Guiding Light of Myanmar Literature "Sayar Zaw Gyi" (Episode-2)
* Culture Shows: Composer Ma Mya Lay
* News
* Choral Dance ( Duel )
* Lucrative Myanma Rattan Industry
* Kyaikhteeyoe: My Father The Porter
* News
* Jeyyanandi (A Day in the Life of a Nun)
* Crab Business (Part-I) Mud Crab

# USJ, JAL join hands to attract more visitors

*Yoshiharu Ueki (L), president of Japan Airlines Co, and Glenn Gumpel, chief executive officer of USJ Co, the operator of Universal Studios Japan, shake hands during a signing ceremony in Osaka on 11 May, 2015.*
KYODO NEWS

OSAKA, 12 May — The operator of Universal Studios Japan in Osaka and Japan Airlines Co said Monday they have formed a partnership to attract more visitors to the theme park and increase air passengers by making the most of USJ's customer base and the airline's flight network.

Under the partnership, JAL, which became the official airline of the amusement park, will sell package tours including airfares and tickets to shorten waiting times for some of USJ's popular attractions.

JAL will also set up a lounge in the theme park and hold a "premium night" event on 24 September allowing its 2,400 customers exclusive access to the attractions.

USJ Co Chief Executive Officer Glenn Gumpel said after a signing ceremony that JAL knows regional markets in Japan and the rest of Asia, where USJ is aiming to boost visitors.

JAL President Yoshiharu Ueki said at a joint press conference that the partnership will enable the two companies to propose travel services with higher value. USJ also expressed hope to attract visitors to a planned new theme park in Okinawa, one of the most popular tourist destinations in Japan, through the tie-up with JAL.—*Kyodo News*

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

11th Waning Day of Kason 1377 ME

Wednesday, 13 May, 2015

*President of Myanmar Football Federation U Zaw Zaw presents K 20 million to silver medalist players of Myanmar women's football team on 11 May. Chairman of Victory Committee for Women's Football Sports Zwekabin F.C. owner U Hla Htay also awards USD 3,100 to the players.*—MFF

# Tepid Arsenal sunk by late Gomis header

LONDON, 12 May — Arsenal's hopes of catching Manchester City for second place in the Premier League suffered a setback after a late Bafetimbi Gomis header, verified by goalline technology, handed Swansea City a 1-0 win at the Emirates on Monday.

Substitute Gomis struck five minutes from time, meeting Jefferson Montero's cross with a header that crossed the line before it was scooped out by keeper David Ospina, the goal confirmed almost immediately to the referee by the goalline technology system.

Arsenal, who have three games left to play, remain on 70 points, three points behind City who have two games left and sit in pole position for automatic entry to next season's Champions League group stage.

Swansea goalkeeper Lukasz Fabianski frustrated his former side, the Poland international making several good saves in the second half to thwart the home side.

Arsenal, unchanged for fifth successive game, had rarely tested Fabianski in a tepid opening half.

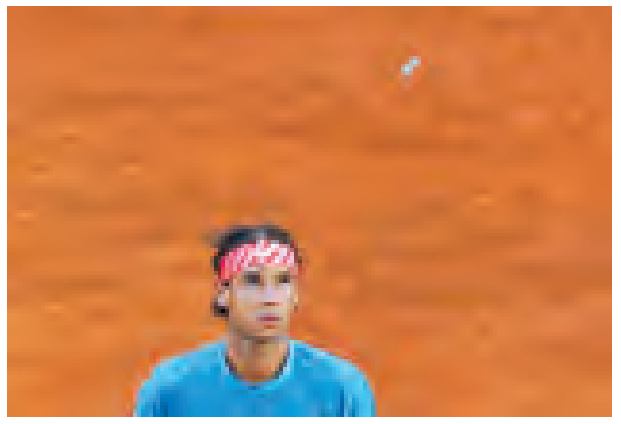
It took almost an hour for Arsenal to muster their first shot on target with Olivier Giroud shooting straight at Fabianski.

Arsenal pressed forward with greater urgency and Fabianski denied Alexis Sanchez and then Theo Walcott with a fine double save.

*Reuters*

*Swansea's Bafetimbi Gomis scores their first goal During Barclays Premier League at Emirates Stadium on 11 May, 2015.* —REUTERS

# Rankings slide leaves Nadal facing toughest challenge



*Spain's Rafael Nadal looks up during the coin toss before his final match against Britain's Andy Murray at the Madrid Open tennis tournament in Madrid, Spain, on 10 May, 2015.*—REUTERS

LONDON, 12 May — Rafa Nadal's slide down the ATP rankings means if he wins a record-extending 10th French Open title early next month it would go down as one of the greatest achievements of his illustrious career.

The Spaniard dropped three places to seventh on Monday as a consequence of his 6-3, 6-2 drubbing at the hands of Britain's Andy Murray in the final of the Madrid Masters the previous day.

And with another 600 points to defend at this week Rome Masters, the 28-year-old could fall to his lowest ranking for 10 years by the time play begins at Roland Garros on 24 May.

Not since April 2005, just before his maiden French title, has Nadal been lower than seventh.

The Spaniard insisted after losing to Murray that he was beginning to feel the "old sensations" again after struggling to find his best form in the wake of the wrist injury and appendicitis issues that undermined him last year.

But the fear factor that once inhibited opponents on the red clay appears to have disappeared.

In Monte Carlo, he was soundly beaten by world number one Novak Djokovic. He then lost to Italy's unpredictable Fabio Fognini in Barcelona and in Madrid, after appearing to be getting back on track with wins against Grigor Dimitrov and Tomas Berdych, he was stopped in his tracks by Murray.

Murray had never beaten Nadal on clay and was thrashed in last year's French Open semi-final, but on Sunday he won with nonchalant ease.

"I will just stay with the good things that happened this week, and there are a lot of them, more good than bad. I will try to recover the good feelings in Rome," Nadal said.

"Whatever will happen will be. It's something that we have to realise, all of us, that what's happening during these last years, it's very complicated to be 10 or one years without leaving the top four."

Barring an early loss in Rome, Nadal should manage to stay in the top eight but the possibility of a quarter-final meeting with Murray, Djokovic or world number two Roger Federer looms.

*Reuters*

# Real staring down the barrel before Juve clash

MADRID, 12 May — Stuttering holders Real Madrid could see their last chance of silverware slip away if they are unable to overturn a 2-1 deficit in Wednesday's Champions League semi-final, second leg at home to Juventus.

Ending the season without winning the Champions League, the La Liga title or the Spanish Cup would be a disaster for the world's richest club by income but such a scenario is a real possibility for Carlo Ancelotti's men. Saturday's 2-2 La Liga home draw with Valencia left them four points behind leaders Barcelona with two games left and they were dumped out of the King's Cup by Atletico, the team they beat 4-1 after extra time to secure a record-extending 10th European Cup last term.

Elimination from the latest edition could prompt drastic action from Real's notoriously impatient — and deep-pocketed — president Florentino Perez, who has rarely stuck by his coaches for long if they do not deliver trophies on a regular basis.

An exodus of players is also a possibility, with local media speculating that top scorer Cristiano Ronaldo and captain and goalkeeper Iker Casillas could be on their way. Real's hopes of getting past Juventus into June's showpiece in Berlin hinge on cutting out the errors and inconsistency that have dogged them in recent weeks. Injuries have also played their part and Ancelotti is hoping to have France striker Karim Benzema back for the clash at the Bernabeu, while a suspected injury to Germany midfielder Toni Kroos on Saturday looks to have been nothing more than a scare.

"Above all we need to keep a cool head, be patient, and not go crazy," defender Dani Carvajal, who conceded the penalty Carlos Tevez converted to win the first leg, said on Real's website on Monday.

*Reuters*

*Real Madrid's Cristiano Ronaldo reacts after missing a chance to score against Valencia during their Spanish first division soccer match at theSantiago Bernabeu stadium in Madrid, Spain, on 9 May, 2015.*
REUTERS

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