

President sends messages of felicitations to Norway

NAY PYI TAW, 17 May— U Thein Sein, President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, has sent messages of felicitations to His Majesty King Harald V of Norway and H.E. Ms. Erna Solberg, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Norway, on the occasion of the National Day of the Kingdom of Norway, which falls on 17 May 2015.—MNA

Dr Sai Mauk Kham pays homage to scholarly monks, visits Yangon Dental University

YANGON, 16 May— Vice President Dr Sai Mauk Kham and wife Daw Nan Shwe Hmon paid homage to scholarly members of the Sangha here on Saturday.

Officials said 90 outstanding monks were honoured in a ceremony at Mahapasana Cave on Thiri Mingala Kaba Aye Hill in Mayangon Township in the morning.

The event also drew senior monks headed by Sayadaw Abhidhaja Agga Maha Suddhammajotika Dr Bhaddanta Kumarabhivamsa, who is also the Chairman of the State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee. The vice president, accompanied by union ministers and high-ranking officials, received the Five Precepts from Sayadaw Agga Maha Pandita Bhaddanta



Paninsarabhivamsa.

The vice president and union ministers presented certificates to learned

monks and offertories to the members of the Sangha.

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Vice President Dr Sai Mauk Kham offers certificate to a monk.—MNA

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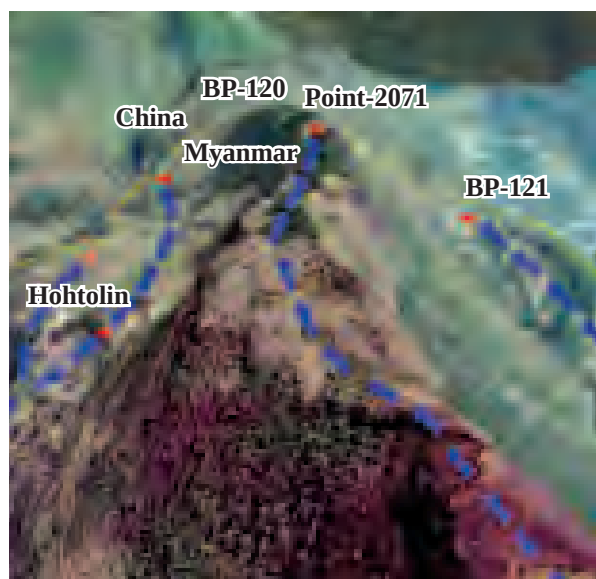
Gov't troops take control of insurgent bases

NAY PYI TAW, 16 May— Government troops on Friday seized a MNDAA base at Point 2202 hill in Laukkai, northeastern Shan State.

The three columns of government soldiers also took control of Point 2071 hill near border point BP-120 as they pursued troops of the MN-

DAA, an insurgent group led by Pheung Kya-shin, who fled to Sekawlyan area and seized Hohtolin and Setoneswe villages in the area. Following the clashes, the Tatmadaw force found five bodies of insurgents along with weapons and ammunition.

Myawady



Map showing Sekawlyan area.—MYAWADY

Ecotourism industry operators from around world set to converge on Myanmar

Local visitors take a boat ride on Indawgyi Lake, an ASEAN Heritage Park located in Monyin Township of Kachin State. Myanmar is home to seven of the 35 AHPs.

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By Ye Myint

YANGON, 16 May— Myanmar will host the 2015 World Ecotourism Conference from 19 to 21 May in Nay Pyi Taw, with discussions focusing on strategies to develop the burgeoning sector in a manner that

balances economic growth with environmental conservation.

The Ministry of Hotels and Tourism said the conference, taking place in Myanmar for the first time, will include the launch of the Myanmar Ecotourism Policy and Management

Strategy.

Organized by the ministry and the Nepal-based International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) in collaboration with the Ministry of Environmental Conservation and Forestry, the conference expects to

host around 200 attendees including tourism ministers and officials, representatives of travel agencies, ecotourism experts and media.

During the three-day conference, panel sessions will be held at The Kempinski Hotel focusing on (See page 3)

GTU to mark 60th birthday celebration



MANDALAY, 16 May — A ceremony to announce plans for the 60th birthday celebrations of the Government Technological University was held at the

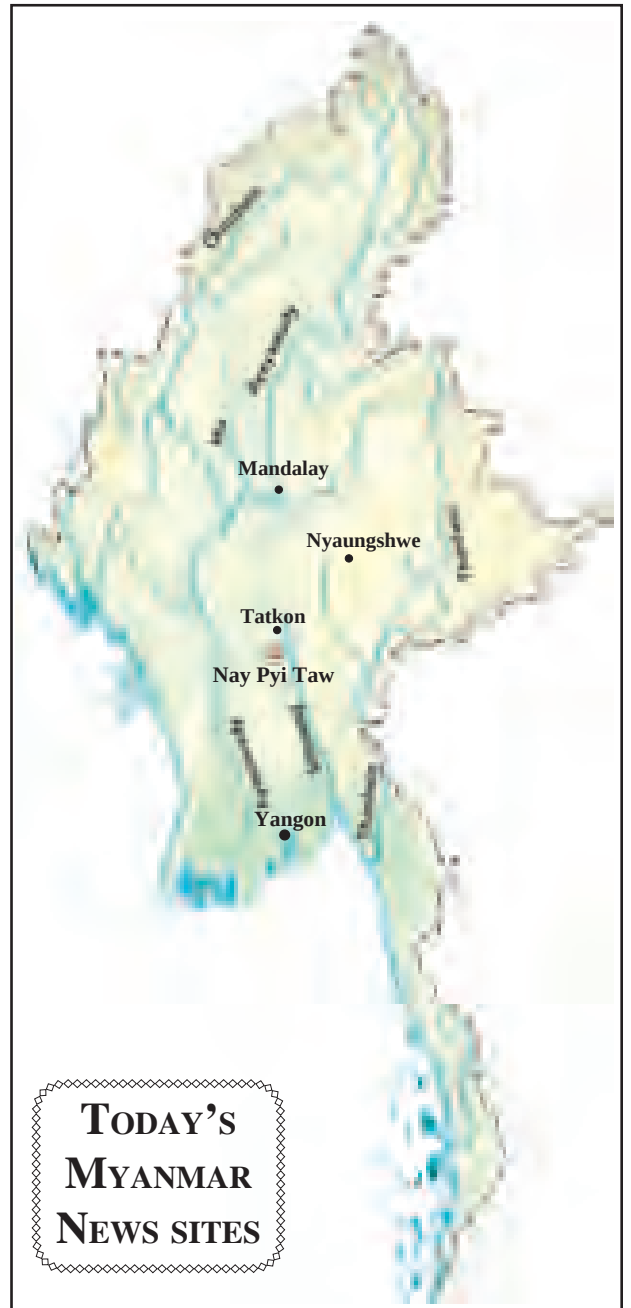
university on 15 May.

Rector Dr Hsint Soe and former student, Mandalay City Development Committee member U Khin Maung Tint, gave speeches at the ceremony.

Historian Tampawady U Win Maung explained the casting of a bronze statue for Kyaukmyaung Myosa U Shwe Oh.

On 20 December 1955, Prime Minister U Nu attended the opening of Government Technical Institute. The military government upgraded it to Government Technological College and then university on 1 October, 1991.

Tin Maung (Mandalay)



**TODAY'S
MYANMAR
NEWS SITES**

Villagers take part in emergency drill for natural disaster

TATKON, 16 May — Nay Pyi Taw Department of Relief and Resettlement took part in a natural disaster preparedness drill in Thawda village, Tatkon Township, on 15 May.

Powerful winds severely damaged 166 houses in Thawda Village on 9 April.

Under the supervision of Deputy Director of Nay Pyi Taw Department of Relief and Resettlement Daw Win Sanda Kyi, local authorities, departmental officials, members of Red Cross Brigade and social organizations, together with local residents, participated in the disaster drill.

A temporary relief



camp was opened at the monastery in the village to simulate the emergency accommodation of older

persons, disabled persons and children. Medical teams provided healthcare to the victims while social

organizations supplied food and water.

*Tin Soe Lwin
(Tatkon IPRD)*

Authorities present emergency medicine kits to rural communities

NAY PYI TAW, 16 May — Villagers in Pobbathiri Township received free emergency traditional medicine kits on 15 May.

At the hall of Township General Administration Department, Head of Nay Pyi Taw Traditional Medicine Department U

Htwe Maung spoke about usage of the kits.

Nay Pyi Taw Council member U Than Htay handed over the kits for villages

to Township Administrator U Htet Aung Phyto. The ceremony was also attended by local residents from 73 villages.—*Shwe Ye Yint*



Vice Chairman Dr Aung Thein and party of Myanmar Industry Association at Yangon International Airport on 12 May prepare to depart for Thailand to attend the Subcon Thailand and Intermach 2015 industrial exhibition in Bangkok from 13 to 16 May.—AUNG THURA

Local farmers receive agricultural equipment, fertilizers

NYAUNGSHWE, 16 May — A ceremony to present agricultural aid was held at Ngaphechaung Village in Inlay region, Nyaungshwe Township, on 14 May, with the aim of conserving Inlay Lake.

Shan State Minister for Inn Ethnic U Win Myint spoke on the occasion while Head of Township

Department of Agriculture U Zaw Win Tun spoke about protecting Inlay Lake and its surrounding environment.

Officials presented plastic buckets for breeding earthworms and equipment for cultivation of tomatoes, as well as pesticides and fertilizers, to local farmers.

Nay Myo Thurein



Dr Sai Mauk Kham pays homage...

(from page 1)

In the afternoon, Vice President Dr Sai Mauk Kham visited Yangon University of Dental Medicine in the township of Thingangyun here, with Rector Prof Dr Shwe Toe providing a briefing on its history, courses offered, the strengths of faculty mem-

bers and students, links with foreign universities and future plans.

The vice president urged the faculty members to improve the university's image and train students to provide health care with comforting warmth and encouragement.

MNA

Vice President Dr Sai Mauk Kham visits Yangon University of Dental Medicine in Thingangyun Township.—MNA

Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann meets local people in Yedashe.

MNA



Pyithu Hluttaw speaker Thura U Shwe Mann meets locals in Yedashe

NAY PYI TAW, 16 May— Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann made a visit to Yedashe Township, Bago Region, Saturday, and met the local people for rural development programmes.

The speaker was accompanied by Bago region's Chief Minister U Nyan Win, the chairman of regional parliament and members of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw.

While meeting with the people, Thura U Shwe Mann said Myanmar is moving ahead its democratic and market-economic system, with holding 2015 general elections in November 2015 and pledges of Union Election Commission for free and fair elections.

He added that the Parliament has approved some laws beneficial to the public, calling for the coordinated efforts of the public.

Chairman of Township Development Committee U Aung Myin and the Headmistress of Yedashe Township Daw Yin Yin Kyi presented the needs for the rural development programmes and school facilities. Before the public meeting, the Pyithu Hluttaw speaker visited Maha Vizarayama Buddhist monastery to pay respect and donate offertories to the monks in Yedashe Township.—MNA



Photo depicting elderly woman's struggle takes top prize in contest

By Khaing Thanda Lwin

YANGON, 16 May—The non-profit Gender Equality Network on Saturday announced the winners of its photo documentary contest held in March with the aim of bringing gender issues into focus.

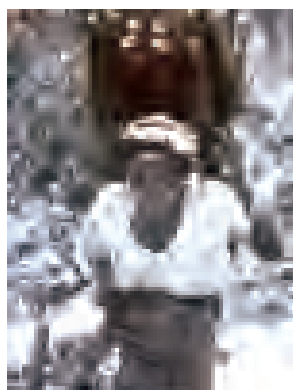
Nine prizewinners, six women and three men, were selected from a field of more than 16 entrants.

First prize went to Daw Rita Khin, second to Daw Myat Thandar Oo and third to Daw Seng Mai. U Arkar Tun Kyaw seized two special prizes while the remaining award went to Daw Saw Wuttmon. Theme prizewinners were U Tun Tun Zaw, Daw Yee Mon Oo and U Thein Naing.

The GEN will present K700,000 to the first prizewinner, K500,000 for second and K300,000 for third at a ceremony to be held in June in Yangon, with three theme prizewinners to each receive K100,000, and the special prizewinners to receive K50,000.

First prizewinner Rita Khin is a freelance photographer and a member of GEN.

"I took this photo when I was on tour to Thantaunggyi of Kayin State when I accidentally saw a 70-year-old woman with a basket full of fire woods inside, making a descent down the hill," she said, describing her winning entry.



A first prize winning photo of Rita Khin reflects the difficulties of an old woman who has to earn her living like a man.—PHOTO:

KHAING THANDA LWIN

She said her photo depicted the daily struggle of an elderly woman and the difficulties face by women who have to earn their livings like men, she added.

"The award-winning photos will be used in the GEN's books and publications as well as in its social and cultural norms research, which is expected to be released in September," Daw Nilar Tun, GEN's Steering Committee member, told the media at a press conference in Yangon.

This is first time the GEN has organized the photo contest with the aim of ensuring that people know the different impacts of culture and social influences on both males and females through photos, she said.

The NPO plans to conduct a gender-focused photo competition and a photo essay and journalism training this year, she added.

Gender Equality Network was established in 2008 as a women's organization.—GNLM

One-month campaign targets drug abuse and trafficking

NAY PYI TAW, 16 May— Myanmar will launch a one-month campaign to fight drug abuse, cultivation and trafficking from May 26, the Central Committee for Drug Abuse Control said Saturday.

The country saw declines in both cultivation and production of opium in 2014, the committee said, at a meeting at the headquarters of the ministry.

Union Minister for Home Affairs Lieutenant General Ko Ko, the committee's chairman, said at the campaign has been

scheduled to coincide with UN International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking on June 26.

The special campaign will take place in three zones of upper and lower Myanmar and Shan State. Myanmar is entering the second year of a five-year project to eliminate narcotic drugs.

The minister said opium cultivation in Myanmar could be reduced to 57,600 hectares in 2014 from 57,800 hectares in 2013, while production volume could be cut to from 870

to 670 tonnes in the same period accounting for 23 percent.

At the meeting officials from the anti-narcotic task forces, the Myanmar Anti-Narcotics Association (MANA), and the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry explained their activities, while holding discussions with representatives from the UN Office on Drugs and Crime, the National Narcotic Control Commission and the Drug Enforcement Administration.—MNA

Ecotourism industry operators from...

(from page 1)

planning and management of ecotourism in and around protected areas to generate income for local communities, ensure conservation, and address climate change.

Myanmar International Convention Centre II will host the opening ceremony and welcome dinner.

After hosting the ASE-

AN Tourism Forum for the first time earlier this year, and with more ecotourism conferences on the cards, the country is looking to boost its impressive growth in the tourism sector, with 5 million overseas arrivals forecast for this year, eclipsing last year's total of roughly 3.1 million.

Since its initiation of

ecologically based tourism in 1998, Myanmar's areas of natural beauty have become renowned among adventure tourists, particularly those in the lucrative 35-54 age range.

The inaugural World Ecotourism Conference was held in Laos in 2009, followed by Malaysia in 2010, Cambodia in 2011, South Korea in 2012 and the Philippines in 2014.—GNLM

Myanmar, ADB sign agreement to further strengthen private sector development

YANGON, 16 May — The Government of Myanmar and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) Friday signed a non-sovereign framework agreement that will allow ADB to provide loans, equity investments, guarantees, and trade financing directly to private companies and projects in the country.

“The private sector is the country’s engine of economic growth, and the government welcomes ADB’s support to private sector ventures in Myanmar,” Deputy Minister for Finance Dr Maung Maung Thein said during the signing ceremony attended by other government officials, ADB Vice-President Stephen Groff, other ADB officials and the media.

ADB estimates that the investment gap for Myanmar that needs to be filled to maintain high economic growth and achieve middle-income country status by 2030 is around \$80 billion.

“The role of private sector investment in meet-



Deputy Minister for Finance Dr. Maung Maung Thein and ADB Vice-President Stephen Groff exchange a handshake after signing a non-sovereign framework agreement that will allow ADB to provide loans, equity investments, guarantees, and trade financing directly to private companies and projects in the country.

PHOTO: CREDIT TO ADB MYANMAR

ing infrastructure financing requirements and providing important expertise and technology is critical”, said Mr. Groff.

In Myanmar, ADB expects to approve up to \$1 billion in non-sovereign

investment projects until 2016 in areas ranging from logistics and connectivity, power generation, telecommunications, and urban development, to financial sector and trade finance.

GNLM

Cartoon exhibition promotes conservation of Myanmar’s natural resources

By Khaing Thanda Lwin

YANGON, 16 May — A group of local cartoonists concerned about the conservation of Myanmar’s natural resources opened a joint exhibition Friday at River Ayeyawady Gallery in Yangon.

The exhibition, entitled “For Who?,” aims to make international investors aware of the importance of conservation

and the negative impacts of businesses, said U Lai Lone, programme officer of environmental NGO Spectrum-Sustainable Development Knowledge Network, which is organizing the exhibition.

All works are aimed at raising public awareness about protection and sustainable management of the environment,

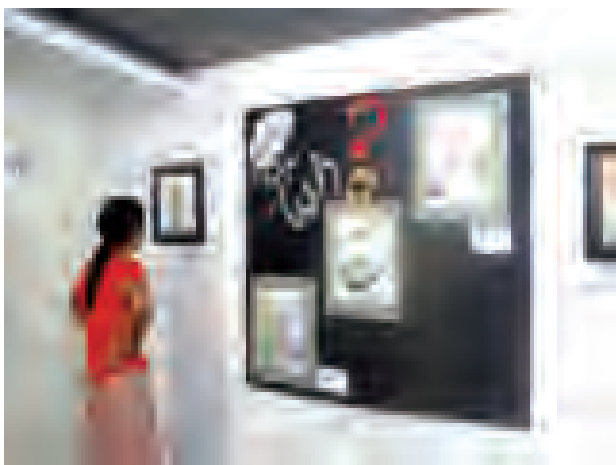
as well as showing people the role of cartoonists in the conservation, he added.

The exhibition runs from 15 to 17 May, showcasing 60 works by 20 artists. The works on display are not for sale but anyone who wants to buy items on show may directly contact the artists, U Lai Lone said.

“We, the Spectrum, particularly invite the foreign embassies in the country and civil society organizations, with expectations of about 1,000 visitors at the three-day event,” U Lai Lone said.

Established in 2007, the spectrum plans to provide environmental journalism training to local reporters by the end of this year to polish their skills.

Myanmar, a resource-rich country, has a population of more than 50 million people, most of whom are dependent on forestry. According to a survey, only 25 per cent of Myanmar people are aware of environmental conservation.—GNLM



A visitor enjoys the works of local cartoonists on display at the art exhibition “For Who?”, which takes place at River Ayeyawady Gallery on 35th Street in Yangon.—PHOTO: KHAING THANDA LWIN

UEC member urges parties to nominate women as candidates

YANGON, 16 May— The Union Election Commission held a meeting with political parties at Summit Parkview Hotel, here, on Friday.

UEC member U Myint Naing said the commission is three-quarters of the way to completing its compilation of the national electoral roll. He urged political parties to nominate female candidates for the elections so as to increase the percentage of women among Hluttaw MPs. He also said party representatives who have attended voter edu-

cation courses must share their knowledge with the people.

Member of the commission U Win Kyi gave an update on the progress of compilation of electoral rolls across the nation.

Commission members, officials of political parties and Ms Tatiana Monney of the Swiss Embassy discussed ethics of political parties and participated in a demonstration of voting and counting of ballots.

U Myint Naing spoke about solving electoral disputes.—MNA

Union FM sends message of felicitations to Norway

NAY PYI TAW, 17 May — U Wunna Maung Lwin, Union Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, has sent a message of felicitations to H.E. Mr. Borge Brende, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Norway, on the occasion of the National Day of the Kingdom of Norway, which falls on 17 May 2015. —MNA

Soap maker says hand washing key to reducing infant mortality

YANGON, 16 May— Midwives can play a big part in preventing common infections and neonatal deaths in Myanmar by educating the public about the importance of washing hands with soap, according to soap brand ambassador Chit Thu Wai.

The Lifebuoy brand ambassador gave a presentation on Thursday at the International Day of the Midwife and Nurse event at Yangon’s University of Nursing.

“The first 28 days of a baby’s life are the most critical,” said Chit Thu Wai. “Every year in Myanmar, 44,000 babies don’t live to turn one month old.

“But many of these deaths are due to preventable infections like diarrhea and

respiratory infections.

“Midwives can act as health messengers to educate the public on proper hygiene practices, especially hand washing with soap which has proven to reduce neonatal mortality by 41 per cent.”

Hundreds of midwives and nurses attended the day along with guest speakers such as Union Minister for Health Dr Than Aung, Region Representative Janet Jackson from UNFPA, Chief of Party from Maternal and Child Survival Program Leah Thayer and representatives of the Myanmar Nurses and Midwife Association.

As an event sponsor, Lifebuoy distributed edu-

cational materials explaining the importance of hand washing with soap.

“We’re proud to sponsor the event and work with the Myanmar Nurse and Midwife Association,” said Unilever Myanmar Managing Director Zaw Myo Hlaing.

Professor Daw Yin Mya gave a speech at the event focusing on ASEAN’s regional guidelines for skilled birth attendants. Five midwives were also presented with awards and a few other midwives in attendance spoke about their work experiences. This is the third time Myanmar has marked International Day of the Midwife.

Khin Yadana



Soap brand ambassador Chit Thu Wai poses for documentary photo with midwives and nurses at the International Day of the Midwife and Nurse event at Yangon’s University of Nursing.— KHIN YADANA

Factory fire puts spotlight on working conditions in Philippines

MANILA, 16 May — A fire that killed 72 people in a rubber slipper factory in the Philippines on Wednesday has shone a spotlight on what trade unions say are the often unsafe working conditions in Southeast Asia's fastest-growing country.

The fire, which gutted the two-storey factory in the capital, Manila, started when sparks from a welding machine set ablaze flammable chemicals. It was one of the country's worst industrial fires.

Labour groups said lax implementation of safety rules and a lack of site inspections by the government were among the reasons why the Kentex Manufacturing Inc factory became a death trap.

"There is a culture of complacency in government," said Alan Tanjusay, spokesman of the Associated Labour Unions-TUCP, the biggest grouping of workers unions in the country. Labour Secretary Rosalinda Baldoz initially said Kentex had complied with general labour, safety and health standards. But on Saturday, she said Kentex had illegally subcontracted workers from an unregistered agency.

Baldoz said only three-fifths of businesses across the country were compliant with labour standards last year and the government was stepping up checks and hiring more people to carry them out.

The fire highlighted work safety in developing Asia, and was reminiscent of a factory collapse in



Protesters hold placards calling for a justice for the workers who were killed in a factory, during a mass outside a funeral home in Valenzuela city, north of Manila on 15 May, 2015. —REUTERS

Bangladesh in 2013 which killed more than 1,000 people. Eufracia Taylor, Asia analyst at global risk consultant Verisk Maplecroft, said that despite commitments to improve working and safety standards after the Bangladesh factory collapse, problems persisted.

"There remains a gap between the targets of companies and the actions implemented by suppliers throughout Asia," Taylor said.

Windows on the Philippine factory's second floor, where most victims were found, were covered with steel mesh that was meant to stop workers from stealing slippers by tossing them out, Kentex lawyer Renato Paraiso said in a television interview.

Survivors said the factory's main gate was padlocked with only a small door open when the fire broke out. Some survivors climbed over a perimeter

wall to get out.

Companies usually pass regular safety checks imposed by the government because they only need to submit documents, and often no physical inspection is conducted, said Tanjusay.

"They don't get to see the actual working environment," he said. Construction worker Emmanuel Madiclom lost his 50-year-old wife, 27-year old daughter, and a sister in law in the fire. They were all manual workers at Kentex. He said his wife often worked 12-hour shifts, especially when there was a big order, as there was this week. She was paid a maximum of 500 pesos (\$11.25) for a 12-hour shift, equivalent to the minimum wage for a regular 9-hour shift, he said.

"At first, she complained of the heat and of a foul smell from the rubber but she got used to it,"

Madiclom said, adding his wife did not get social security. Tanjusay said most Kentex labourers worked on a quota basis, and were paid just 150-200 pesos a day, below the minimum wage, because of layers of subcontracting.

"Our assumption is almost 90 percent of local factories are problematic, with violations in workplace arrangement, safe working conditions, wages and social benefits," he said, adding these did not include most multinational firms which he said adhered to strict labour and safety standards.

More than two-thirds of the country's nearly 40 million workers suffered from labour law violations, Tanjusay said. He added his group has been urging the government to limit labour sub-contracting to three layers from about eight to nine now.

Reuters

Eight bodies recovered from wreckage of US military chopper in Nepal

KATHMANDU, 16 May — Eight bodies have been recovered from the wreckage of a US Marine Corps helicopter found on Friday northeast of Kathmandu after three days of search efforts, the Nepalese Army said on Saturday. "The chopper was carrying two Nepalese Army personnel and six US Marines onboard. All bodies are not recognizable," the army said in a statement. US military and Nepalese Army personnel are at the site and an investigation is under way, it said.

The UH-1Y Huey went missing while conducting a relief aid flight after a massive earthquake, the second since last month, hit Nepal on Tuesday.—Kyodo News

Chinese warship leaves for Singapore for drills

BEIJING, 16 May — A Chinese navy warship has left southern China's Guangdong province for Singapore for military exercises, the Ministry of National Defence said.

The missile frigate Yulin will participate in IMDEX Asia 2015, a flagship maritime defence show in the region that runs from

19 to 21 May, and join a multilateral naval exercise hosted by the Western Pacific Naval Symposium.

After that, the vessel will also take part in a joint Sino-Singapore maritime drill, the first of its kind between the two militaries, the ministry said in a report posted on its website.

Xinhua

India to launch anti-submarine warfare-class corvette next week

NEW DELHI, 16 May — India will launch an anti-submarine warfare-class stealth corvette next week, sources said on Friday.

"This corvette, called INS Kavaratti, will in fact be the last of the four anti-submarine warfare class stealth corvettes built by Garden Reach Ship Builders and Engineers," the

sources said.

The vessel can fight in nuclear, chemical and biological warfare conditions. It is 90 percent indigenous, has four diesel engines and can achieve speeds in excess of 25 knots.

INS Kamorta, the first ship, was commissioned by the Indian Navy last year.

Xinhua

Strong aftershock hits Nepal, near Kathmandu

KATHMANDU, 16 May — A magnitude 5.7 earthquake hit Nepal on Saturday, about 76 km east south east of the capital Kathmandu, at a shallow depth of 10 km, the US Geological Survey said.

A 7.8 magnitude earthquake struck on 25 April, killing more than 8,000 people and there have been a series of aftershocks since then.—Reuters

Japan requests Hiroshima invite to be reinstated in disarmament paper

NEW YORK, 16 May — Japan called on Friday for the return of language referring to possible visits by leaders to Hiroshima and Nagasaki in the outcome document of the UN review conference on the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty after it was removed from a draft paper at China's insistence. At a meeting of the committee on disarmament, one of the three panels at the conference, around 10 countries including the Philippines, Australia, Chile, Czech Republic and Nigeria expressed support for the Japanese proposal.

Toshio Sano, a Geneva-based ambassador for disarmament, said at the meeting that the invitation

is "one of the most effective ways" to increase awareness about the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons and is supported by other delegations.

"Therefore, Japan requests that this will reappear in the next draft" of the conference's outcome document, he added.

The proposal for leaders to "witness with their own eyes the realities" of the 1945 bombings by the United States was made by Japanese Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida in his speech on 27 April, the opening day of the review conference of the around 190 member countries of the treaty.

The language had been included in elements for a



Chinese Ambassador for Disarmament Affairs Fu Cong (C) speaks at a meeting of the committee on disarmament, part of the review conference on the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, at United Nations Headquarters in New York on 15 May, 2015.

KYODO NEWS

draft but was later dropped after China strongly opposed the idea. On Friday, Chinese Ambassador for Disarmament Affairs Fu Cong said

that Japan has repeatedly denied its history of invasion of other countries and the atrocities committed by its forces in those countries during the

war. "I hope that the Japanese delegation can show some sensitivity to the emotions of other countries and do not insist on their proposals," he said. Having spoken against the Japanese proposal repeatedly in the past few days, Fu added, "I would say enough is enough." Backing Japan's bid, a representative of the Philippines delegation said that "the Philippines strongly believe nothing can substitute the experience of seeing first hand devastation, human suffering there."

The invitation proposal "is not about World War II" but "about informing the world through Hiroshima and Nagasaki the extent to which nukes could wreak havoc," the speaker said.

At a Press conference in Tokyo on Friday, Kishida said he is sending Shinsuke Sugiyama, one of his deputies, to the NPT review conference to drum up support from other countries for its bid to invite leaders to visit the two cities.

Motohide Yoshikawa, Japan's top envoy at the United Nations, is also expected to be enlisted for this effort. Participants in the review conference are planning to merge final drafts from the three committees — on disarmament, nonproliferation and the peaceful use of atomic energy — into one early next week in the run-up to the conclusion of the month-long event on 22 May.—Kyodo News

Iran prepared for all scenarios in nuclear talks

VIENNA, 16 May — Iran is prepared for “all scenarios” in talks with world powers about curbing its nuclear programme in exchange for sanctions relief, its top nuclear negotiator said on Friday when asked what would happen if no final deal was reached by July.

Diplomats have been working in Vienna this week to iron out details of a deal without announcing any breakthrough ahead of a self-imposed on 30 June deadline. The current talks, led by US Under Secretary

of State Wendy Sherman, concluded on Friday, a diplomatic source said.

“Even if I’m optimistic, that doesn’t mean that any deal is acceptable. All parties want a good deal, and for Iran it’s only a good deal if our legitimate rights are respected and sanctions are finished,” top negotiator and Deputy Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi told Austrian news agency APA. “We have thought of all possibilities and, accordingly, are prepared for all scenarios,” he said.

Iran, which denies seeking nuclear weapons, has said sanctions must be rescinded as soon as any final deal is signed. The United States wants a gradual lifting of restrictions tied to verified compliance by Iran with its end of the deal, a big sticking point left unresolved so far.

A framework accord reached last month also did not spell out all details about the future of Iran’s atomic research and development programme, the exact scope of the UN atomic watchdog’s monitoring regime,

and what kind of uranium stockpile Teheran will be allowed to keep.

“We believe that solving the technical components won’t be difficult if there is veritable political will. If that is the case, the final deal can very likely be reached before the deadline,” Araqchi said.

On Thursday, he held talks with the head of the International Atomic Energy Agency, Yukiya Amano. The IAEA is seeking access to Iranian military sites, such as Parchin near Teheran, as part of its investigation into any possible military dimensions to Teheran’s nuclear activities.

Iran, which is extremely reluctant to allow atomic inspectors access to military sites, has been stalling the investigation since last August. Deputy-level talks between Iran and the six powers — the United States, Russia, China, Britain, France and Germany — will continue next week, Araqchi told Iranian Press TV. Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said he was optimistic that Teheran could reach a final nuclear deal with world powers provided that they “mean it seriously,” according to Germany’s *Spiegel* magazine.—Reuters



Negotiators of Iran and six world powers face each other at a table in the historic basement of Palais Coburg hotel in Vienna on 24 April, 2015. —REUTERS

Sentenced to death, Boston Marathon bomber could live for decades

NEW YORK, 16 May — Boston Marathon bomber Dzhokhar Tsarnaev was sentenced to death on Friday. But his execution may not happen for decades — if ever. A lengthy appellate process, an effective moratorium on federal executions and declining support among Americans for capital punishment all suggest that Tsarnaev’s death by lethal injection is far from a sure thing, according to death penalty experts. Instead, it may end as a purely symbolic judgement.

“With every passing year, the likelihood of execution will diminish,” said Deborah Denno, a law professor at Fordham University who has studied capital punishment.

That said, many of the issues that typically draw criticisms of death penalty sentences, such as inadequate legal counsel and post-conviction exoneration, are not present in the Tsarnaev case. His legal team included one of the most respected death penalty lawyers in the country,



Death penalty protesters and media await the announcement of the sentencing verdict in the trial of Boston Marathon bomber Dzhokhar Tsarnaev outside the federal courthouse in Boston, Massachusetts on 15 May, 2015. —REUTERS

Judy Clarke, and she did not attempt to argue his innocence at trial. The absence of those criticisms, along with the sheer horror of the crime, could make Tsarnaev the “perfect test case” for the future of capital punishment, said Douglas Berman, a law professor at Ohio State University who specializes in federal sentencing.

“I think it’s 50-50,” he said. “This could be the case that people have in mind when they say we reserve the death penalty for the worst of the worst.”

Tsarnaev was sentenced to death by a federal jury for helping carry out the 2013 attack that killed three people and wounded 264 others in the crowds at the finish

line of the Boston Marathon. The same jury found Tsarnaev guilty last month in the bombing, which was one of the highest-profile attacks on US soil since 11 September, 2001. While Massachusetts has banned the death penalty, Tsarnaev was convicted of federal crimes, which can carry a death sentence under US law.—Reuters

WTISD 2015: Message from ITU Secretary-General, Houlin Zhao



This year, 2015, marks the 150th anniversary of the International Telecommunication Union. Established in 1865, ITU has reaffirmed its reputation worldwide as one of the most resilient and relevant organizations and continues its work as the specialized agency of the United Nations, and its oldest mem-

ber, dealing with state-of-the-art telecommunications and information and communication technologies.

The remarkable history of ITU exemplifies its stellar role in connecting the world to the most advanced and innovative means of communication, from the days of the telegraph to the Internet and mobile broadband, which now allows us to be in touch anytime, anywhere with friends, family, colleagues and even things.

As we celebrate our 150th anniversary, we look back with pride at our accomplishments. And we look forward to the future as we respond to the rapid changes in the global ICT environment.

The innovations with and from ICT and the implementation of these technologies pervade every aspect of our lives. ICTs are also the catalysts for shaping the post-2015 development agenda and achieving our goals for sustainable development.

Throughout 2015, we will organize several events highlighting **ICTs as the drivers of innovation** at ITU and around the world to mark this landmark 150th anniversary. I invite you to celebrate with us and participate in the events, providing your support as well as your contributions in order to fulfil our commitment to connect the world.

I wish you a very productive 150th anniversary in 2015.

Houlin Zhao
ITU Secretary-General

US, China clash over disputed South China Sea

BEIJING, 16 May — The United States and China clashed over a territorial dispute in the South China Sea on Saturday, as China’s foreign minister asserted its sovereignty to reclaim reefs saying its determination to protect its interests is “as hard as a rock”.

After a private meeting with US Secretary of State John Kerry, China’s Foreign Minister Wang Yi showed no sign of backing down despite Kerry urging China to take action to reduce tension in the South China Sea.

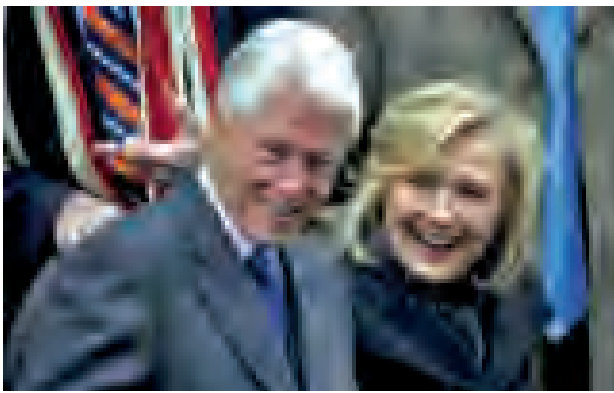
“With regard to construction on the Nansha islands and reefs, this is fully within the scope of China’s sovereignty,” Wang told reporters, using the Chinese name for the Spratly islands. “I would like to reaffirm that China’s determination to safeguard its sovereignty and territorial integrity is as hard as a rock,” he said. “It is the people’s demand of the government and our legitimate right.”

Wang made the comments at a joint news conference with Kerry, who is at the beginning of a two-day visit to China that is likely to be dominated by deepening concern about Beijing’s ambitions in the South China Sea. China claims about 90 percent of the 3.5 million sq km (1.35 million sq mile) South China Sea. The Philippines, Taipei, Malaysia, Brunei and Vietnam also claim large parts of the sea.

China’s rapid reclamation effort around seven reefs in the Spratly archipelago of the South China Sea has alarmed other claimants such as the Philippines and Vietnam. At the same time, China has expressed its concern about a possible US plan to send military aircraft and ships to assert freedom of navigation in the South China Sea.

Kerry did not respond when asked to clarify whether the United States intended to follow through on what a US official on Tuesday said was a proposal to send US military aircraft and ships.—Reuters

Clintons earned at least \$30 mln since beginning of 2014



Former US President Bill Clinton and former US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton depart the former Governor of New York Mario Cuomo's funeral in Manhattan, New York on 6 Jan, 2015. —REUTERS

WASHINGTON, 16 May — Hillary and Bill Clinton have earned at least \$30 million since January 2014, including more than \$25 million for delivering

nation in 2016, has earned more than \$5 million in royalties for her book, "Hard Choices," which was published in June, according to the form.

The Clintons' income puts them at the upper end of the top 0.1 percent of earners in the US population, according to government data.

Economic inequality has emerged as an early theme with candidates of both parties vying for the White House in November 2016.

The "one percent" has become a talking point in policy discussions about the divide between rich and poor, cited by politicians to support everything

from increased Wall Street oversight to raising wages to overhauling the tax code.

Clinton announced her candidacy last month by saying "everyday Americans need a champion and I want to be that champion."

In early campaign stops, Clinton has said how she believes the "deck is stacked" against middle class Americans and that it is time to "reshuffle the cards."

The Clintons themselves have faced criticism for their privileged status. Last year, Hillary Clinton said they were "dead broke" when they left the White House in 2001, even

though Bill Clinton made millions of dollars giving speeches after his presidency.

Clinton, a former top diplomat, US senator and first lady, has earned as much as \$250,000 per speech since leaving the State Department in 2013.

Paid appearances at financial institutions such as Goldman Sachs and Bank of America in particular have drawn fire from the liberal wing of the Democratic party, which fears her campaign will be beholden to moneyed interests.

Clinton, like all presidential candidates who entered the race before 15 April, was required to file

an account of her personal finances by 15 May.

The Clinton campaign made the filing available to media outlets for review.

The Federal Election Commission forms ask candidates to report the values of assets and liabilities in broad ranges, making it impossible to arrive at a candidate's exact net worth.

The minimum value of the Clinton's financial assets is \$11.3 million, but their net wealth is likely far more, since the value of some assets, including personal residences, are not required to be reported and anything above \$5 million is reported in a single category.—Reuters

Typhoon lashes Guam, nearby islands; power, water supplies cut

YIGO, (Guam), 16 May — Power and water supplies were cut in many areas of the Pacific island of Guam on Saturday, a day after a typhoon brought strong wind and heavy rain that uprooted trees and tore off roofs.

There were no reports of injuries. About 1,100 residents took shelter in schools as Typhoon Dolphin hit the US territory late on Friday but some started to go home on Saturday.

There were long lines at gasoline stations.

"We have some water issues. We have more pockets of power outages.

These are being restored.

The hospital was back up," Lieutenant Governor Ray Tenorio told Reuters.

The typhoon knocked out power in about 40 percent of Guam, and cut water supplies in more than a tenth of the island,

said the island's utilities providers. Nimfa Lumanog-Ricalde, a resident of the northern village of Dededo in Guam, said the tin roof of her house had been blown away.

"I have a swimming pool in my lounge," she said. Some streets were flooded.

The eye of the storm, with maximum winds of 110 mph (177 kph), passed through a narrow channel between Guam and Rota island on Friday.

It was a moderate category 2 typhoon when it narrowly missed a direct hit on Guam but strengthened to a category 4, the second strongest on a scale of one to five, as it headed towards Japan.

Rota, a small island north of Guam with fewer than 3,000 residents, is completely without power, officials said.

Reuters

US lower house backs expansion of Japanese forces' activities

WASHINGTON, 16 May — The US House of Representatives backed Japan's new policy Friday of allowing the Self-Defence Forces to play a wider role, including the lifting of a self-imposed ban on the use of the right to collective self-defence.

The position was included in the annual key defence act outlining budgetary plans for the next fiscal year from October, which the lower house endorsed the same day.

"The United States supports recent changes in Japanese defence policy, including the adoption of collective self-defence," said the National Defence Authorization Act for fiscal 2016, which authorized the annual budget worth more than \$600 billion.

The Senate is deliberating a bill for the act.

In July last year, Japan's Cabinet adopted a change in the legal interpretation of the war-renouncing Constitution so that the country can help allies such as the United States even when Japan itself is not directly attacked.

The act also backed the Guidelines for US-Japan Defence Cooperation, which were revised last month for the first time in 18 years on the back of a rise in the Chinese presence in East and Southeast Asia.

The revised guidelines detail roles of the US military and the SDF in a possible contingency, reflecting the change in Japan's policy on collective self-defence.

The United States and Japan should improve joint interoperability and collaborate on developing future capabilities to maintain regional stability "in an increasingly uncertain security environment," the act said.

The US legislature recognizes the close alliance with Japan "continues to be enhanced to maintain peace and prosperity in the region," it said.

Congress reserves and applies the lessons learned from the history of World War II in the Pacific theater, the act also said, referring to US battles with Japan.

The lower house also backed an agreement between Washington and Tokyo to relocate a Marine Corps base within Okinawa, a project which is faced with local opposition led by Gov. Takeshi Onaga.

The plan to move the Futenma Air Station from a crowded residential area in Ginowan to the less densely populated Henoko seaside area in Nago "remains the only option," it said.

Kyodo News

World energy experts urge G20 to help Africa solve power crises

ISTANBUL, 16 May — World energy experts called on Friday on the G20 countries to increase their investments in Africa to solve its electricity crises. The appeal was made at the 6th International Energy Forum in Istanbul, Turkey. More than 400 energy experts are taking part in the event.

Experts agreed at the forum that G20's primary aim under the presidency of Turkey should be the integration of Africa with the rest of the world in the energy field.

Almost two thirds of the population of Africa (620 million people) still have no electricity, according the data provided by the International Energy Agency (IEA).

Turkey prepares to come up with new suggestions on how to mobilize investments in sub-Saharan countries in the final G20 summit in Antalya that will be held in November, said Fatih Birol, chief economist of IEA.

Speaking about the enormous energy opportunities and resources of Africa, Birol said that solar energy, hydro power, oil and gas are among the major resources of the continent.

"When we talk about oil market, more than 30 percent of the new oil discovery comes from sub-Saharan Africa," he added.

While Africa has been suffering tremendously from electricity shortage, more than 80 percent of



Delegates discuss at the 6th International Energy Forum in Istanbul, Turkey, on 15 May, 2015.—XINHUA

the world energy are consumed within the G20 countries, the energy experts said.

Entire electricity that is consumed in Africa is equal to that of New York, Birol pointed out.

Enabling uninterrupted energy source with a good price is among the top targets of G20, said Guler Sabanci, chairman of the board of Trustees of Sabanci University of Turkey, which hosts the forum.

The experts also expressed their hope that the G20 will provide effective solutions to the global energy challenges before Antalya summit. After the summit, Turkey will hand over the presidency to China.

Xinhua



Sunday, 17 May, 2015

Solving traffic congestion key to improving life of city

By Aung Khin

Yangon's traffic congestion has gradually worsened over the years, causing major headaches for those who commute daily. As commercial activity increases with the entry of more business firms to the country, the number of commuters continues to grow.

The vast majority of people rely on buses, taxis and private cars, as the city does not have other pub-

lic transportation systems such as Bangkok's BTS and MRT which have had a hugely positive impact on that city's traffic congestion.

Traffic congestion has many bad consequences. Yangon city has a large expanse of suburban areas that can accommodate expansion. However, few business firms set up their offices in these areas due to poor transportation infrastructure, causing higher property rates in the downtown business hub. Traffic congestion in this way is a major contributor to the exorbitant real estate prices that inhibit economic activity.

In some cases, many bridges linking city areas have only one lane in each direction. There have been incidents in which ambulances have been stuck due to vehicles blocking these narrow thoroughfares.

Employees are frequently late to work due to severe congestion. From suburban areas to downtown, some staff must travel nearly two hours to their offices, wasting their time and that of their company.

When people are forced to face traffic congestion day after day, their health and happiness suffer. The situation is also a hindrance to the tourism industry, which is a major source of revenue for the country.

Traffic congestion should be solved urgently to make Yangon a better place both for residents and visitors.

Write for us

We appreciate your feedback and contributions. If you have any comments or would like to submit editorials, analyses or reports please email wallace.tun@gmail.com with your name and title.

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

Nepal Earthquake: Lesson for Safety of Hospitals and Health Centers from Disasters

Dr. Aung Soe @ Aung Kyaw Moe
Retired State Medical Superintendent

Recently, a drastic earthquake of 7.9 in magnitude caused a huge destructive natural disaster in Nepal, resulting in loss of nearly eight thousand lives and properties, the cost of which could not be accurately estimated yet, followed by a series of after-shocks.

In 2008, Myanmar also encountered a natural disaster, not in the form of earthquake, but as cyclone Nargis and associated tsunami, which claimed nearly one hundred and fifty thousand human lives in fractures, buildings, livestock, cattle, paddy fields, natural environments and so forth.

It is an economic as well as a political concern to keep health facilities functional and available in a disaster, which, of course, is utmost difficult in practical point of view. The concept of keeping health facilities safe from disaster initiates after the 1975 Mexico earthquake, when most of the health facilities collapsed in Mexico City and there was no way to provide needed health services to the mass of casualties.

Mexico earthquake was preceded by Bagan earthquake in Central Myanmar, which destroyed numerous unvaluable ancient national heritages of Myanmar, in addition to loss of human lives and basic structures.

A safe health facility constitutes some place that provides clinical and public-health services, which should have structures that are able to withstand the traumas from natural disasters. Non-structured elements consist of equipment that will not fail, such as related contin-

gencies, constant supply of electricity and water back up. Conventional aspect of safe health facility in natural disaster is trained staff skilled according to disaster preparedness plans, who are aware of the consequences of disaster and brave enough not to run away leaving patients abandoned. Perhaps functional evacuation plan is also included in conventional elements of a safe health facility in disasters.

The health service outlets are not the priority items for governments and donors to fund, whether in peacetime or in disaster time. The social loss is also an important one. In a post-emergency situation, the hospital is a veritable meeting place for all to come together and feel a sense of shared plight and mutual comfort, or a common dwelling for those whose homes have been destroyed. If the hospital remains standing, it can give access to basic services such as water, sanitation, electricity and other social security measures. It houses the field hospital that will take care of the urgent and salvageable casualties of the early hours of the disaster. When a health facility is lost, it is a huge loss in investment, not just because of the absolute amount of money lost, but also because of the lack of opportunities to attract public or donor funds to such investments. The health sector is not the first priority of such investors or investments. In times of disasters, funds pooled go elsewhere, to seemingly more visible items such as housing, roads, bridges etc. In the scheme of governance, health is very under-

funded. So it is all the more important and reason enough to help protect these investments a priority.

One example: The Global New Light of Myanmar, in its May 10 issue, published a news item quoting Reuters News Agency. It reads, Nepal's prime minister pledged on May 8 to rebuild schools and roads within two years of quake. Telecoms, power stations and hospitals were mentioned only at the letter part of prime minister's pledge and promise.

We have had several emergencies in these few years—the Asian tsunami, cyclones Cidr and Nargis, the Kosi river floods in Nepal, the West Sumatra earthquake, Vietnam and the Philippines typhoons, and other complex emergencies such as the conflict in Sri Lanka. Health workers risk their lives through all this and although all health services are supposed to be neutral even in times of war, there are cross-fire casualties or collateral damage, as it is now sometimes called. Round about 60 percent of deaths from disasters were in South East Asia during recent past, World Health Organization says.

Lack of investment for keeping health facilities intact may have its basis in the lack of emotional attachment people have for these facilities to which one goes only when one is sick. Thus, health facilities do not have the backing or demand for protection as other entities. It is also a fact that hospitals do not have too many good feelings attached to them anyway because we prefer happy memories to the often gloomy memories of our illnesses. Structurally too, hospitals can be a difficult thing to plan consistently across all cultures and national bounda-

ries. Neither do all countries have the same health systems nor risk reduction systems. And not all countries have similar architectural designs or constructional typologies. Therefore, an all-encompassing systemic programme is difficult to craft. There have to be national-level adaptations, and these take meticulous attention and time.

Since the 2009 WHO campaign to promote the movement for keeping health facilities safe in disasters, a lot of effort has happened. There were a lot of hits on this, and now global ambassadors such as the Chinese actor Jet Li, and Heikki Kovalainen the F-1 speed ace, have endorsed the campaign. WHO has published a very popular pocket guide to disasters. The private sector also has contributed through the growth of health-care providers.

Urban dwellers must be taught the skills of how to respond in an emergency. This is the place where most casualties will be recorded if an emergency should strike like a major after-shock in Nepal on 11 May 2015. There are disaster risk reduction actions being taken in several nations including Myanmar. The Gujarat (India) project is one that uses the community in programme planning, drills and response plans. The Kathmandu valley also has a better plan now that will be more effective on these fronts. The Hospitals Preparedness in Emergencies programme in Nepal has engineers involved in the training course, and a similar project will also soon be rolled out in India. Furthermore, in India, there is an urban disaster preparedness initiative happening already. Risk mitigation and personal protection in schools and communities are

Letter to the Editor

Our cost of living

Dear Sir,

May I just deal with two topics which are the most essential in our daily life:

Cost of essential commodities: Prices of these items had risen as soon as Govt. decided to raise the salaries of Govt. employees, actually before the employees could enjoy the benefits. Some mention was made in our newspapers, saying that the price of meat and fish had remained stable. But how many and how often can an average Govt. servant afford such luxuries? Apart from Govt. servants who might probably get some easement from raised salaries, what about the rest of our population? Especially growing children who would become our leaders one day, and who need nourishing food to be healthy?

In this respect, I have heard of certain countries where Governments impose very strict actions to make sure that prices of very essential commodities like rice, oil, gram, flour, salt, sugar, etc., remain stable, and where necessary, with government subsidies, while the governments control the prices of fuel, power and gas. Perhaps this idea may be worthy of consideration till we reach our objective in raising our way of life.

Public Transportation: For any developing society, public transportation needs to be safe, convenient, and fast. Our public transportation, unfortunately, had been lacking badly in such privileges till now. At the moment, we are blessed with unprecedented congestion of saloon cars, meterless costly taxis, outdated, old, frequently broken-down, overloaded buses. In this regard, encouraging news came on our media, saying Bus Companies were about to be formed with public shares. I hope this venture will earn a lot of pre-planning regarding types of buses, bus routes, recessed bus stops not to interfere with traffic lanes, bus stations well equipped to handle technicalities, well-trained drivers, over head bridges at busy crossings, new rules, etc, etc.

Another important system in public transportation, is the rail. Land transportation needs the support of rail inevitably. Rail transportation is not hampered by congestion, accidents or overcrowding. A balance between road and rail transportation can solve a lot of our traffic problems existing at this moment.

I may sound critical of our administration's efforts in this regard, but we must admit that unless our internal situation is stabilized, foreign investments will be slow in coming, however friendly and promising they may sound.

A patriot

included in this. There is a two-city simulation exercise also now being planned for Mumbai and Delhi, which would require that all new hospitals be seismically resistant. But quality professionals are also needed for assessing and reconstructing. These are unfortunately hard

to come by, which may delay the work somewhat.

Private sector regulation is also a huge issue that must be addressed. With so many providers and hospitals, they must be also made to abide by building regulations.

May all planet citizens be safe from disasters.

On Turning Age 74

Tin Shein
CEO, MICPA

As we all know, age is the time we pass through from birth to grave. I would have turned 74, come next June. Once we reach the age of 74—only one year short of the average life expectancy of 75 years—we are, of course, approaching the end of the human life span on earth. Not many years remain to us and our own ends may not be too far off in the ordinary course of things. It is also time for us to take stock of our situation and do whatever is necessary for winding up our affairs in preparation for the final passage out of this world. W. Somerset Maugham, a well-known British writer, wrote at the age of 40, “The Summing Up,” in which he summarized all his thoughts on philosophy, religion, literature, the meaning of life, etc. that had occupied his mind for a long time. He said it was a sort of rounding off his worldly affairs before he met his fate. But he added that one does not die immediately after one has made his will. Of course, he himself had proved the truth of what he had said; he had lived to an advanced age of 97, if I remember correctly. His reading covers a wide range of subjects, including literature, old and modern, philosophy, religion, etc.

As for myself, I have all along been occupied in earning my living as a public servant for a family of four. It has proved a hard job making both ends meet on my monthly salary. Thus I have not had a good opportunity to seriously study those great books of world knowledge that had advanced our civilization to the present stage of space age, Internet, multi-national corporations, globalization, etc. I had to read western philosophy for my graduate course of studies at the university. But then it only scratched the surface of the subject which I had studied just enough to pass the exam. My reading of English literature has been confined to the Sherlock Holmes stories by Arthur Conan Doyle, and some novels by W. Somerset Maugham, Pearl S. Buck, Hemingway, etc. I like the writing styles of those writers better than those of any other writers I have read—especially the styles of Arthur Conan Doyle and W. Somerset Maugham, which are simple and easy to understand. Soon after I arrived in Yangon and worked at the Directorate of Commercial Audit, I joined the Sapaybeikman Library as a member and took out on loan “Ivanhoe” by Sir Walter Scott. I had read that novel in the retold series while in the Matriculation class at high school. In fact, it was a prescribed English text for the 1957 Matriculation Exam. I thought I would enjoy more reading that novel in the original than the retold text. Nothing could be further from the truth. I could make neither head nor tail of it; it was written in Middle English, I supposed. Sentences were long and very complex, and I could not find some words in the modern dictionaries. So, I had to give up reading those classics in the original. I turned my attention to more modern novels that were easily available from the British Council library. As a matter of fact, I have learned English mainly from my reading of those books, not through direct contact with English-speaking people.

My own roots lay deep in the countryside far away from big cities. My secondary schooling was finished at a small town about 90 miles north of Yangon. So my knowledge of those great subjects is very limited, and consists of only odds and ends gleaned from my study of technical literature of my accounting profession as well as reading of current news journals like Times, Newsweek, and the Reader’s Digest. To speak the truth, accounting is a subject for which I have had no aptitude because I have no head for figures. Mathematical problems have always baffled me. In fact, it was forced upon me by the circumstances of life, in which I had found myself. I think a diplomatic career would have suited me best, since I take a great interest in the study of the English language and literature as well as in world history and current international affairs. During my years in public service I have been so buried in my studies of technical literature and building up my professional career, that I have not had the time to turn my attention to the study of the Buddha’s teachings that alone can show the way to an escape from “samsara”. Up until recent years I have been a Buddhist only in name. “Vipassana” medi-

tation is something I have heard elderly people talk about and I have not taken any interest in it. Thus my thoughts on philosophical, literary and religious matters are only superficial, not subtle and profound.

My ambition has been to master the English language well enough that I can write it flawlessly on any subject under the sun. I have directed my efforts towards that end over the years. But now, after a life-time of study, I have found that it is impossible to master it in the social and intellectual environment, into which fate has thrown me, and in which I don’t have any chance to write it or to practice it on native speakers of English. Reading books by Dr. Htin Aung, Dr. Maung Maung, and Daw Khin Myo Chit, I am inspired to write articles on various subjects of general interest for publication in the newspapers, and journals in English. My literary efforts included some letters to the editor, published in the then Working People’s Daily, prize-winning English translations of passages culled from the writings of famous Myanmar writers in the “Light of English.” I have, therefore, given up my hope of mastering the English language in all aspects of reading, writing and speaking and made up my mind to be content with the present level of proficiency I have achieved in that language, which I know still leaves much to be desired.

Looking back over the years, I know that my life has not been a success in the sense that most people would have thought in terms of material wealth, social status, and education. As a matter of fact, I have lived a simple, honest life with my family and moved in a limited circle of a few close friends. I neither smoke nor drink, but indulge myself in a bit of drinking on some social occasions. During my years of public service, I have earned just enough salary to live on. But when I have retired on a pension as director from the office of the Auditor-General and worked in the private sector, my income has risen well enough to meet the daily living costs, with a little bit left over to save against a rainy day. These days, when medical care costs have rocketed sky-high, especially at so-called private specialist medical centers in Yangon, it will, of course, be a prudent policy to set aside a certain amount from our monthly earnings for saving purposes. Only then will we be able to dip into our savings to meet emergency medical costs that may arise when we are suddenly struck by unexpected diseases that are common in old age rather than in youth. However, whatever savings we may have made over the years can be wiped out completely in case of month-long hospitalization at any one of those medical centers. As we grow older, it is inevitable that one ailment or another will strike us and we have to fend such ailments off as best we can through proper medication or dieting until we breathe our last.

In recent years a few of my friends, who are my contemporaries, have dropped off one after another. Most of them were in their late 60s when they passed away. It brings home to me the realization that death is at an arm’s length for every living thing and that it can strike any one without warning like a bolt of lightning out of a blue sky. We must awaken to the fact that time is running out, especially for those of us who have already crept into old age. With age there comes pain, decay and finally death from which no mortal of high or low class, rich or poor, educated or uneducated, can escape until the day we attain the end of suffering—enlightenment. There is no escape from the conclusion that old age, pain, decay and death are the ever-present companions of all those who possess body and soul.

At my age of 74, I should have retired completely from my active career and retreated into a life of leisure and “vipassana” meditation, as befitting a true Buddhist. But the trouble is that I am in no position to give up my present career, because my monthly pension is not enough to maintain my family at a comfortable standard of living what with the rising costs of commodities these days. That is more or less the fate that has fallen on most of retirees.

For the past 25 years I have tried to keep the Buddha’s five precepts—not to kill, not to steal, not to lie, not to have illicit sex, and not to take intoxicated drinks—every day of

my life. To speak the truth, the last two precepts—not to lie and not to drink liquors of any kind—have proved the most difficult ones to keep. I have been taught that whatever precepts I could have kept will bring me good merits that may come to fruition for me, if not in the present life, then in the after-life. I have realized that I must turn my attention away from mundane affairs of life and towards the Buddhist studies and literature, especially on vipassana meditation and practice, if I want to escape from ‘samsara’—rounds of births and rebirths in which we worldlings have to circle until we attain enlightenment—‘nirvana’—the end of all suffering. In recent years, I have had access to religious literature on vipassana meditation practice and discourses on discs by many venerable monks. From the study of the religious literature, I learn that we can escape from ‘samsara’ only after we have attained the stage of the stream-winner (sotapanna) through vipassana meditation in the present life. Dana (donation), Sila (morality), and Samahta (concentration), no matter how much merit may be acquired through them, can’t provide a good enough protection against any mortal beings falling into the four lower planes of existence after death. Good merits (good Kama), so acquired, may enable us to be reborn in the higher planes of existence, but when the force of that good “Kama” is exhausted, we will come down again to the lower planes. Only vipassana meditation, if pursued right up to the fruition stage of sotapana, can save us from being reborn in the lower planes of existence for ever. In this context, it is noted that a stream-winner needs to pass through only seven higher planes of existence before he finally reaches the end of suffering—“nirvana.” As a matter of fact, that is the goal all Buddhists should strive for in life. I have decided to pursue vipassana meditation whenever I can take time off from my daily round of activities at night when all is quiet and at peace. My pursuit of vipassana meditation practice may not enable me to attain the stream-winning stage in the present life, but can help me pile up perfections (paramis) that can make for the continuation of such practice in future existences, until the final goal of ‘nirvana’ is reached. This is the pattern of life that I have sketched out for myself to follow for the rest of my life, as a way to gain as much merit as I can to save myself from falling into any type of lower planes of existence. However, I must confess that I am not making as much progress as I desire in my efforts at vipassana meditation practice. Unlike at a meditation centre, I can’t practice very well at home because of the disturbances that assail me from all sides. But I don’t give up easily; I keep on trying despite the difficulties I have to face. As they say, there will be light at the end of the tunnel. In the meantime, I should try as best I can to keep myself away from Dosa (anger), Moha (ignorance), Loba (greed), and Mana (conceit)—the factors that can drive one headlong into hell. My message to people of 74 and above is this: live a pure, simple life of high morality and high thinking without harboring any evil thoughts of harm towards anybody, friend or foe alike.

Some people are afraid of old age, because once they reach old age, with its frailties of mind and body, they do not have any ability to engage in any physical activity that requires the strength and energy of young people. They are prone to many kinds of illnesses, because their bodies have lost resistance powers that can fight off an invasion of quite a host of disease-causing viruses and bacteria. To make matters worse, they have to give up, though unwilling, many of the sensual pleasures they used to enjoy in the prime of their life. They are compelled to take great care of their health which has begun to decline with the advancing years of their age. They can’t eat any kind of food they like to their heart’s content on health grounds. They can’t go on long journeys alone either by car, train, or plane without any trusted companion, or their family members to look after them. As a matter of fact, it is time they put all their pursuits of worldly pleasures behind them and spend the remaining period of their life profitably in their respective religious practices. By so doing, they are more than likely to gain peace of mind and freedom from all kinds of worries and anxieties that may torment them for the rest of their days. Thus, they will be able to live to the full extent of their life span enjoying the fruits of their religious practices not only in the present life but in the life after.

(To be continued)

Islamic State raises flag over local government headquarters in Iraq's Ramadi

BAGHDAD, 16 May — Islamic State militants raised their black flag over the local government headquarters in the Iraqi city of Ramadi on Friday and claimed victory through mosque loudspeakers after overrunning most of the western provincial capital.

If Ramadi were to fall it would be the first major city seized by the insurgents in Iraq since security forces and paramilitary groups began pushing them back last year.

The insurgents attacked Ramadi overnight using six suicide car bombs to reach the city centre, where the Anbar provincial government compound is located, police sources said.

Fighting continued in one district of Ramadi, 100 km (60 miles) west of Baghdad, and government forces were still in control of a military command centre to the west of the city.

"The situation in Ramadi is dire, but the city has not fallen and the battle against criminal Daesh is still on-going," Anbar governor Sohaib al-Rawi said on Twitter,

using an Arabic name for Islamic State.

Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi met with military and security leaders on Friday as well as the heads of the air force and counterterrorism and pledged to intensify efforts to "expel the terrorist gangs from Ramadi".

He later spoke about the Ramadi attacks with US Vice President Joe Biden, who pledged expedited US aid to Iraqi forces including heavy weaponry, AT-4 shoulder-held rockets, ammunition and other supplies, the White House said.

Ramadi has been fought over for months, but the insurgents renewed their offensive there in April, crushing government forces' efforts to retake Anbar, Iraq's largest province, and move north to the Islamic State stronghold of Mosul.

An army major whose regiment is positioned near the Anbar operations command described the situation as critical and said the militants had taken control of the only major supply route into the city, making it difficult to send reinforcements.



Iraqi security forces defend their headquarters against attacks by Islamic State extremists in the eastern part of Ramadi in Anbar Province on 14 May, 2015.

REUTERS

Most army and police units have retreated to the area around the operation command to protect it, he said, but some elite counterterrorism forces were "fighting for their lives" in the Malaab district of central Ramadi, where they were surrounded.

"If the government does not send any reinforcements and the coalition air force does not rescue us, we will lose all of Ramadi by midnight," the major said.

"A massacre will take place and all of us will be slaughtered. We have been defending the city for months

and we don't deserve to end like this. It's humiliating."

Still, the US military sought to play down the Islamic State gains, telling a Pentagon news conference the militants were broadly "on the defensive" in Iraq.

Marine Corps Brigadier General Thomas Weidley, chief of staff for US-led coalition operations, said Iraqi forces still controlled most "key facilities, infrastructure and lines of communication" in the Ramadi area.

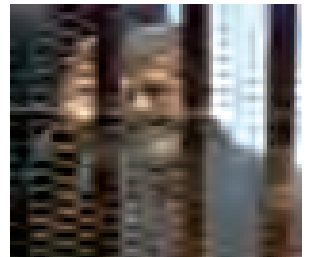
"(Iraqi forces) will eventually take back the terrain," Weidley said via teleconference. —Reuters

Egyptian court seeks death sentence for former president Mursi

CAIRO, 16 May — An Egyptian court on Saturday sought the death sentence for former president Mohamed Mursi and more than 100 other members of the Muslim Brotherhood in connection with a mass jail break in 2011.

The court also sought capital punishment for Brotherhood leader Khairat el-Shater and 15 others for conspiring with foreign militant groups against Egypt. The cases, like any capital sentences, will be referred to Egypt's top religious authority, the Grand Mufti, for an opinion before any executions can take place.

Mursi, who was overthrown by the army after mass protests against his



Ousted Egyptian President Mohamed Mursi

rule in 2013, stood defiant in a court cage in a blue prison outfit pumping his fists in the air before the sentences were read out.

Human rights groups have accused Egyptian authorities of widespread abuses in a crackdown on Brotherhood supporters as well as secular activists, allegations they deny.

Reuters

Desert as deadly as sea for surge of Europe-bound migrants

DAKAR, 16 May — At least as many migrants may be dying of hunger and thirst in the Sahara as are drowning in the Mediterranean during this year's huge surge of human trafficking from Libya to Europe, the International Organization for Migration said on Friday.

The number of people travelling through Niger's vast desert wastes to reach North Africa and Europe could more than double this year to 100,000, the global migration body's Niger office said. The migrants are often abused by traffickers who abandon them to die in the desert if they run out of money.

More than 170,000 migrants crossed the Mediterranean to Italy last year, and more than 3,000 drowned. With the numbers attempting the crossing surging this year, the IOM expects the death toll will be many times higher.

The issue raised particular alarm in Europe last month after more than 800 people were believed to have drowned in the shipwreck of a single fishing boat, the worst disaster of its kind. Most of the victims were locked below decks.

Smuggling rings have profited from lawlessness in Libya to ferry tens of thousands of people to Europe in unsafe boats. The

migrants are first brought to Libya from across sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East.

Niger's desert town of Agadez is one of the main transit points in the Sahara for migrants leaving impoverished West African nations en route for north Africa and then Europe.

"Libya is an open door," said Giuseppe Loprete, IOM head of mission in Niger. "In 2015, we estimate that 100,000 migrants will transit across Niger, roughly double the figure last year."

Loprete said there was little Niger could do to stop the flow of migrants as many came from countries in the West African bloc ECOWAS — such as Nigeria, Mali, Gambia and Senegal — which allows freedom of movement between its 15 member states.

According to the latest IOM figures, an estimated 38,000 migrants crossed into Italy between January and mid-May, with the largest numbers coming from Eritrea, Somalia and Nigeria, followed by Gambia, Syria, Senegal and Mali. The summer peak season for the sea crossing has barely begun.

The Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime estimates migrant smuggling in Libya may be worth more than \$300 million a year.

Reuters

Fighting continues in Yemeni city despite truce, 10 killed



Fighters of the Popular Resistance Committees man a checkpoint in Yemen's southwestern city of Taiz on 14 May, 2015.—REUTERS

ADEN, (Yemen), 16 May — At least 10 people were killed in heavy clashes in Yemen on Friday despite a five-day humanitarian truce, while aid distribution to the millions deprived of food, fuel and medicine by weeks of fighting and air strikes continued.

Saudi Arabia, leading a coalition of Arab states backed by the West, has pounded Iranian-allied Houthi forces and fighters loyal to Yemen's former leader since 26 March, aiming to restore President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi.

The ceasefire, which began on Tuesday, appeared to be mostly holding on Friday despite heavy ground fighting between local militiamen and the Houthis in the city of Taiz, residents said. A medical source said 10 were killed.

In the city of Dhalea residents also reported clashes on Friday but there was no information on casualties.

"Nothing has changed with this truce. People are still fighting and the Houthis are still in control," said Alawi al-Afour, a resident in the southern city of Aden.

"The legitimate Yemeni government is scattered abroad and has no authority inside."

Officials from Hadi's government in exile live mostly in Riyadh and have little influence on the ground in Yemen.

Meanwhile, tribal sources said on Friday Houthi fighters have withdrawn from the border area between Saudi Arabia and Yemen.

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

The United Nations humanitarian coordinator for Yemen on Friday urged the Saudi-led coalition to ease inspections of Yemen-bound cargo to allow vital commercial and humanitarian goods into the country.

Aid flights have started from the United Arab Emirates to the capital Sanaa, which is under Houthi control and has faced air strikes but no ground fighting. The

United Nations said aid ships had docked at ports of Hodeida and Aden.

On Friday, the World Health Organization (WHO) said it was increasing shipments of medical supplies to Yemen during the humanitarian pause.

"More than 20 tonnes of medicines and medical supplies have been flown from WHO's humanitarian hub in Dubai to Djibouti, where they will be loaded on a UN vessel departing for Hodeida today," it said in a statement on Friday.

A shipping source in Yemen said that seven ships with fuel, wheat and food supplies had docked in Hodeida and in al-Mukalla on Friday.

In the capital Sanaa, petrol stations have started working again and long queues of vehicles have been waiting since Thursday night, residents say.

The Houthi-run Saba news agency said new fuel shipments have reached Yemen and were being distributed across the country.

Reuters

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Google's self-driving cars to hit roads, with steering wheels

DETROIT, 16 May — Google Inc (GOOGL.O) will begin testing self-driving cars of its own design on public roads this summer, but they will have steering wheels and brakes, which is not what the company described a year ago.

Engineers will operate 25 prototype vehicles, which use the same software as Google's self-driving Lexus RX450h sport utility vehicles that have been in operation for several years, the company said on Friday.

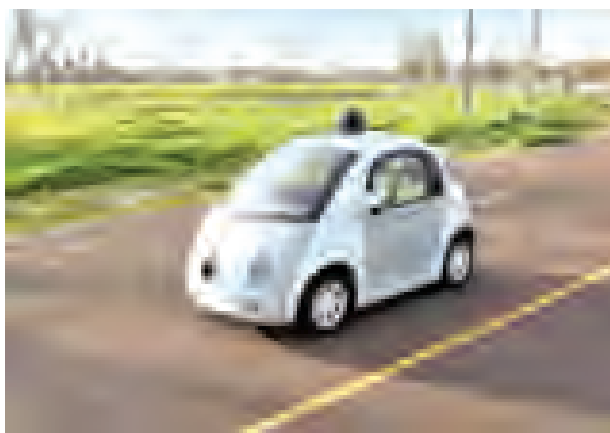
When the Internet search company announced a year ago that it planned to build a fleet of self-driving cars, project director Chris Urmson said the proto-

types "won't have a steering wheel, accelerator pedal or brake pedal ... because they don't need them."

It turns out, however, that the prototypes will need those critical control devices after all because California requires that self-driving vehicles have manual controls during testing.

Built in Detroit by auto supplier Roush Industries, the prototypes will be equipped with removable steering wheels, brake pedals and accelerator pedals so test engineers can "take over driving if needed," Urmson said in a blog post on Friday.

Google describes the pod-like prototype, which



A Google self-driving car is shown in this handout photo released to Reuters on 15 March, 2015.

REUTERS

seats two people, as "the world's first fully self-driving vehicle."

The company also said it would test new passenger

and pedestrian protection technologies, including a foam front end and a flexible windshield. It also said the speed of the prototypes

will be limited to 25 mph (40 kph) to "decrease the likelihood of severe injury" in a collision.

As part of the rollout of the self-driving prototypes, Google said its engineers plan to test for "rare and weird situations" — what self-driving car proponents refer to as "edge cases," or unusual situations that occur once every 100,000 miles or so.

Such testing, Google said, will "help us validate that our software handles even the rarest variations on common driving scenarios."

On Monday, Google disclosed that its self-driving Lexus vehicles had been involved in 11 accidents on

public roads near its Mountain View, California, headquarters.

"Not once was the self-driving car the cause of the accident," Urmson said in the blog post. No one was injured in the accidents, he added. The cars had been hit from behind seven times, mainly at traffic lights, with a majority of the accidents being on city streets rather than on freeways.

Google said its self-driving cars have been logging about 10,000 miles a week and have accumulated nearly 1 million miles.

Google shares were down 3.6 percent at \$545.60 on Friday afternoon.

Reuters

Russian rocket with Mexican satellite crashes in Siberia

ALMATY, 16 May — A Proton-M carrier rocket carrying a Mexican satellite malfunctioned and crashed in Siberia soon after launch on Saturday, the latest in a series of mishaps for Russia's space industry.

The third stage of the rocket carrying the Mex-Sat-1 communications satellite suffered a problem about 500 seconds after launch from the Baikonur cosmodrome in Kazakhstan, Russian media quoted Russian space officials as saying.

The cause of the accident, which meant the satellite was not put into orbit, was not immediately established. RIA news agency quoted one space official as saying that all launches of carrier rockets of this type would now be suspended.

The final stage of the Proton could still have contained a few tonnes of heptyl, a highly toxic rock-

et propellant, when it came down in the Chita region of Siberia, one space official was quoted as saying.

Russia's workhorse Proton rocket, known at the time under its UR-500 code, made its first test flights in the mid-1960s.

It was originally designed as an intercontinental ballistic missile to carry a nuclear warhead targeting the Soviet Union's Cold War foe the United States. But it was never deployed as a nuclear weapon.

Russia's space industry, which pioneered space exploration with the launch of the first satellite and put the first man into space, has been haunted by accidents which have tarnished its reputation.

In late April, Russia abandoned a 2.6 billion rouble (\$51 million) mission to supply the International Space Station, (ISS), after an unmanned Pro-

gress M-27M cargo ship, carrying almost 3 tonnes (2,722 kg) of supplies, was unable to dock with the ISS because of problems.

In July 2013, a Proton carrier rocket carrying three navigation satellites worth around \$200 million crashed shortly after lift-off from the Russian-leased Baikonur cosmodrome.

Just a few hours before Proton's crash on Saturday, the Progress M-26M spaceship docked at the ISS failed to ignite its engines and correct the orbit of the space outpost, Russian media reported.

The lives of the crew are not in danger, they said.

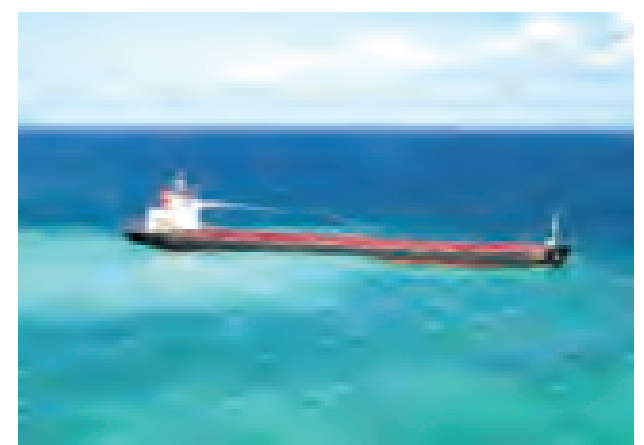
The cause of the latest accident with the Proton rocket was not immediately established. RIA news agency quoted one space official as saying that all launches of carrier rockets of this type would be suspended.—Reuters

Australia to widen curbs on shipping around Great Barrier Reef

SYDNEY, 16 May — Australia will more than double an area near the Great Barrier Reef subject to special curbs on shipping in a bid to protect the environmentally sensitive region, the government said on Saturday. The decision to include large areas of the adjacent Coral Sea in the area will expand it by 140 percent, or 565,000 square km (218,000 square miles), Infrastructure Minister Warren Truss said in a statement.

The expansion comes as international concern is growing over the reef with the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) considering putting it on its list of World Heritage sites that are "in danger".

"The Coral Sea is one of the world's most distinctive and undisturbed marine ecosystems," Truss said. "It behoves us to do all we can to reasonably and responsibly protect one of our great-



Oil is seen next to the 230-metre (754-ft) bulk coal carrier Shen Neng 1 about 70 km (43 miles) east of Great Keppel Island in this 4 April, 2010 picture.

REUTERS

est natural resources."

"Our new measures enhance protection for the Coral Sea — as well as the adjacent Great Barrier Reef World Heritage area — by helping ships traverse the region safely and avoid potentially hazardous areas." Proposals put forward by Australia last year were accepted by the International Maritime Organization

(IMO) at a meeting in London overnight, Truss said. The changes should gradually come into force once associated measures are adopted by an IMO committee expected to be held next month. Busy shipping lanes pass through the area and commercial ships are required to hire a special "reef pilot" to navigate through it.

Reuters

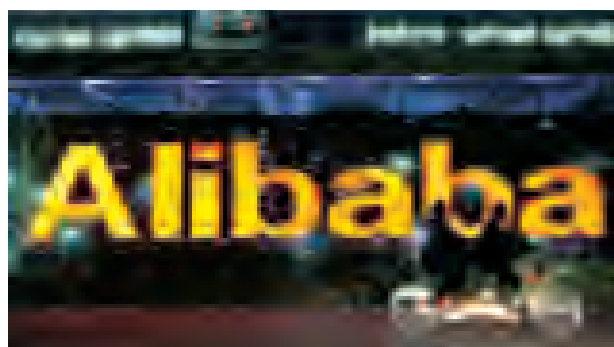
Alibaba sued in US by luxury brands over counterfeit goods

NEW YORK, 16 May — A group of luxury goods makers sued Alibaba Group Holding Ltd (BABA.N) on Friday, contending the Chinese online shopping giant had knowingly made it possible for counterfeiters to sell their products throughout the world. The lawsuit was filed in Manhattan federal court by Gucci, Yves Saint Laurent and other brands owned by Paris-based Kering SA (PRTP.PA) seeking damages and an injunction for alleged violations of trademark and racketeering laws.

The lawsuit alleged that

Alibaba had conspired to manufacture, offer for sale and traffic in counterfeit

products bearing their trademarks without their permission.



People ride a double bicycle past a logo of The Alibaba Group at the company's headquarters on the outskirts of Hangzhou, Zhejiang Province on 10 Nov, 2014.

REUTERS

A spokesman for Alibaba declined to comment.

Concerns over fake products on Alibaba's platforms, including online marketplace Taobao, have dogged it for years, although the US Trade Representative removed Taobao from its list of "notorious markets" in 2012 in light of progress made.

Friday's lawsuit marked the second time in less than a year that the Kering brands had sued Alibaba over the alleged sale of counterfeit products.

An earlier lawsuit was

filed in July only to be withdrawn the same month with the ability to refile it while the Kering units worked towards a resolution with Alibaba, according to court records.

The lawsuit alleged that Alibaba and its related entities "provide the marketplace advertising and other essential services necessary for counterfeiters to sell their counterfeit products to customers in the United States."

The lawsuit cited, for example, an alleged fake Gucci bag offered for \$2 to \$5 each by a Chinese mer-

chant to buyers seeking at least 2,000 units. The authentic Gucci bag retails for \$795, the complaint said.

Alibaba has allowed for counterfeit sales to continue even when it had been expressly informed that merchants were selling fake products, the lawsuit said.

The lawsuit seeks a court order that, among other things, would block Alibaba from offering or facilitating the sale of counterfeit products and unspecified damages that could include \$2 per counterfeit item under a statutory regime.—Reuters

Rescuers recover six bodies from flooded Colombian mine

BOGOTA, 16 May — Six corpses of miners who were trapped when a gold mine flooded have been retrieved, Colombia's disaster response service said on Friday.

The accident, caused by a power cut in the mine, happened on Wednesday in the Riosucio municipality in Caldas department, 220 km (136 miles) northwest of the capital Bogota.

The power cut shut off pumps that the miners used to keep water out of the mine from a major river that passes nearby, local daily *El Universal* reported.

Dozens of workers managed to escape before the water levels rose too high, but it is believed that 16 people were trapped inside.

Around 80 rescue workers from the disaster response service, the Colombi-

an Red Cross and the armed forces were on hand shortly after news of the disaster broke, local media reported.

The first four bodies were discovered on Thursday night and have been identified. Another two bodies were retrieved on Friday and have yet to be identified.

Colombia's President Juan Manuel Santos said on Thursday that the "families of the Riosucio miners are in our hearts."

The process of recovering all the bodies may be slow because rescue services do not want to risk the lives of the rescuers, local daily *El Tiempo* reported.

The mine was in the process of becoming legal, which meant that the illegal miners would be allowed to obtain licenses once they agree to adhere to certain norms.

Xinhua



Armored rescue vehicles are displayed to mark the 70th anniversary of the National Police in Phnom Penh, Cambodia on 16 May, 2015. Cambodia on Saturday celebrated the 70th anniversary of the National Police, marking the date that the country's police force was founded under Japanese occupation during World War II.—XINHUA

Philadelphia train may have been hit by projectile before wreck

PHILADELPHIA, 16 May — The Amtrak train that derailed in Philadelphia and a separate commuter train in the vicinity may have been hit by projectiles of some kind shortly before the wreck, a US transportation official said on Friday, after investigators interviewed members of the Amtrak crew.

But when questioned for the first time about the crash on Tuesday night, the Amtrak engineer who was driving the train said he had no memory of anything that happened shortly before the wreck, which killed eight people and injured more than 200 others, said Robert Sumwalt, a member of the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB).

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) was called in to examine a remnant of the Amtrak locomotive's shattered windshield with a circular damage pattern, Sumwalt said.

The revelation that

Amtrak train No 188 might have been struck by a bullet, rock or other object added an unexpected twist to a crash probe that initially focussed on why the train had accelerated to over 100 miles per hour (160 km per hour) in the minute before it barrelled into a curved

track segment where the authorized speed limit was just 50 mph (80 kph).

An assistant conductor told NTSB investigators on Friday that the train run that day had been unremarkable until a few minutes after pulling out of Philadelphia's 30th Street

station, the last stop before the accident, Sumwalt said.

At that point, she heard the engineer, 32-year-old Brandon Bostian, talking by radio with the driver of another train from the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA).



Emergency workers look through the remains of a derailed Amtrak train in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania on 13 May, 2015.—REUTERS

The other driver, according to her account, said he had reported to a train dispatcher that his windshield had been cracked by a projectile that he believed was either fired from a gun or thrown at his train, and that he had made an emergency stop as a result, Sumwalt said.

The conductor told investigators that Bostian then replied that he believed his own New York-bound Amtrak train had been similarly struck, Sumwalt said.

It was moments later that the Amtrak train began to round the curved section of track at twice the authorized speed and derailed in the city's Port Richmond neighbourhood along the Delaware River, according to her account.

Sumwalt said FBI agents would arrive on Friday night to examine a portion of the lower left-hand corner of the locomotive's battered windshield

that appeared to have been cracked by a flying object of some type.

The Philadelphia Inquirer and other media outlets reported on Friday that a third train, an Amtrak Acela, had also been hit by an unidentified projectile that cracked a window on one of the cars about five minutes before it entered the 30th Street station, citing an account of a passenger.

CBS News cited federal safety investigators as saying they were aware of the report of a third train being hit.

The Wall Street Journal, citing anonymous sources, reported late on Friday that the Federal Railroad Administration has ordered Amtrak to modify its current signal system to guard against overspeeding at several curves along the Northeast Corridor, including the site of Tuesday's derailment.

Reuters

UN Security Council calls for peaceful solution to Burundian crisis

UNITED NATIONS, 16 May — The UN Security Council on Friday voiced its "serious concern" over the ongoing unrest in Burundi, and "stressed the urgent need for dialogue and reconciliation" to resolve the current crisis.

"The members of the Security Council called on all parties to exercise restraint, not to resort to violence or retaliatory attacks, to settle disputes peacefully and to prioritize Burundi's peace and stability above all else and in the best interests of the nation," the 15-nation UN body said in

a statement issued to the press here.

Burundi was plunged into chaos on Wednesday as the former head of Burundi's National Intelligence, Major General Godefroid Niyombare, announced from a radio station that the army had overthrown President Pierre Nkurunziza and stakeholders were working on a transitional government.

Later in the evening, however, Burundian Army Chief of Staff Major General Prime Niyongabo said, "A group of insurgents has attempted a coup," stress-

ing that the situation was under "control."

More than 105,000 people have fled Burundi to neighbouring Tanzania, Rwanda and to the province of South Kivu in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, according to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees.

Members of the Security Council condemned the violent unrest in Burundi and specifically those who facilitated violence of any kind. They called on the Burundian authorities to address the crisis, while respecting fundamental

freedoms and the principles of fair trials and due process.

"The members of the Security Council called for the swift return of the rule of law and the establishment of a genuine dialogue between all Burundians to create the necessary conditions for the holding of peaceful, transparent, inclusive and credible elections in the spirit of the Arusha Agreements, including fundamental freedoms of expression and peaceful assembly," the statement said.

Xinhua

Venezuela charges former counter-narcotics boss with money laundering

CARACAS, 16 May — Venezuela has indicted a former head of counter-narcotics at the CICPC investigative police on money laundering charges, part of a bigger scandal linking the South American OPEC nation and tax haven Andorra.

Norman Puerta had been under investigation for allegedly transferring more than \$1 million from Panama to the Banca Privada d'Andorra (BPA), Venezuela's public prosecutor's office said in a statement on Friday.

Andorra's financial authority took control of BPA in March after the United States said the lender was under suspicion for money laundering. The US allegations included that BPA facilitated the movement of about \$4.2 billion in transfers related to Venezuelan money laundering.

The public prosecutor's office did not mention other allegations or investigations. No one at the office was immediately available for comment.—Reuters

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CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV KARIN RAMBOW VOY NO (1507)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV KARIN RAMBOW VOY NO (1507) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 17.5.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T./M.I.P where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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WEATHER REPORT

BAY INFERENCE: Weather is generally fair in the North Bay and partly cloudy to cloudy in the Andaman sea and elsewhere in the Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL EVENING OF THE 17th May, 2015: Rain or thundershowers are likely to be fairly widespread in Taninthayi Region and Mon State, scattered in Sagaing, Mandalay, Yangon and Ayeyawady Regions, Kachin, Shan and Kayin States and isolated in the remaining Regions and States. Degree of certainty is (60%).

STATE OF THE SEA: Seas will be moderate in Myanmar waters.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Continuation of thundery activities in the Southern Myanmar areas.

Gunman kills four, wounds at least five in Naples shooting

NAPLES, (Italy), 16 May — A man shot dead four people, believed to include his wife and other members of his family, and wounded at least five more after opening fire from the balcony of his home in the southern Italian city of Naples on Friday, police said.

As well as his wife, the 48 year-old nurse with no previous criminal record was believed to have killed

his brother, sister-in-law and a local policeman with a pump-action shotgun in the Capodimonte neighbourhood, police officials said. At least five people, believed to include at least two police officers, were wounded when the gunman opened fire onto the street outside his house. Police forced their way into the house, arrested the gunman and took him away in a police car.—Reuters

5.8-magnitude quake hits 98km NNW of Curup, Indonesia

HONG KONG, 16 May — A 5.8-magnitude earthquake jolted 98km NNW of Curup, Indonesia at GMT202655 on Friday, the US Geological Survey said.

The epicenter, with a depth of 149.95 km, was initially determined to be at 2.6472 degrees south latitude and 102.1751 degrees east longitude.—Xinhua

Two Philippine soldiers died in ambush by unidentified armed men

MANILA, 16 May — Two government soldiers were killed and another was injured when they were ambushed by unidentified armed men in central Philippine province of Samar on Friday morning, the military reported on Saturday. Amado Gutierrez, public affairs officer of the Army's 8th Infantry Division,

said the soldiers were unarmed and wearing civilian clothes when they were attacked in Paranas town at around 8:30 am.

He added the soldiers were on the way back to the camp in San Jose de Buan town after buying supplies when they were waylaid.

Two other soldiers survived the attack un-

scathed. The Army's Central Command spokesman Jim Alagao said the two are undergoing debriefing. Authorities are still establishing the identities of the suspects and their group affiliation. Communist New People's Army rebels are known to operate in Samar.

Xinhua

Colombia gov't confirms suspension of aerial coca spraying

Workers hired by the Colombian government destroy coca plants during an eradication operation at a plantation in Yali, northeastern Antioquia, on 3 Sept, 2014.—REUTERS

BOGOTA, 16 May — Colombia will suspend aerial fumigation of illegal coca plants in light of a number of studies linking the herbicide involved to cancer, a move that marks the end

of a decades-long strategy in the country's fight against drug trafficking.

Spraying coca leaves, which are used to make cocaine, has been a key part of Colombia's efforts to curb production of some 300 tonnes of cocaine a year that make it one of the world's biggest producers of the drug.

For two decades, the Andean country has used the herbicide glyphosate to fumigate coca, with financial and technical help from the United States. The strategy also included spraying of poppies, used to make heroin.

"We've taken the decision by a majority of seven to one, to suspend the spraying of areas with glyphosate," health minister Alejandro Gaviria said, referring to a vote taken by the National Narcotics Council late on

Thursday. Various scientific reports, including one by the World Health Organization (WHO) in March, have suggested that the weed killer is likely carcinogenic to humans, Gaviria said.

Spraying will be halted after administrative formalities are completed, which could take several weeks, he added. More than 1.6 million hectares (3.9 million acres) of land in Colombia have been sprayed using the chemical.

Glyphosate is a key ingredient in the world's most widely used herbicide, Roundup, produced by Monsanto Co.

Monsanto officials have said the chemical has been proven safe for decades and the company has demanded a retraction from the WHO over its report linking the herbicide to cancer.

Reuters

OPEC works on deal to stabilize oil prices

CARACAS, 16 May — The Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) is trying to reach a deal to stabilize world oil prices, Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro said on Friday.

"Venezuela and OPEC's greatest interest ... is to be able to stabilize prices around 100 (US dollars a barrel) in the medium term," Maduro told reporters, following a private 90-minute meeting with the visiting Emir of Qatar Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani.

OPEC members will continue to hold meetings to "progressively stabilize the international price of crude," the state-run Venezuelan News Agency (AVN) reported.

Prices have plummeted in recent months due to overproduction, mainly on the part of the United States, the AVN said. Maduro's announcement comes three weeks before OPEC members are set to meet to decide whether to

cut production to shore up prices. OPEC decided at its last meeting not to cut output even though crude has lost around half its value since selling for 115 dollars a barrel in June of last year.

Venezuela was against that decision, which was promoted by the close US ally Saudi Arabia, and has been campaigning for steps to boost prices.

Maduro said he has "high hopes" that an eventual agreement will stabilize the oil market, "not only for the second half of the year, but for years to come."

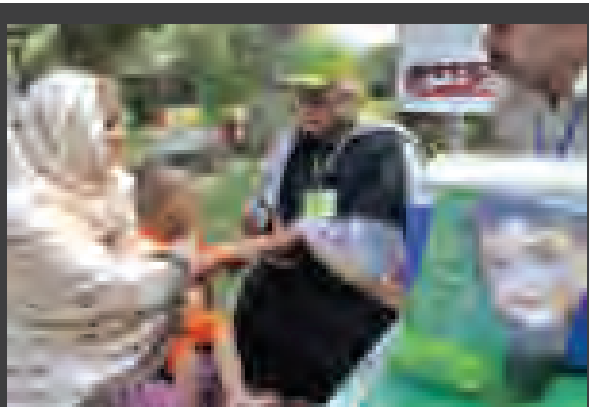
The Venezuelan leader also announced a "new map of cooperation" with Qatar, which includes exchanges in the energy and gas fields, as well as agriculture, infrastructure and tourism.

"It was an extraordinary and fruitful visit to continue boosting our bilateral relations and deepening the South-South bonds between Qatar and Venezuela, between the Arab

world and Latin America," Maduro said.

This is the second time this year the two leaders meet, as Maduro visited Al Thani in Doha in January.

Al Thani arrived in Caracas on Friday for a private visit after meeting with US President Barack Obama and other leaders of Gulf oil-producing nations in Washington.—Xinhua



A Pakistani health worker marks an infant after his immunization with a polio vaccine in eastern Pakistan's Lahore on 15 May, 2015. Terror attacks on polio vaccination workers and their guards in Pakistan are hindering the government's efforts to eradicate poliovirus which still exists in the country.

XINHUA



Rihanna's 25 kg Met dress thrusts Chinese designer Guo Pei into spotlight

BEIJING, 16 May — Among the opulent outfits on display at last week's Met Gala, one dramatic design stole the show.

Singer Rihanna's canary yellow cape dress, trimmed with fur the colour of egg yolk and embroidered with flowers, swept behind her in a seemingly endless train as she arrived for the ball at New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art, one of the biggest nights in the fashion year.

Social media lit up with chat about the dress, and the fashion magazine *Vogue* promptly put it on the front cover of its Met Gala Special Edition, catapulting its Chinese creator Guo Pei into the international spotlight.

Guo, a brand designer turned haute couture stylist already well known in China, says the empress-style gown, one of her most ambitious creations, took some two years to make from its conception in 2008.

"Just designing, choosing the cloth, confirming the colour and getting the material woven in Italy took almost half a year, more or less," Guo said at her studio in north Beijing.

The designer, who admitted she did not know much about Rihanna when she received the call from the Grammy Award winner, said the 25-kg (55-pound) outfit was designed to be difficult to wear to reflect the respon-

sibilities and challenges of an empress.

"I was really not convinced that she would be able to wear it because ... it's very heavy," Guo said. "But she later told me 'This piece of clothing is so beautiful' (and) that ... she gained the courage (to wear it). I really admired that."

The gown is now back with the designer, who hopes to display it in a museum one day.

Guo says she is now getting used to being in the spotlight. "I have no requirement to gain a certain level of fame," she said. "I just want to do really beautiful designs that everyone likes."—Reuters

Celebrities arrive at Vienna for Life Ball 2015

VIENNA, 16 May — Prominent guests are arriving in the Austrian capital of Vienna ahead of Saturday's Life Ball, one of the largest European charity events for AIDS and HIV awareness.

Paula Abdul, Carmen Electra, Kelly Osbourne, and Dita von Teese were among those to arrive on Friday, and were greeted at the Vienna International Airport by Life Ball founder and organizer Gery Keszler.

Keszler said the fact that numerous celebrities attend the event each year is testament to "a build-up of trust over many years," and that "one must achieve a certain standing."

Actress Charlize Theron will attend the event as will her partner and fellow Hollywood star Sean Penn on Saturday. The couple, who Thursday attended the premiere of the new "Mad Max" film in Cannes, are expected to arrive in Vienna on Friday.

Theron will take part in the First Ladies Luncheon at the Belvedere palace where she will deliver a keynote speech on her charity the "Charlize Theron Africa Outreach Project."

Penn had previously already attended the Life Ball in 2012, the year of the event's 20th anniversary.—Xinhua

Cannes 'Lobster' film suggests crustacean could be you

CANNES, (France), 16 May — In the warped world of Greek filmmaker Yorgos Lanthimos's "Lobster", society has decreed that single people or those who have lost their mates must find someone during a hotel "dating game" or be turned into an animal of their choice.

The film, in competition at the Cannes film festival where it was shown on Friday, features a somewhat bloated-looking Colin Farrell as an architect whose wife has left him.

He decides upon arrival at the luxury hotel, which is actually in southwest Ire-

land, that if he fails to find a mate within the 45-day deadline he will become a lobster because it lives 100 years and has blue, as in royal, blood.

The hotel manager applauds him on his choice because most people choose to become dogs.

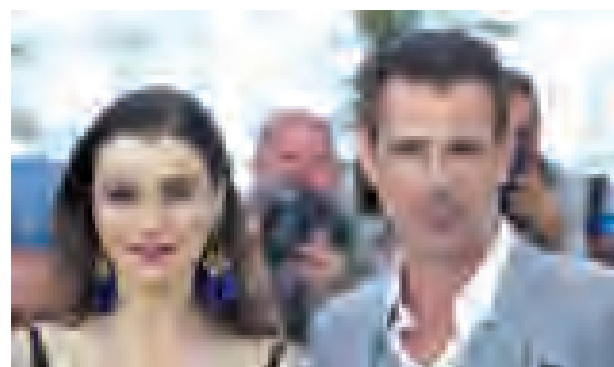
A critique of the strait-jacket of social convention? The director would not be drawn on the film's meaning and the lead actors seemed unsure as to what it was all about.

"We really just want to ask the questions and make people consider how we organize our ways of life and,

you know, if all the rules that we follow make sense, should we rebel against some, should we make new ones, all these kinds of questions," Lanthimos said.

One of his previous films, "Dogtooth", was about a mother and father who brought up their children to adulthood without letting them see the world beyond the walls of their compound.

Farrell, who said he was thrilled the film was made in his native Ireland, added: "I have no clue what it's about except a sense of the deep loneliness that permeates (modern life)."



Rachel Weisz (L) and Colin Farrell

British actress Rachel Weisz, who plays the woman Farrell's character eventually links up with, though in circumstances far removed from the hotel dating game, said she felt the film

was deeply romantic despite its absurdist trappings.

American actor John Reilly, another of the hotel "guests", said he had loved the script precisely because it was absurd.—Reuters

Woody Allen says his TV series will be a 'cosmic embarrassment'

CANNES, (France), 16 May — Award-winning film maker Woody Allen fears his first foray into directing for the small screen will be a disaster, saying that he should never have signed up to make a television show for Amazon.com.

Amazon announced in January it had secured a deal for Allen to write and direct a series of half-hour episodes for its streaming television service.

"It is a catastrophic mistake," the 79-year-old Allen told a news conference in Cannes, where he was presenting his latest movie "Irrational Man".

"I'm doing my best with it. I'm struggling with it at home. I should never have gotten into this."

Allen said he expected shooting 30 minute episodes would be a stroll, but it was turning out to be very tough.

"It's very hard for me. I thought it was going to be easy. Doing a movie is a big long thing, but to do six half hours I figured it would be a cinch. I do a half hour, I do another half hour. ... but it's not, it's very, very hard and I just hope I don't disappoint Amazon," he said.

"I am struggling with it, I am not good at it, I don't watch any of those television series really, so I don't know what I'm doing. I'm floundering. I expect this to be a cosmic embarrassment when it comes out."

Filmmakers such as Martin Scorsese, Steven Soderbergh, David Fincher and Guillermo del Toro have all made recent forays into television, helping end the stigma that used to be attached to small screen productions in the eyes of the cinema greats. Allen's online series is due to come out next year.—Reuters



Director Woody Allen (C), cast members Emma Stone (L) and Parker Posey pose during a photocall for the film 'Irrational Man'.—REUTERS

GENERAL

Hull suspend Livermore after positive cocaine test

LONDON, 16 May — Hull City have suspended midfielder Jake Livermore after he tested positive for cocaine, British media reported on Friday.

The Premier League club issued a statement confirming that Livermore, 25, had been suspended but gave no reason.

“Following suspension by the FA the club has subsequently suspended Jake Livermore pending further investigations to be made by the FA and our own internal disciplinary procedures,” Hull said in a statement on their website (hullcitytigers.com).



Hull City's Jake Livermore (R) celebrates his goal against Tottenham Hotspur with team-mate Hatem Ben Arfa during their English Premier League soccer match at the KC Stadium in Hull, northern England on 23 Nov, 2014.—REUTERS

“The club is unable to make any further comment during this process.”

According to the *Daily Telegraph*, Livermore, who has made one appearance for England, failed a random drug test after the 2-0 win over Crystal Palace last month.

Livermore's suspension will be a blow to Hull manager Steve Bruce, whose side are scrapping to avoid dropping into the Championship. They are 18th, the final relegation spot, with two matches remaining.

Livermore joined Hull for eight million pounds from Tottenham Hotspur last year.—*Reuters*

Los Angeles mayor urges city to keep conserving water despite rain

LOS ANGELES, 16 May — A rare May storm has brought much-needed rain to drought-parched Southern California, but Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti on Friday urged residents of the second-largest US city not to slack off on water

conservation.

A storm originating in the Gulf of Alaska brought a wave of showers across Central and Southern California beginning on Thursday afternoon, delivering up to half an inch (1.3 cm) of rain to parts of the state.

The National Weather Service has called those rainfall totals impressive for late spring in Southern California, a region struggling into its fourth year of a devastating drought that has prompted strict water conservation measures across

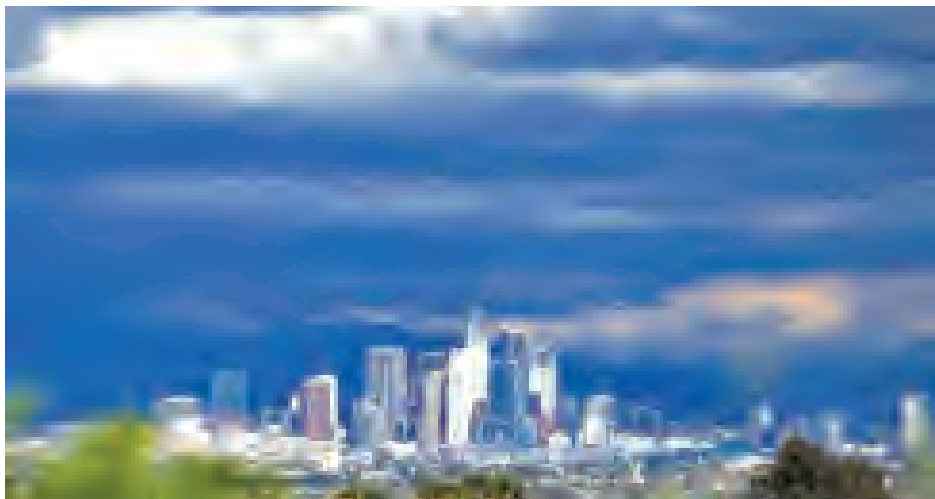
the state.

“Every little bit of rain helps, but our drought emergency remains critical,” Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti said in a statement as a light rain fell across the city.

“Angelenos must continue aggressive conservation efforts, and in the wake of this storm, sprinklers should be turned off for at least a week,” Garcetti said.

The mayor also reminded residents that Los Angeles was offering rebates to install so-called smart sprinklers that adjust to changing weather and to adopt low-water landscaping.

California's drought has prompted Governor Jerry Brown to impose the state's first-ever mandatory cutbacks in urban water use, up to 36 percent in some communities.—*Reuters*



Rain clouds move in over downtown Los Angeles, California on 2 March, 2015. REUTERS

United duo Rooney and Shaw to miss Arsenal game

LONDON, 16 May — Manchester United captain Wayne Rooney and left back Luke Shaw will miss the Premier League game against Arsenal on Sunday due to injury.

Rooney suffered a dead leg in last weekend's 2-1 win at Crystal Palace and Shaw sustained a facial injury, the latest in a succession of fitness problems to plague the 19-year-old in his first season at Old Trafford.

United manager Louis van Gaal said he did not want Shaw to play for the England under-21 team at this year's European Championship. “When you are not playing for Man United you cannot play for other teams,” Van Gaal told reporters on Friday.

“He needs the rest because he has over-crossed the line. He is 19. We have to protect him. I hope the coach of the under-21 team

understands that.”

United are fourth in the table, six points ahead of fifth-placed Liverpool, and with a vastly superior goal difference they should secure a place in the Champions League qualifying

round even if they lose to Arsenal and Hull City in their last two games.

Victory over the Gunners would lift United one point above their opponents into third but Arsenal have a game in hand.

Influential midfielder Michael Carrick will also miss Sunday's game but striker Robin van Persie is available to face his former club along with Argentine defender Marcos Rojo.

—*Reuters*



mitv Myanmar International

(17-5-2015 07:00 am ~ 18-5-2015 07:00 am)

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MRTV Entertainment Channel

(17-5-2015, Sunday)

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| 6:00 am | 8:05 am |
| • Alinka Wutyi Music Troupe | • Game for Children |
| 6:25 am | 8:35 am |
| • Myanmar Video | • Sing & Enjoy |
| 7:55 am | 9:25 am |
| • Fashion Show | • Myanmar Movie |

Phelps finishes third in 100 butterfly

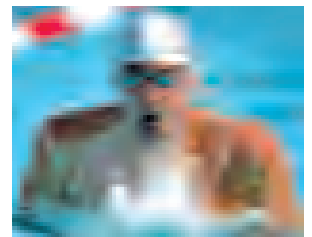
WASHINGTON, 16 May — Michael Phelps finished third in the 100 metres butterfly at the Arena Pro Swim Series meet in Charlotte, North Carolina on Friday and conceded he still has a lot of work to do in his bid to return to Olympic competition in Rio next year.

Phelps, competing in his second meet following a six-month ban for a drunk driving conviction, finished behind winner Tom Shields and runner-up Ryan Lochte.

“My turns are still pretty terrible,” the 18-times Olympic gold medallist told reporters. “But it's a lot better than what it was last year.”

Phelps, the fastest 100 butterfly swimmer in the world last year with a best time of 51.17 seconds, clocked 52.59 on Friday.

Shields won in a time of 52.12. Earlier in the day, Phelps failed to qualify for the 200 freestyle final after clock-



Michael Phelps

ing the 14th fastest time in his heat. At the Arena Pro Swim Series meet in Mesa, Arizona last month, Phelps won the 100 butterfly but failed to reach the 400 freestyle final.

He is scheduled to compete in the 200 butterfly and 100 backstroke on Saturday.

His participation in the 200 butterfly will mark the first time he has competed in the race since the 2012 London Olympics. “For me to ever want to really compete at that race, I would make sure that I was in the best shape possible,” Phelps said. “I know what I have to do to be able to get there.”—*Reuters*

Nadal upset by Wawrinka as Federer, Djokovic advance



Rafael Nadal of Spain returns the ball to Stan Wawrinka of Switzerland during their men's quarter-final match at the Rome Open tennis tournament in Rome, Italy, on 15 May, 2015.—REUTERS

ROME, 16 May — Seven-time Italian Open winner Rafa Nadal lost 7-6(7), 6-2 to Stan Wawrinka on Friday meaning there will be an all-Swiss semi-final after Roger Federer crushed Thomas Berdych 6-3, 6-3.

Top seed Novak Djokovic dropped a set for the third successive match before reaching the last four with a 6-3, 3-6, 6-1 win over Japanese fifth seed Kei Nishikori.

Nadal, the number four seed, twice earned

breaks in a tight first set that lasted 76 minutes but slipped through his fingers in a 16-point tiebreak in which he held a 6-2 advantage.

His trademark forehand again let him down at crucial moments and, as doubts crept in, eighth-seeded Wawrinka took control by winning five of the six second set games that went to deuce.

Wawrinka and Federer meet for the first time since their ATP World Tour semi-final in which the 17-

time grand slam champion saved four match points before winning in a third set tiebreak.

Second seed Federer fell behind early against Berdych only for the Czech to double fault and give a break away in the sixth game. Federer handled the windy conditions better and was almost untouchable on first serve, winning 86 percent of the points.

"Thomas can play much better than this," Federer told Sky Sports Italia after stepping closer



Roger Federer of Switzerland returns the ball to Pablo Cuevas of Uruguay during their tennis match at the Rome Open tennis tournament in Rome, Italy, on 13 May, 2015.—REUTERS

to winning one of the two Masters 1000 tournaments he has never claimed.

Defending champion Djokovic battled past Nishikori but said he had let his game and concentration slip in the second set.

"I became passive in the second set so it was important to get off to a good start in the third," Djokovic said.

The world number one, who had also dropped a set in his previous rounds against Nicolas Almagro and Thomaz Bellucci,

earned the decisive break in the fourth game of the final set to advance to a last-four meeting with Spaniard David Ferrer.

"I'm not playing my best but what's important is to find a way to win and I did that," he said.

Seventh seed Ferrer outlasted David Goffin, the only unseeded player to reach the last eight, 6-2, 4-6, 6-3.

Ferrer scammed around from the start to jump into a 3-0 lead before breaking the Belgian for a

second time to close out the set. Goffin snatched the following set but Ferrer regrouped to dominate the end of the match and claim the victory.

In the women's event, twice champion Maria Sharapova overpowered Belarusian Victoria Azarenka 6-3, 6-2 and will try to avenge her Miami loss to Daria Gavrilova on Saturday.

"I'm really looking forward to playing her again because there were so many things I could have done better last time," Sharapova told SuperTennis TV.

The 21-year-old Russian Gavrilova is in the last four of a WTA event for the first time after defeating American Christina McHale.

Simona Halep crushed Romanian compatriot Alexandra Dulgheru 6-1, 6-0 in 56 minutes.

The second seed has been unstoppable in Rome, losing only seven games in three matches, and next faces Spaniard Carla Suarez Navarro who defeated Madrid winner Petra Kvitová 6-3, 6-2.

Reuters

Middlesbrough swat away Bees to reach playoff final



Middlesbrough's Kike celebrates scoring their second goal during Middlesbrough vs Brentford, Sky Bet Football League Championship Play-Off Semi Final Second Leg, at the Riverside Stadium on 15 May, 2015. — REUTERS

LONDON, 16 May — Middlesbrough moved within one victory of securing a golden ticket to the Premier League by cruising past Brentford 3-0 to win their Championship semi-final promotion playoff 5-1 on aggregate on Friday.

Lee Tomlin opened the scoring midway through the first half with a curling right-foot shot from 20 metres before Spaniard Kike and Albert Adomah killed the "Bees" off in the second period.

Middlesbrough, coached

by Spaniard Aitor Karanka, will meet Norwich City or Ipswich Town in the final at Wembley on 25 May.

Norwich go into their home second leg against Ipswich on Saturday having drawn the first match 1-1 at Portman Road.

The winners of the final are set to earn an estimated 120 million pounds (\$188.72 million) by reaching the Premier League.

Bournemouth and Watford were automatically promoted to the top flight.

Reuters

Individual rivalries can revive athletics

SHANGHAI, 16 May — Head-to-head rivalries featuring the world's leading athletes are the best way forward for the beleaguered sport of track and field, according to Olympic 400 metres champion Kirani James.

The Grenadian 22-year-old puts his beliefs into action by never shying away from battle with his main rival for one-lap supremacy, American world champion LaShawn Merritt.

On Sunday, the pair will meet for the 14th time over the distance at the IAAF Diamond League meeting in Shanghai, with James adamant that building up such rivalries is key for a sport whose popularity has taken such a hit from doping scandals and ineffective promotion.

The issue has been highlighted again with the likelihood that Justin Gatlin, currently the world number one sprinter, and Usain Bolt, the great Olympic and world champion, are unlikely to race all season until the world championships in Beijing in August.

"Some athletes have different circumstances and their own reasons why they don't compete in certain meetings and that's up to them, but I think head-to-head rivalries bring a lot more excitement to the sport," James told Reuters on Friday.

"For me, when I compete, I try to put on a good performance for the fans, just make it exciting and not focus on whether I'm going to win or lose. Once you do that, everyone wins because the sport wins."

Having beaten Merritt eight times and lost five, he added: "We just want to compete. He (Merritt) says it and I say it. We just want to make it exciting for the fans and once we do that, everything's all right."

Organizers of the Diamond League, the sport's major season-long showpiece, have taken on board this need to promote individual rivalries.

They opened up in Doha on Friday with a series of spectacular competitions, including the best triple jump duel in history between Cuba's victorious Pedro Pablo Pichardo (18.06 metres) and American Christian Taylor (18.04m).

Shanghai hopes to follow suit on Sunday, with excellent head-to-heads between the world's two top high jumpers, Bohdan Bondarenko and Mutaz Essa Barshim, who have Javier Sotomayor's world record as a target this summer, and a long jump featuring Olympic champion Greg Rutherford, world champion Aleksandr Menkov and world number one



Kirani James of Grenada holds his national flag as he celebrates after winning the men's 400 metres at the 2014 Commonwealth Games in Glasgow, Scotland, on 30 July, 2014. REUTERS

Jeff Henderson.

With other major attractions including a sprint hurdles showdown between Olympic champion Aries Merritt and world champion David Oliver on the program, James believes athletics still has the sort of cast lists to ensure a revival for a wounded sport.

"There's a lot of great athletes out there and events like mine, like the men's high jump and both men and women's hurdles that are really competitive," said James.

"I think somewhere, something has gone wrong in the marketing of the sport but if the right people are in the right positions, I still think the sky's the limit for track and field."

Reuters