

President U Thein Sein accepts credentials from Bulgarian, Hellenic, Czech Ambassadors



President U Thein Sein poses for documentary photo with Mr Evgueni Stefanov Stoychev, the newly-accredited ambassador of the Republic of Bulgaria after accepting credentials.—MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 26 May—Mr Evgueni Stefanov Stoychev, the newly-accredited ambassador of the Republic of Bulgaria, Mr Pericles Boutos,

the newly-accredited Ambassador of the Hellenic Republic, and Mr Jaroslav

Dolecek, the newly-accredited Ambassador of the Czech Republic to

the Republic of the Union of Myanmar presented (See page 3)

UN statement says 200 boat people rescued in Myanmar waters are believed to be young Bangladeshi males

YANGON, 26 May—On 22 May a joint visit to Rakhine took place with Mr. Vijay Nambiar the Special Advisor to the Secretary-General on Myanmar, Ms. Renata Dessallien the UN Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator in Myanmar, and senior Representatives of the UN

System in Myanmar. The visit was in the context of the ongoing “boat crisis” in the Andaman Sea and Bay of Bengal as well as the UN’s ongoing focus on the humanitarian and development situation in Rakhine State.

The delegation met with the Chief Minister, (See page 2)

Red tape stalls EU-backed development project for Myanmar aquaculture industry

By Ye Myint

YANGON, 26 May—Red tape is delaying the start of an aquaculture industry development project backed by a 20 million euro (U.S. \$22.4 million) commitment from the European Union, the Myanmar Fisheries Federation said Tuesday.

A local steering committee is required to coordinate with the EU on implementation of the project, but has yet to be formed.

“Despite the EU’s readiness to provide funds and technical assistance for the start of the project, we still cannot form the (See page 3)

Study seeks Yangon residents’ views on city heritage

YANGON, 26 May—The Yangon Heritage Trust will initiate a project in the city this month to study residents’ opinions on preservation and development of their local environment, the trust announced Tuesday.

The programme will be led by the YHT, with the assistance of the New Zealand government and with the support of the Yangon City Development Committee, and will provide one of the first opportunities for downtown communities to express their views about the streets and urban environments they inhabit.

The trust, which advocates for heritage preservation in Yangon, can provide options and bring technical advice and lessons learned from abroad, said Dr Thant Myint-U, founder and chairman of the YHT.

“In the end it’s the people of Yangon who will need to decide how

they would like to protect their heritage and see their city grow,” he said. “This project is for us a hugely important initial step towards trying to engage local people and commu-

nities, and hear from them their thoughts, stories, and ideas for the future.”

The community engagement project will seek ways to address concerns raised by local residents

and help the government. Addressing the concerns of local residents, however, does not fall within the scope of the project, according to the YHT.

GNLM



Civil service personnel walk past one of Yangon heritage buildings in downtown Yangon.—PHOTO: AYE MIN SOE

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Pyidaungsu Hluttaw discusses settlement of land confiscation disputes

NAY PYI TAW, 26 May — Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Session on Tuesday was overwhelmed with the implementation of the report of the investigating commission to prevent losses

from confiscation of farmland and other types of land.

Representative of U Aung Thein Lin said that it is necessary to confiscate land after issuing land con-

fiscation orders and compensating land owners for their land at the prevailing prices, adding that land that is not used for permitted purposes must be confiscated while confiscated

land must also be returned to former owners if it is not used for the purpose of confiscation.

Representative U Khine Maung Yi discussed that the process for return-

ing land lacks transparency and timeframe for the settlement of land confiscation disputes should be set.

In addition the representative pointed out that state and region governments are compensating for land differently and stand-

ards should be set for land compensation.

Representative U Hla Swe was of the view that a few areas of land that have not been returned to former owners in Magway Region should be returned to them.

MNA

Pyithu Hluttaw

Ministry of Health provides snake anti-venom to rural health centres, station hospitals

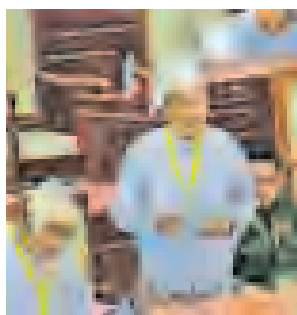


**Deputy Minister
Dr Win Myint.—MNA**

NAY PYI TAW, 26 May — The Ministry of Health has distributed snake anti-venom to rural hospitals and health centres for treatment of farmers and residents during growing season, Deputy Minister for Health Dr Win Myint told the Pyithu Hluttaw on Tuesday, at the 52nd-day session of the Lower House.

The deputy minister explained the distribution of anti-venom in reply to Dr May Win Myint of Mayangon constituency, who asked about management of foreign aid for snakebite treatment.

Dr Win Myint said Myanmar Pharmaceutical



**Deputy Minister
U Chan Maung.—MNA**

Enterprise, under the Ministry of Industry, is receiving technical assistance and materials from the WHO, Australia and Brazil for production of anti-venom.

U Myint Thein of Muddon Constituency asked about modernization of railroads and whether new coaches from Japan would be operated on the Mawlamyine-Ye route. Deputy Minister for Rail Transportation U Chan Maung said priority is being given to improvement of Yangon's circular railroad and other high-usage routes, and there is no plan to use new Japanese coaches on the Mawlamyine-Ye section.



**Deputy Minister
Brig-Gen Kyaw Zan
Myint.—MNA**

U Aung Thein Lin of South Okkalapa constituency asked how Branch 1 of the investigation commission was handling 1,501 complaints of land confiscation and what plans were in place to report its findings. Deputy Minister for Home Affairs Brig-Gen Kyaw Zan Myint said the branch had scrutinized 14 cases involving 1,166 acres of confiscated farmlands and had transferred 664 acres of farmland to 84 farmers, and 387 more acres to 18 other farmers, as well as 65 acres of pasture land to respective persons.—MNA

Amyotha Hluttaw

Govt monitoring, assisting ethnic armed groups in line with peace deal

NAY PYI TAW, 26 May — Authorities are monitoring the Karen National Union and other ethnic armed groups and cooperating with them in accordance with an agreement between the government and the armed groups, Deputy Minister at the President Office U Aung Thein told the Amyotha Hluttaw session on Tuesday

The deputy minister gave the explanation in response to a question from a representative on whether authorities have a plan to monitor activities of the KNU, which is cooperating with the government for peace, in their areas.

Authorities will raise objections over activities that contravene conditions of the peace deal, the three main national causes of the Tatmadaw, and the rule of law and security, according to the deputy minister.

In addition, the deputy minister said authorities are helping KNU troops by establishing farms for their resettlement.

Deputy Minister for Electric Power U Maw



**Deputy Minister at the
President Office
U Aung Thein.—MNA**

Tha Htwe, in response to a question on increasing the budget for the Shweli (3) Hydro Power Project, said the ministry is discussing low-interest loans for the project from international financial institutions including the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, since the government budget cannot accommodate the K150 billion needed for the project every year.

The deputy minister also added that road and bridges are also being reinforced to transport large machinery for the project.

In response to a question about eucalypt culti-



**Deputy Minister for
Electric Power
U Maw Tha Htwe.**

MNA

vation, Deputy Minister for Environmental Conservation and Forestry U Aye Myint Maung said eucalypt is economically beneficial, as it can be turned into plywood within five years and can be used for firewood, charcoal and other needs.

The deputy minister pointed out that the tree can contribute to greening projects as it grows quickly and can be cultivated on unfertile land, adding that advantages and disadvantages of the tree will be disseminated through the media and talks.

MNA

UN statement says 200 boat people...

(from page 1)

Mr. Maung Maung Ohn, and other representatives from the State government, as well as undertook a visit to Ale Than Kyaw Village to inspect the situation of the disembarked migrants.

The UN commended both the Union Government of Myanmar and Rakhine State Government for the important rescue of over 200 migrants in Myanmar waters on 21 May. Of these rescued migrants it is believed that 200 are young Bangladeshi males, 19

of whom were minors between 15-17 years of age. The migrants were taken ashore by the Myanmar Navy, and provided food, water, and temporary accommodation by the Myanmar government, local community, and Myanmar Red Cross Society, with support from the UN and INGOs.

Mr. Nambiar recognized that the rescue had been undertaken with great seriousness and irrespective of the nationality of the stranded migrants. The Myanmar government was urged to continue the

search and rescue operations as there are believed to be many more migrants still stranded at sea. Both sides discussed the seriousness of the situation of migrant smuggling, human trafficking and irregular migration affecting both Myanmar and the broader region. They agreed on the need for concerted action against the brokers and criminal syndicates involved in perpetrating such activities throughout the region. The UN has offered support to the government of Myanmar to address these issues and both sides agreed of the importance of tackling these challenges both nationally but also

at the regional level. The UN therefore welcomed the confirmation that the Government of Myanmar will participate in the Regional Meeting to be held in Bangkok on 29th May to discuss this issue and to identify areas for regional cooperation.

Inevitably, much media attention has been focused on the conditions in the countries of origin of these migrants as well as the root causes leading to people to undertake such dangerous journeys by sea. The UN recognizes and appreciates the recent improvements in the conditions in Rakhine, including efforts to improve the

situation of the IDPs. The Government has started to enable IDPs to return to their places of origin and is assisting with livelihood enhancement, health and education. The Government is requesting the UN and international community for assistance to help scale up the ongoing improvements, both for the IDPs and for all people of Rakhine State.

Notwithstanding these welcome improvements, more work needs to be done to address the daily issues of discrimination, restricted freedom of movement, and deprivation of fundamental rights faced by the IDPs and oth-

er Muslim populations.

The UN Delegation emphasized that the citizenship process and legal status, in particular, need urgent and comprehensive solutions, not only in Rakhine State, but also for other groups in Myanmar. The UN reiterated that efforts to address these rights need to be combined with concerted measures to urgently ramp up development initiatives for all communities of Rakhine State so that the critical challenges facing the state of extreme poverty, deprivation and exclusion are tackled through a comprehensive approach.



President U Thein Sein accepts credentials from Mr Pericles Boutos, the newly-accredited Ambassador of the Hellenic Republic.—MNA



President U Thein Sein accepts credentials from Mr Jaroslav Dolecek, the newly-accredited Ambassador of the Czech Republic.—MNA

President U Thein Sein accepts
(from page 1)
their credentials to U Thein

Sein, President of the Republic of the Union of My-

anmar at the Presidential Palace, here, on Tuesday.

Also present at the

calls were Union Minister for Foreign Affairs U Wunna Maung Lwin, Un-

ion Minister at the President Office U Thein Nyunt and Director-General U

Thurain Thant Zin of the Protocol Department.

MNA

Bangladeshi boat people want to go back home as soon as possible



Deputy Director-General U Wai Lwin Than of Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

TAUNGPYO LETWE, 26 May— Bangladeshi boat people temporarily provided shelter on humanitarian grounds at temporary relief camp in Ale Thankyaw Village were relocated to a temporary relief camp in Taungpyo Letwe Township on Monday so that they can be repatriated to their country more conveniently, according to U Wai

Lwin Than, deputy director-general of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Deputy Director U Saw Naing of Maungdaw District Immigration and National Registration Department said the Bangladesh consul asked the addresses and phone numbers of the boat people and checked whether they are Bangladesh citizens.

On Tuesday morning, Bangladeshi Consul Mohammad Mahbubur Rahman and an assistant consul interviewed the boat people at the temporary camp to make sure that they were Bangladesh citizens by checking whether their addresses were correct.

The Bangladeshi consul said that he had been in Myanmar for two years and he visited the camp to

repatriate the boat people after reporting his findings to the ambassador of Bangladesh to Myanmar.

Two boat people, Mohammad Sonja Hussein and Mohammad Shaje Dullah, said that the Bang-

ladeshi consul confirmed that all 200 boat people were from Bangladesh. They said they wanted to go back home as soon as possible.

Min Min Zaw (MNA); Photos: Maung Po Htaung



Union FM accepts exequators of honorary consuls of Sweden, Belarus, Norway

NAY PYI TAW, 26 May—U Wunna Maung Lwin, Union Minister for Foreign Affairs granted exequators to Dr Myint Han, the Honorary Consul of

Sweden to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, Dr Aung Moe Myint, the Honorary Consul of Belarus to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and U Htet Nyi, the Honorary Consul of Norway and Finland to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar at the ministry, here, on Tuesday.

Present at the ceremony were U Thurain Thant Zin, Director-General of the Protocol Department and U San Lwin, Director-General of Political Department.—MNA

Bangladeshi Consul Mohammad Mahbubur Rahman asks questions over citizenship of Bangladeshi boat people.

Red tape stalls EU-backed...

(from page 1)
committee that the EU called for," senior MFF official U Tun Hein told The Global New Light of Myanmar.

U Tun Hein who is also chairman of Myanmar Fishery Products Processors and Exporters Association, blamed "red tape" for the continued delay in forming

the committee.

Given that the EU explicitly asked the Myanmar side to form the committee as a requisite for the project, it should be assembled as soon as possible, he added.

The committee will be comprised of representatives from the MFF, Fisheries Department and academics from universi-

ties connected with marine science studies in Myanmar, according to discussions at the MFF's regular Tuesday meeting.

"We are working to develop the new project, funded as part of a 1 billion euro EU aid package to Myanmar, as aquaculture is very important for Myanmar," EU Ambassador to

Myanmar Mr Roland Kobia told The GNLM earlier this month.

Since admitting Myanmar to its Generalized System of Preferences in 2013, the EU has become an important market for the country's marine products, and wishes to help develop the country's aquaculture sector in order to increase the volume of Europe-bound fisheries exports, he added.

Based on its studies of the country's shrimp and fish farming operations, the EU suggested cultivation of saltwater tiger prawn, fresh-

water shrimp farming and tilapia fish farming as key aquaculture businesses in Myanmar, the MFF said.

The MFF said the EU-backed project could also help Myanmar compensate for its decreasing sea catch and meet local demand for fish and prawn.

Along with funds for the aquaculture sector and technical assistance from EU experts, a training programme for more than 30 Myanmar youths is also included in the project, the federation added.

GNLM



The European Union has identified farm cultivation of saltwater tiger prawn (pictured) as a key growth area for Myanmar's aquaculture industry, under a joint project for which the EU has pledged 20 million euro.—CREDIT: PHOTOGRAPH FROM CSIRO SCIENCEIMAGE

Construction of govt staff housing nears completion in Thazi Tsp



THAZI, 26 May — Ngwe Taung Oo and Yadanabon Companies are constructing two housing complexes for government staff with funds from the Mandalay Region government near Kanswe Village in Thazi Township.

The three-storey buildings are each 102 feet long, 29 feet wide and 30 feet high.

The companies are trying to complete the construction tasks within the month.

Each building will have 12 two-bedroom apartments.

Maung Ko (Thazi)

Storm victims receive donations of cash, supplies



MYINGYAN, 26 May — A ceremony to donate cash and necessities to people whose homes were damaged by storm was held at Basic Education Primary School in Shwebontha Village, Myingyan Township, Mandalay Region, on 23 May.

Mandalay Region Minister for Planning and Economy U Aung Zan presented K50,000 and assistance to each house.

Powerful winds hit Nabuaing, Chaungle,

Shwebontha, Myintha and Kanchaw villages on 17 May. So far, repairs to schools damaged by the strong winds are at 90 percent completion.

The ceremony was also attended by deputy commissioner U Myint Thin Aung, Township Administrator U Tun Thein Aung, Deputy Director U Aye Myint of Township Development Affairs Committee and officials.

Zaw Min Naing (Myingyan)

Training course enhances capacity of sports officers



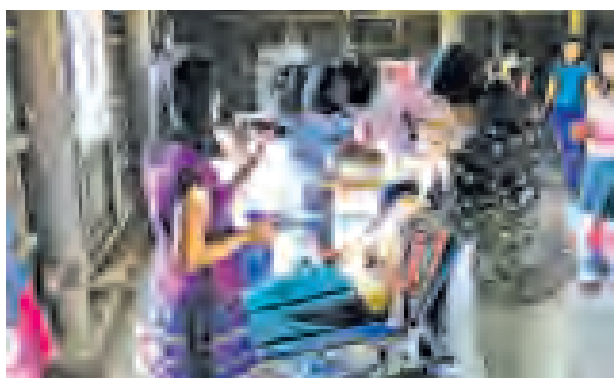
MANDALAY, 26 May — A training course for Instructors at Mandalay's Sports and Physical Education Institute began here on 25 May.

Principal of the Institute, under the Sports and

Physical Education Department, U Myo Myint Aung, introduced lecturers. Retired SPED director-general U Aung Din was among the speakers at the three-day course at the institute.

Tin Maung (Mandalay)

Mobile clinic provides healthcare to residents in Tatkon Tsp



TATKON, 26 May — Secretary Daw Tin Tin Win of Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association (Central) and medical officer Dr San San Hlaing of Myitta Sanyay Clinic of the association and party opened a mobile clinic in Shadaw Village, Tatkon Township, on 24 May to provide health care services to local residents.

The medical officer and

party gave a talk on health knowledge to the residents at the Basic Education High School in the village.

The mobile clinic treated 290 local residents and provided nutritious foods to 109 older persons and 38 pregnant women. The chairperson of Ottara District MCWSC and officials provided necessary assistance to the mobile clinic.—*Tin Soe Lwin (Tatkon IPRD)*

Farmers receive good price for summer paddy in 2015

NATTALIN, 26 May — Summer paddy plantations are thriving in Nattalin Township, Bago Region.

A local farmer said, "We grow paddy in the irrigated area of Taungnyo Dam. We spent K150,000 per acre on cultivation of summer paddy. Farmers spend K40,000 per acre for use of combine harvesters. Merchants are waiting for purchase of paddy."

Paddy was sold at K380,000 per 100 baskets last year but this year's price rose to K450,000 per 100 baskets.

The Yadana Toe paddy strain yielded 130 baskets

per acre. Nattalin Township has planted paddy on 1,200 acres of farmland.

Kyemon-071



Pageant finalists demonstrate talent in Mandalay

MANDALAY, 26 May — Finalists in the Miss Golden Land Myanmar pageant showed their skills in the talent contest section of the competition at Oriental House, here, on 25 May.

"We shortlisted 31

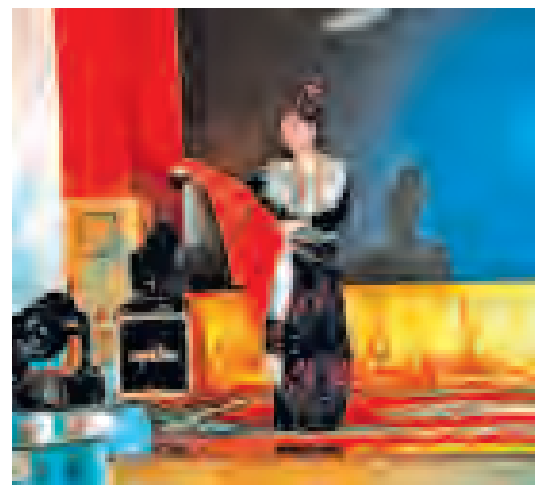
finalists from more than 670 entrants," Chief Executive Officer Ko Wai Yan Aung of the Miss Golden Land Myanmar organization said. "We have trained them to be able to show their skills and talents in

the contest."

The 31 young women have been undertaking training, as well as taking part in philanthropic tasks and tourism promotion in Sagaing and Myinmu townships.

The Miss Golden Land Myanmar 2015 will be held at MCC in Yangon on 30 June to choose five winners, each of whom will represent Myanmar in international contests.

Tin Maung (Mandalay)



Cambodian parliament chief urges citizens to join fight against corruption



President of the Cambodia's National Assembly Heng Samrin speaks during the opening ceremony of an anti-corruption seminar in Phnom Penh, Cambodia on 26 May, 2015. Heng Samrin on Tuesday called on Cambodian people to actively join the fight against corruption, which is a major obstacle to socio-economic development.

XINHUA

PHNOM PENH, 26 May — President of the Cambodia's National Assembly Heng Samrin on Tuesday called on Cambodian people to actively join the fight against corruption, which is a major obstacle to socio-economic development.

Speaking at a workshop on the understanding of Anti-Corruption

Law and law enforcement, Samrin recommended the country's Anti-Corruption Unit (ACU) to continue educating people, particularly youths, about the Anti-Corruption Law and consequences and negative impact of corruption.

"I'd like to appeal to and encourage people to actively participate in anti-corruption activi-

ties — to be brave to file complaints and condemn anyone who commits corruption," he said during the opening ceremony of the workshop, attended by about 300 people who are lawmakers, government officials, foreign diplomats, development partners, and civil society representatives.

He said the workshop provided an opportunity for the participants to understand the progress of the enforcement of the Anti-Corruption Law and to exchange views and experiences in preventing and eliminating corruption in the country.

"The National Assembly and the Senate have played an important role in fighting against corruption through making laws and monitoring law enforcement," he said.

The Southeast Asian nation promulgated the Anti-Corruption Law on 17

April, 2010. The ACU was launched in the same year.

ACU's Chairman Om Yinteng said his agency has received about 1,000 complaints a year, and has investigated a number of corruption cases and brought many corrupt officials to the court of law for legal punishment.

He said besides the crackdown on corrupt cases, the ACU has been working to educate young generations to avoid committing corruption.

"We have included an anti-corruption subject in the high school curriculum — the first-ever in our history," he said. "Some 70,000 text books and teacher books have been published and will be used to teach students later this year."

According to the Cambodian law, a corrupt official, if found guilty, will be jailed between 5 and 15 years.

Xinhua

IT chief at Bangladesh Coca-Cola unit arrested as Islamic State suspect

DHAKA, 26 May — An IT manager at a subsidiary of Coca-Cola Co was one of two men arrested in Bangladesh on suspicion of planning to fight for Islamic State in Syria, police and company sources said on Monday.

The pair were detained during a raid in the capital, Dhaka, on Sunday night, said Sheikh Nazmul Alam, a senior official of the police detective branch.

One man, Aminul Islam, was the information technology head of a multinational company, and worked as a regional coordinator for Islamic State, while the other, Sakib Bin Kamal, was a teacher at a school in Dhaka, he added.

A police official and a company source told Reuters that Islam worked at International Beverages Private Ltd, a Coca-Cola unit. The company source, who requested anonymity because of the sensitivity of the case, confirmed the arrested man was the head of IT, and said he had been absent from work for several days.

In a statement, the subsidiary said it was aware of media reports that the employee, whom it named as Aminul Islam Baig, had been arrested. "We will fully cooperate with the law enforcement agencies as required," it said.

"We can confirm Mr Md Aminul Islam Baig is an employee of IBPL," a Coca-Cola spokesman said by email. "We are cooperating fully ... with the law enforcement agencies on this matter."

Alam said the suspects had confessed to having persuaded at least 25 students to join Islamic State, the militant group that has captured swathes of Syria and Iraq.

At least 12 people have been arrested in Bangladesh in recent months for suspected involvement with Islamic State, and reports of its growing influence have raised fears across South Asia.

It remains unclear whether militants organizing under its name are acting on their own or as part of a centralised initiative from the Middle East.

Bangladesh, whose population is around 90 percent Muslim, is already on alert. Three secular bloggers including a US citizen, Avijit Roy, have been killed by radical Islamists since February.

In a separate development on Monday, the Interior Ministry banned Ansarullah Bangla Team, a group that has claimed responsibility for the killings, as an extremist militant organization.

Reuters

Vietnam's "ceramic king" has 100,000 antiques

HO CHI MINH CITY, 26 May — After nearly 25 years of collecting and now owning nearly 100,000 antique ceramic items, a 48-year-old man of Vietnam's Ho Chi Minh City has been dubbed a "ceramic king," local online news-

paper Vietnamnet reported on Tuesday.

Dinh Cong Tuong began collecting antique ceramic at the age of 24 after his aunt gave him an ancient bowl and plate as gifts. After two decades, he now has over 100,000 ceramic items

of all kinds, mostly antiques with some unique ones.

His collection includes ancient pottery items of Vietnam, China, Singapore, France and Japan dating back from the 12th century to the early 20th century.

In 2011, the Guinness

Book Centre of Vietnam branded Tuong as the owner of the largest collection of ceramic antiques in Vietnam, with more than 80,000 items. He was also recognized as the owner of the largest collection of ancient vases in Vietnam.—Xinhua

Malaysia refuses entry to Hong Kong pro-democracy student activist

KUALA LUMPUR, 26 May — Malaysian immigration authorities on Tuesday denied entry to Hong Kong student activist Joshua Wong, who had been invited to the Southeast Asian nation to participate in academic talks on democracy in China and last year's protests in Hong Kong.

Wong was one of the main leaders of the Hong Kong protests, which shut down key roads in the city for 79 days and presented China's Communist Party leadership with one of its biggest political challenges in decades.

Online news portal Malaysiakini said Wong was detained soon after arriving at the airport on the northern island of Penang on Tuesday morning, and then put on a plane back to

Hong Kong.

"Malaysia's government doesn't allow me to enter, now on my way back to Hong Kong," Wong posted in Mandarin on his Facebook page at about 0500 GMT.

A Malaysian immigration official had said it was a "government order" to deny him entry, Wong wrote.

Penang immigration authorities declined immediate comment, when contacted by Reuters.

Malaysiakini reported that Home Minister Ahmad Zahid Hamidi said he had no knowledge the 18-year-old had been denied entry to Malaysia.

Wong was dragged away by immigration officers, and was heard shouting, "Don't use violence," Malaysiakini added.



Student leader Joshua Wong is scolded by government supporters (L) during a promotional event on electoral reform in Hong Kong, China on 25 April, 2015.

REUTERS

Wong's Facebook page showed he had been invited to participate in

a series of seminars in the cities of Ipoh, Johor Bahru, and the capital,

Kuala Lumpur, besides Penang.

Human rights activist

Ng Yap-hwa, an organizer of the event at which Wong had been invited to speak, said he was angry at Wong's treatment.

"We are still demanding that the government make clear why they stopped Joshua Wong from coming here," he said.

"We're angry at the government's actions because there's no reason that the Malaysian government should stop us from organizing any international talk on the democracy movement."

In 2013, Malaysian authorities deported Australian senator Nick Xenophon after refusing him entry over his participation in an illegal street rally for electoral reforms in 2012, saying that he was considered a "security risk".

Reuters

China to boost offshore military capability: defence strategy paper

BEIJING, 26 May — China outlined a defence strategy on Tuesday to boost its naval capability farther from its shores, saying it faced a grave and complex array of security threats including in the disputed South China Sea.

In a policy document issued by the State Council, the Communist-ruled country's cabinet, it vowed to continue growing its "open seas protection" and criticized neighbours who take "provocative actions" on its reefs and islands.

The document comes as tensions rise over China's increasingly assertive posture in the disputed waters of the South China Sea, where Beijing has engaged in land reclamation in the Spratly archipelago.

China, which claims most of the South China Sea, criticized Washington after a US spy plane flew over areas near the reefs last week, with both sides accusing each other of stoking instability in the region.

It has overlapping claims with the Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, Taipei and Brunei in the South China Sea, through which \$5 trillion in ship-borne trade passes every year.

Yang Yujun, a spokesman for the Ministry of Defence, said in a briefing on Tuesday China's reclamation activities in the Spratly archipelago were comparable with construction of homes and roads on its mainland.

"From the perspective of sovereignty, there is absolutely no difference," he said. He said some countries with "ulterior motives" had unfairly characterized China's military presence and sensationalized the issue. Surveillance activities in the region were increasingly common, and China would continue to take "necessary measures" to respond, Yang said.

"Some external countries are also busy meddling in South China Sea affairs; a tiny few maintain constant close-in air and



Chinese navy sailors stand in formation as they attend a send-off ceremony before departing for the Rim of the Pacific exercise (RIMPAC), at a military port in Sanya, Hainan Province on 9 June, 2014. —REUTERS

sea surveillance and reconnaissance against China," the strategy paper said in a thinly veiled reference to the United States.

It also said China's air force would shift its fo-

cus from territorial air defence to both offence and defence, and building airspace defences with stronger military capabilities.

The People's Liberation Army's nuclear force,

known as the Second Artillery Corps, would also strengthen its capabilities for deterrence and nuclear counterattack as well as medium- and long-range precision strikes, the pa-

per said. It also said the military would strengthen security in areas critical to China's overseas interests, without giving details.

Reuters

Diet deliberations on Japan's security legislation kick off

TOKYO, 26 May — Diet deliberations began on Japan's security legislation on Tuesday, setting the stage for a face-off between the ruling and opposition camps over bills that, if passed, would expand the scope of overseas operations by the Self-Defence Forces and mark a major change to Japan's postwar security policy.

"Politicians should not just wish for peace but take bold actions (to achieve peace)," Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said in a plenary session of the House of Representatives, adding that the passage of legislation is "indispensable" to ensure security for Japan amid a severe environment in the Asia-Pacific region.

Abe reiterated his resolve to get the legislation enacted during the current parliament session through 24 June, a period speculated by lawmakers to be extended for a month or so.

His Cabinet approved on 14 May bills that would remove geographical restrictions for SDF operations and allow Japan to exercise the right to collective self-defence, or coming to the aid of the United States or other friendly nations under armed attack even if

Japan itself is not attacked.

Given the proposed major transformation on Japan's exclusively defence-oriented policy, the Democratic Party of Japan and other opposition parties are demanding thorough debate on the legislation.

"We should not let the ruling bloc have its way in passing all the bills just because they have the numbers (sufficient to approve the bills' passage)," Yoshiaki Takaki, a senior DPJ lawmaker and the party's Diet affairs chief, said in a press conference.

Saying many people in Japan are "anxious and concerned" about the new security legislation, Takaki expressed an intention to "reveal" problems posed by such bills.

A day after the Cabinet approval, the government submitted the legislation to the Diet in the wake of persistent concerns over China's assertiveness in the East and South China seas and North Korea's missile and nuclear weapons development. The legislation consists of a new permanent bill that would allow the SDF to provide logistical support to foreign militaries in international peacekeeping activities and another



Japanese Defence Minister Gen Nakatani discusses national security bills during a House of Representatives plenary session in Tokyo on 26 May, 2015. KYODO NEWS

bill comprising revisions to 10 existing security-related laws.

Speaking to the lower house on Tuesday, Abe said arguments that the security-related bills "would drag Japan into combat activity are absolutely way off the mark." His remarks come after Defence Minister Gen Nakatani recently came under fire for saying the legislation "would not increase" risk to SDF personnel. The opposition camp has criticized Nakatani for making comments not reflective of reality.—Kyodo News

Australia to strip citizenship of dual national terror supporters

SYDNEY, 26 May — The Australian government will strip the citizenship of dual nationals who engage in terrorism under proposed new legislation announced on Tuesday.

Under proposed changes to the Citizenship Act, to be introduced into parliament within a few weeks, dual nationals who fight with or support groups such as Islamic State or so-called 'lone-wolf' actors, both in Australia and on foreign soil, will be stripped of their citizenship by the country's minister of immigration and border protection.

"We will be ensuring that as far as we can humanly make it, no one

becomes stateless and any decision by the minister to strip someone of their citizenship, to strip a dual national of Australian citizenship, will be subject to a judicial review," Prime Minister Tony Abbott told a Press conference.

There are currently about 100 Australians fighting with terrorist groups in the Middle East and up to half of those are dual citizens, according to Abbott.

Minister of Immigration and Border Protection Peter Dutton, appearing alongside Abbott, said he would rely on intelligence information to form judgments.

The legislation will

apply to those who commit or prepare to commit an act of terrorism, raise funds to support terrorism, provide financial support for terrorists or indoctrinate young people into extremism, Dutton said.

The new powers will bring Australian laws closer to those of Britain, Canada, France and the United States, according to the government. Last September, Australia's terrorism level was raised to high. Also in September, two policemen were stabbed by a terror suspect in Melbourne, while in December, a siege at a Sydney cafe resulted in the death of two victims and the gunman, a self-styled Islamic

DPRK building artillery positions near inter-Korean sea border: S Korea

SEOUL, 26 May — The Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) is building artillery positions in an uninhabited island just above the inter-Korean maritime border, South Korea's military said on Tuesday.

Defence Ministry spokesman Kim Min-seok told a press briefing that the DPRK military is con-

structing facilities in the island of Gal, just some 4.5 km north of the South Korea's border island of Yeonpyeong.

Given the Gal island's geopolitical position and the close distance from the Yeonpyeong island, the DPRK facilities would pose a serious threat to the South Korean military's operation near the North-

ern Limit Line (NLL), Kim said.

The NLL, which was drawn by the US-led forces after the 1950-53 Korean War ended in a ceasefire, has served as a de-facto maritime border between the two Koreas, which the DPRK claimed must be redrawn farther south.

Xinhua

UK's Cameron tells EC president that Europe must change

LONDON, 26 May — British Prime Minister David Cameron told the president of the European Commission that the country needed a new deal on Europe, before he presses his case for reforms to the bloc with other national leaders this week.

Talks between Cameron and EC President Jean-Claude Juncker over dinner on Monday focused on reforming the European Union and renegotiating the UK's ties with Brussels, a government spokeswoman said.

"The prime minister underlined that the British people are not happy with the status quo and believe that the EU needs to change in order to better address their concerns," she said.

Juncker reiterated he wanted to find a "fair deal for the UK and would seek to help", he said, and they agreed more discussions would be needed to find a way forward.

Cameron promised before the British national election earlier this month he would renegotiate Britain's role in Europe, and hold a referendum on the country's continuing mem-



European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker reacts as he meets with Britain's Prime Minister David Cameron at Chequers, the Prime Minister's official country residence, near Ellesborough in southern England, Britain on 25 May, 2015.—REUTERS

bership of the bloc by the end of 2017.

He launched his reform drive at a summit of EU and ex-Soviet states in Latvia last week, saying he was confident of winning concessions although it would not be easy.

Cameron has said changes to rules on welfare benefits were an absolute requirement in any renegotiation. He wants to force EU migrants to wait four years before accessing a range of welfare benefits in

Britain, and to win the power to deport out of work EU jobseekers after six months.

Cameron will embark on a tour of five European capitals later this week to hold talks with key EU leaders over his reform plans.

The British leader will travel first to Denmark for a working breakfast with Prime Minister Helle Thorning-Schmidt on Thursday before heading to the Netherlands for talks with Prime Minister Mark Rutte. He will have dinner

with French President Francois Hollande at the Elysee palace in Paris.

On Friday, Cameron will meet Polish Prime Minister Ewa Kopacz in Warsaw and German Chancellor Angela Merkel in Berlin.

Cameron hopes to speak with all 27 EU leaders individually before a European Council meeting at the end of June where he is expected to set out his reform plans in more detail.

Earlier on Monday the

government said most citizens of other European Union countries living in Britain will not get to vote in the referendum.

Cameron's office said only those eligible to vote in British national elections, plus members of the upper house of parliament and Commonwealth citizens in Gibraltar, will get a say in the EU referendum.

That means British, Irish, Maltese, Cypriot and other Commonwealth citizens aged over 18 and resident in the UK, as well as UK nationals who have lived overseas for less than 15 years will be able to vote, but no other EU nationals.

"This is a big decision for our country, one that is about the future of the United Kingdom. That's why we think it's important that it is British, Irish and Commonwealth citizens that are the ones who get to decide," a source in Cameron's office said.

Citizens of other EU nations living in Britain are allowed to vote in local council and European elections.

The government will introduce its EU referendum legislation to parlia-

ment on Thursday as Cameron, whose Conservatives were elected with a surprise majority earlier this month, embarks on his diplomatic charm offensive across Europe.

As they dined on spring salad, pork belly and lime bavarois at the prime minister's country residence Chequers, the leaders also discussed the Greek economic situation, and Ukraine, including the extension of sanctions against Russia later this year, the spokeswoman said.

Earlier on Monday, Cameron also talked about Ukraine in a telephone call with President Putin, the government said.

The prime minister said the priority now must be to deliver full implementation of the Minsk agreement that attempts to resolve the conflict.

Putin and Cameron also discussed the civil war in Syria, the spokeswoman said, and agreed their national security advisers should meet to restart talks, although the British leader reiterated that President Assad could not be part of the solution in Syria.

Reuters

Obama heralds first US Memorial Day without ground war in 14 years

ARLINGTON, (Virginia), 26 May — President Barack Obama heralded the first US Memorial Day in 14 years without a major ground war in an annual ceremony of remembrance on Monday for fallen American forces.

In remarks at Arlington National Cemetery near Washington, Obama paid tribute to US military personnel who served in conflicts such as World War Two as well as the more recent wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, which he wound down as commander in chief.

"For many of us, this Memorial Day is especially meaningful. It is the first since our war in Afghanistan came to an end," Obama said. "Today is the first Memorial Day in 14 years that the United States is not engaged in a major ground war." As a Democratic presidential candidate in 2008, Obama sharply criticized the war in Iraq launched by his Republican predecessor, former President George W Bush.

US forces are now in-



US President Barack Obama

involved in air campaigns against Islamic State militants in Iraq and Syria as well as training missions in Iraq and Afghanistan. The president has been reluctant to relaunch ground operations in Iraq.

"Today, fewer than 10,000 troops remain on a mission to train and assist Afghan forces. We'll continue to bring them home and reduce our forces further, down to an embassy presence by the end of next year," Obama said.

"But Afghanistan remains a very dangerous place. And as so many families know, our troops continue to risk their lives for us."

Reuters

Greece says wants to make debt payments but needs aid urgently

ATHENS, 26 May — Greece intends to make good on its debt obligations but needs aid urgently to be able to do so, the government said on Monday, after several senior officials insisted Athens had no money to pay a loan instalment falling due next week.

Shut out of bond markets and with bailout aid locked, Greece is running out of cash to pay its bills. It must repay four loans totalling 1.6 billion euros (\$1.76 billion) to the International Monetary Fund next month, starting with a 300 million euro payment on June 5 that is seen as the next crunch point for state coffers.

Athens has the money to make monthly wage and pension payments this week, government spokesman Gabriel Sakellaris told a news conference. But he was less direct when asked about the 5 June payment, reiterating the government's official stance that it has the responsibility to pay all its obligations. "Based on the liquidity problems that we have, there is an imperative need for us and the euro zone to have a deal as soon as possible," Sakellaris said. "To the degree to which we are able

pay our obligations, we will pay our obligations. It's the government's responsibility to be in a position to pay all of these obligations."

A growing list of senior members of the government — the interior minister among them — have openly said Athens does not have the means to pay the IMF, and would prioritise paying civil servants and pensioners instead. "We haven't got the money. We won't pay. It's that simple," Deputy Foreign Minister Nikos Chountis, who holds the European affairs portfolio, told Greek TV on Monday.

Greek officials have frequently threatened to default in recent weeks, arguing the country does not have cash, which euro zone officials have dismissed as a negotiating tactic to raise pressure on creditors to disburse aid.

Adding pressure on the government, prominent opposition lawmaker Dora Bakoyianni said the country risked facing capital controls to stem deposit outflows if it did not reach a deal for aid with the government this week. Sakellaris dismissed such "doomsday scenarios", saying there was "just no chance" of imposing capital

controls. He also dismissed reports that the government would try to pay all its June obligations in one lump sum to the IMF. He voiced optimism about a deal by early June but acknowledged that agreement on value-added tax hikes, pension and labour reform and lower primary surplus targets had yet to be found in negotiations with EU and IMF lenders.

Canadian financier and Fairfax Financial Holdings Chief Executive Prem Watsa met Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras on Monday and expressed confidence in the country's recovery and on a deal with lenders, even "at the last minute". Fairfax owns a 13.6 percent stake in the Greek lender Eurobank. "A deal is possible because it is the only logical solution and both sides need it," Watsa told Eurobank and other officials, according to a statement from the bank.

Not accepting cuts to wages and pensions has been one of the government's so-called red lines in over four months of negotiations since taking power in January. Such cuts are a sensitive issue in a country where unemployment has soared and incomes have fallen during

the six-year economic crisis.

Sakellaris denied reports that the government was considering an extension to its bailout programme that expires in June or that the idea had been proposed to the government.

Ahead of talks between technical teams from Greece and its creditors in the "Brussels Group" which resume on Tuesday, the country's negotiating team convened to discuss the progress of the negotiations with Tsipras late on Monday.

VAT rates, pension reform as well fiscal targets remain open issues, a Greek government official said, and the two sides disagree over the size of the fiscal gap for this year — the lenders put it at 2 billion euros while Athens puts it at under 1 billion.

On Sunday, the ruling Syriza party's central committee voted in favour of reaching a mutually beneficial solution with lenders.

A proposal by the party's hard leftists stating that paying wages and pensions should be a priority versus external debt obligations if the liquidity crunch continues was rejected by 95 members, as many as 75 members voted in favour.—Reuters

PERSPECTIVES

Wednesday, 27 May, 2015

Liberal opinions should not be blocked

By Aung Khin

The term 'unity' is widely accepted as meaning a sense of cooperation, working together and living harmoniously with each other. We also use the word 'unity' for peace and harmony.

However, we need to judge the context of unity we are practicing. The word unity is only

appropriate for all-inclusive efforts and transparent honesty. Unity should not be misused in secret conspiracy.

The genuine sense of 'unity' is a noble mindset without discrimination against others and it ensures the welfare of people throughout a community. If unity is properly developed, it combines the strengths of different people and through teamwork and collaboration achieves wonderful things.

If unity prevails only within a certain group, it will raise suspicion among others outside the group, and will work against harmonious cooperation. Discussion, negotiation or bargaining will never disappear from the Earth, as different societies have different ideologies and opinions about what is best for them.

An American philosopher George Herbert

Mead said 'Society is unity in diversity'. Unity should be a tool to wipe out the suspicions or doubts of other groups. Diversity can lead to liberal opinions and it must be connected with unity.

If unity lacks acceptance of liberal opinions, it will not last long and can be regarded only as a protective unity for one group.

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.

The Singapore Institute of Management (SIM University)

By Sayar Mya

There are six universities in Singapore as follows.

- National University of Singapore
- Nanyang Technological University
- Singapore Management University
- Singapore Institute of Technology
- Singapore University of Technology and Design
- The Singapore Institute of Management (SIM University)

Out of six universities in Singapore, I have already introduced five universities to the esteemed readers through the Global New Light of Myanmar. The remaining one is the SIM University.

SIM University is the only private university in Singapore and is highly funded by the government.

Established in 2005, the university started as a result of the Singapore Government mandate to set up a university for working adults. In 2012, it is announced that UniSIM will be granted National University status and later became the republic's 6th national university. The university in 2012 admitted only part-time students but began to offer full-time publicly funded university places starting 2014. In October 2013, it is announced that UniSIM has been selected to house Singapore's third law school. Despite being a private university, eligible students are able to enjoy government tuition fee subsidy, government loans and bursaries for their undergraduate education. The university is managed separately from the SIM Global Education arm of the Singapore Institute of Management Group (SIMG).

Announcement of publicly funded Full-time programmes

UniSIM, together with SIT, has launched full-time publicly funded degree programmes in 2014. New programmes offered by both universities take on the new 'Applied Degree' pathway which heavily emphasizes practice-oriented teaching. UniSIM first offered programmes in Accountancy, Finance and Marketing.

Academic schools

SIM University currently offers more than 50 academic programmes through four academic schools, namely School of Arts & Social Sciences, School of Business, School of Human Development & Social Services and School of Science & Technology.

Admissions

A candidate applying to SIM University must either be a Singapore Citizen, Permanent Resident or a resident in Singapore. In



(Photo: Google.com)

addition, the candidate must meet the relevant entry requirements.

Conclusion

The quest for knowledge and learning began as early as 1964. In its early days of economic development, Singapore was in dire need of professional leadership and managerial know-how. In 1964, Dr Richard Eu Keng Mun [the first Chairman of Singapore Cancer Society (from

1964 to 1971) and Governing Council of Singapore Institute of Management (Nov 1964-1995)] was invited by the Economic Development Board (EDB) to spinoff and grows its management training unit through the formation of a dedicated management institute.

Against this backdrop, the Singapore Institute of Management (SIM) started operations with the social mission of advancing management excellence and developing manpower in support of Singapore's growth. Since then, SIM has grown in tandem with Singapore, responding and innovating to meet manpower needs at different phases of its development. Today, SIM is a leading private institution for higher education and an embodiment of lifelong learning, reputed for its commitment to a high standard of professionalism and quality, relevance to industry and integrity.

As industry partners, total of (55) large organizations have agreements to work in cooperation with the university.

The most interesting

point is that SIM receives extensive support from different organizations in the form of provision of strategic plans, programme feedback, scholarships and sponsorships for students, provision of infrastructure, and case studies development for programmes as well as networking opportunities.

The author of this article would like to sum up in simple and plain presentation of SIM University in two aspects for the esteemed readers of the Global New Light of Myanmar and to those interested in the educational field.

The first stands out in developing the required manpower in support of growth of the country, and the second salient point is the successful creation of nexus between the university and industrial partners including many renowned organizations.

The author can safely draw a conclusion that the Singapore Institute of Management (SIM) could be termed as a leading provider of higher education and professional training in Singapore.

National workshop highlights women's leadership and participation in social cohesion and peace building

NAY PYI TAW, 26 May—The National Workshop on strengthening women's leadership and participation in social cohesion and peace building through south-south and triangular cooperation, jointly conducted by Progress of Border Areas and National Races Department, UNDP and Indonesia, kicked off at Hotel Amara, here, on Monday.

Myanmar and Indonesian representatives openly discussed gender issue, social cohesion and peace building process, south-south and triangular cooperation

process, effective spending of fund for Myanmar, and participation of women in peace-making

process and social cohesion in Myanmar.

It was attended by 20 representatives from minis-

tries, 10 from civic society organizations, eight from UNDP and five from Indonesia.—MNA



LOCAL NEWS

Election sub-commission offices announce voter lists



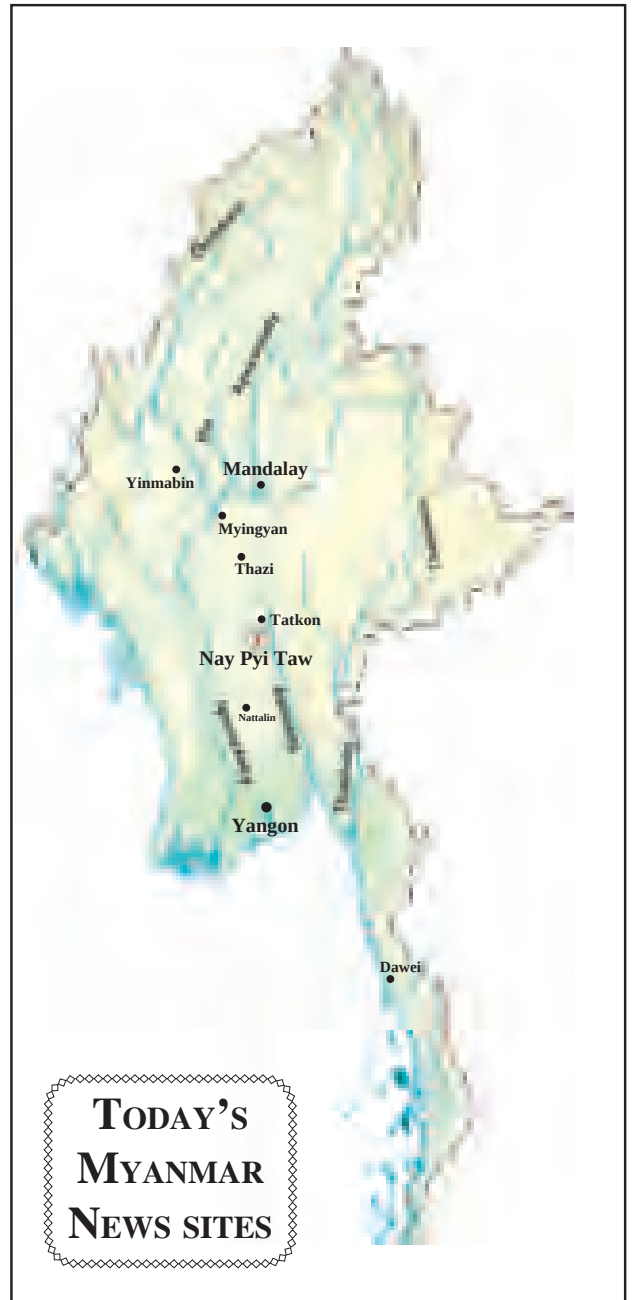
TATKON, 26 May — Chairman of Ottara District Election Sub-commission U Aung Lwin visited Bayintnaung, Bo Min Yaung and Thabye-chaung ward election sub-commission offices in Tatkon Township for the

announcement of electoral rolls on 25 May.

According to the township election sub-commission, voters whose names are absent from rolls must submit form No. 3, while those listed with incorrect information must use form No. 4-C for complaints. People may contest the nomination of unsuitable persons, such as those who are deceased or imprisoned, with form No. 4.

Local residents checked their nomination in the voter lists at the office in Bayintnaung Ward, Tatkon.

*Tin Soe Lwin
(Tatkon IPRD)*



Mandalay launches School Enrolment Week

MANDALAY, 26 May — Basic education schools in Mandalay started enrolment of students as of 25 May, the first day of School Enrolment Week.

The union and region governments, social organizations and volunteers assisted school officials with the enrolment process.

“The government delivered school textbooks, six notebooks and one school uniform to each primary student,” said a parent. “Well-wishers also donated notebooks, bags

and school uniforms to the students.”

“When I enrolled my children at primary level, we received notebooks and stationery from school and well-wishers, so we thank the government and well-wishers for their donations,” said a local resident.

The Ministry of Education has designated the school enrolment week in the last week of May every year since 1999-2000 academic year. Free primary education was launched in



the 2011-12 academic year and free middle education in 2014-15.

Min Htet Aung (Mandalay Sub-printing House)

Fire Services Department supplies drinking water to rural residents

YINMABIN, 26 May — Yinmabin District Fire Services Department and well-wishers donated drinking water to local residents in Tebinkan and Aungchanaye villages in Yinmabin Township, Sagaing Region on 25 May.

Township FSD and well-wishers have donated water, delivered via

browsers, to local residents in Tebinkan Village five times as of the first week of May.

“Under the arrangement of Township Management Committee, the fire services department will supply water to the local residents, using funds donated by well-wishers,” said Head of District FSD

U Aung Zay Moe.

“Due to drought, local people face shortages of drinking water. People bring water from Kyaysin mine, two miles from the village, by motorcycle or bicycle. We all thank the donors for the supply of water,” said the administrator of Tebinkan village.

Tin Ko Ko (Yinmabin)



Mandalay Region Sub-commission clarifies preparations for 2015 general elections



MANDALAY, 26 May — Mandalay Region Election Sub-commission held a meeting on preparations for successfully holding the 2015 general elections with political parties, civic society organizations and media at the office of Mandalay Region government on 25 May.

The chairman of the region sub-commission said voter lists will be announced in 20 townships of Mandalay, Kyaukse, PyinOoLwin and Myingyan districts from 8 to 21 June 2015.

One sub-commission member will be assigned duty to each township to provide necessary assistance

for the complaints of voters, he added.

He stressed that voters need to confirm they have been properly listed on electoral rolls. He urged the political parties, CSOs and media to organize local people to check the voter lists.

Min Htet Aung (Mandalay Sub-printing House)

Zimbabweans go hungry as drought hammers southern Africa



A woman fetches drinking water from a well along a dry Chemumvuri river near Gokwe, Zimbabwe on 20 May, 2015.—REUTERS

SIYAGIJIMA, 26 May— Even in the best of times, life is harsh in Siyagijima, a desolate village in southwest Zimbabwe. After the worst regional drought in nearly a decade and the failure of nearby crops, it is likely to be even harsher.

For 31-year-old Mejury Tererai, whose maize and cotton crops have been decimated, that means feeding her children nothing but scarce maize and groundnuts.

She would be lucky to get 50 kilos of maize this year — enough for just over a month. Her cotton is a write-off and she owes

\$27 (£17.47) to the firm that provided her with chemicals. If she fails to pay, they will sell her single goat or chickens or rip the corrugated iron roof from her two-roomed house, she said.

She hopes President Robert Mugabe's government can provide basic support, but it is far from clear that it has the means.

"Our request is that we need help with food so that our children are able to go to school and concentrate," she said in the village, 400 km (250 miles) southwest of the capital.

"Last year we had a good harvest but this year

we got very little. It was too hot and we received little rain," she added, as her two-year-old son slept on her bosom. The drought is likely to damage harvests across southern Africa — from southern Angola to Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique and Namibia, the World Food Programme (WFP) says.

The impact is looking particularly serious for Zimbabwe, where the economy has been struggling for five years to recover from a catastrophic recession that was marked by billion percent hyperinflation and widespread food shortages.

The government and foreign relief agencies are still assessing needs but one official said up to 1.8 million people — more than a tenth of the population — may require food aid.

The 2015 harvest is forecast at 950,000 tonnes of maize, the staple, far less than the 1.8 million tonnes Zimbabwe's people need.

Harare has plans to import 700,000 tonnes of white maize, which would cost \$168 million, according to the latest spot prices from GrainSA, a farmers' body in neighbouring South Africa, the region's top producer. But the government is already struggling to pay for expenses as basic as civil service salaries and did not plan for the imports in its 2015 budget.

That means the burden is likely to fall on the shoulders of international donors, who have been distributing food since 2004 despite broad economic sanctions imposed by the West after the seizure of thousands of white-owned farms from 2000 and a violent election in 2002. WFP director for Zimbabwe Sory Ouane told *Reuters* the United Nations agency was looking for \$60 million for local food aid.

Reuters

Libyan tribes meet in Cairo as Egypt seeks allies against militants

CAIRO, 26 May — Hundreds of Libyan tribal leaders met in Cairo on Monday with Egyptian authorities hoping to enlist their help in preventing Islamist violence from spilling over their shared border.

Islamist militants have thrived in the chaos of Libya, a North African oil producer that now has two competing governments backed by armed factions that four years earlier joined in an uprising that toppled autocrat Muammar Gaddafi.

Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi sees ascendant Islamists in Libya as a major security threat and is trying to secure the cooperation of tribal leaders to tackle it.

Analysts say that Sisi would like Arab states to carry out a Yemen-type intervention in Libya to combat Islamic State jihadis and other radical factions that have taken advantage of the lawlessness to recruit and train in the vast desert country.

Egyptian Foreign Minister Sameh Shukri inaugurated the tribal conference, which runs through Thursday, by highlighting

the positive role the tribes could play in restoring stability to Libya.

Egypt had invited the tribal leaders to talks because they were the "backbone" of society and main guarantor of Libyan stability, security and territorial integrity, Shukri said.

"Egypt will not hesitate to support her brother Libyans until they achieve security and reconciliation among themselves," he said.

But achieving consensus among the hundreds of tribal leaders on how to tackle Islamic extremism could be a long process.

Libya's two governments depend on various tribes and militias to support their claims to power.

The country's internationally recognised government, which Egypt backs, has operated out of eastern Libya since a rival armed faction called Libya Dawn seized the capital Tripoli in August and set up its own government. Analysts said most of the tribes in attendance in Cairo were known supporters of the internationally recognised government, with supporters of its Tripoli-based rival not well represented.—*Reuters*

Islamic State faces battle in Iraq, US reassures Abadi

BAGHDAD / WASHINGTON, 26 May — Islamic State poured more fighters into Ramadi as security forces and Shi'ite paramilitaries prepared to try to retake the Iraqi city, while Washington scrambled on Monday to reassure Baghdad after a US official's sharp criticism of Iraqi forces.

US Vice President Joe Biden spoke to Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi after Defence Secretary Ash Carter questioned Iraqi troops' will to fight when Ramadi fell. The US damage-control effort came as the loss of Ramadi and Palmyra in Syria put its strategy against Islamic State into question.

"The vice president recognized the enormous sacrifice and bravery of Iraqi forces over the past eighteen months in Ramadi and elsewhere," the White House said in a statement about Biden's call with Abadi.

"The United States will

... do all we can to help the brave Iraqi forces, including the tribes of Anbar, secure the province from ISIL terrorists," a senior US official said separately, referring to the group by an acronym.

The insurgents reinforced Ramadi on Monday, deploying fighters in preparation for battle against security forces and paramilitary groups advancing on the provincial capital, 110 km (70 miles) northwest of the capital, Baghdad.

Iraqi forces have regained ground east of Ramadi since launching a counter-offensive on Saturday, a week after it was overrun, and on Monday retook a rural area south of the city.

In comments to CNN on Sunday, Carter knocked Iraqi forces for being unsuccessful in holding Ramadi despite being more numerous than the militants, drawing a rebuke from Abadi, who told BBC the US defence chief had been misinformed. Abadi predicted Iraqi forces would take back

Ramadi "in days."

In Palmyra, the Syrian air force struck at buildings captured by the Sunni militant group, whose arrival has raised fears that the city's famed Roman ruins will be destroyed.

The air force levelled Islamic State "hideouts" and killed a large number of its members around Palmyra's military air base, Syrian state media said.

Islamic State has killed at least 217 people execution-style, including children, since it moved into the Palmyra area 10 days ago, according to the British-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights.

Police sources said Iraqi forces supported by Iran-backed Shi'ite militia and locally recruited Sunni tribal fighters had retaken parts of al-Tash, 20 km (12 miles) south of Ramadi.

Pro-government Sunni tribal fighters, with the help of the army, laid land mines to reinforce their defensive lines around Baghdadi, a



A rebel fighter fires a weapon as a fellow fighter covers his ears during clashes with forces loyal to Syria's President Bashar al-Assad on the frontline of Aleppo's Sheikh Saeed neighbourhood on 23 May, 2015.—REUTERS

settlement northwest of Ramadi that controls access to a major Iraqi air base. Islamic State attacked Baghdadi with seven suicide car bombs on Sunday.

In Ramadi, residents said trucks carrying Islamic State fighters arrived on Sunday evening.

Abu Saed heard a com-

motion outside his house in the city's southeastern Officers neighbourhood. "I saw two trucks pull up outside with dozens of fighters carrying arms running quickly into nearby buildings and taking cover."

Another resident said at least 40 fighters had jumped out of three trucks

that arrived in the southern al-Tamim district on Sunday evening.

"They were carrying weapons and wearing mostly khaki dress with ammunition belts wrapped around their chests," said Abu Mutaz. "They were talking in an Arabic dialect, they were not Iraqis."—*Reuters*

BUSINESS & HEALTH

Asian shares turn higher as China rallies, dollar up

TOKYO, 26 May — Asian shares turned higher on Tuesday, reversing earlier losses on the back of gains in Hong Kong and China, while the dollar extended highs scaled in holiday-thinned trading in the previous session and pushed to an eight-year high against the yen.

But European markets were seen opening broadly

at IG in Melbourne, said in a note to clients.

European shares had a weak finish in thin trade on Monday, with many markets in the region closed. US markets were closed for Memorial Day.

MSCI's broadest index of Asia-Pacific shares outside Japan .MIAPJ0000PUS was up 0.4 percent in late after-

noon trade, after eking out a late gain in the previous session. Australian shares .AXJO rose 0.9 percent.

Hong Kong's Hang Seng index .HSI jumped 1.3 percent, flirting with seven-year highs, on expectations of more money inflows from the mainland following Beijing's fresh moves to expedite cross-border investment. Mainland bourses also rose, with the CSI300 Index .CSI300 and the Shanghai Composite Index .SSEC both rising 1.6 percent to fresh seven-year highs

China announced over the weekend that it would allow funds domiciled in Hong Kong and China to be sold in each others' market starting 1 July, in Beijing's latest step to fa-

litate cross-border investment. Japan's Nikkei stock index .N225 ended up 0.1 percent, logging its eighth straight gain and closing at a fresh 15-year high, though some strategists said that investors might start taking profits at the current lofty levels.

"Whether it's a political risk in the euro zone, volatility in the bond market or the timing of a US rate hike, we can't ignore these risks," said Norihiro Fujito, a senior investment strategist at Mitsubishi UFJ Morgan Stanley Securities, explaining why investors might unwind some of their bullish positions.

The dollar hit a fresh one-month high against a basket of major currencies, extending a rally triggered by Friday's comments from Federal Reserve Chair Janet Yellen, who rekindled market expectations that the US central bank was gearing up to hike interest rates.

Yellen said she expected economic data to strengthen and noted that some of the US economy's weakness at the start of the year might be due to "statistical noise."

The dollar index .DXY rose as high as 96.734, and was last up about 0.7 percent at 96.719.

Fed Vice Chair Stanley Fischer said in Israel on Monday that too much importance was being placed on the central bank's first rate hike, and that the process of returning to more normal levels of interest rates will take a few years.

While markets largely expect the first rate hike in September, it will be determined by data and not by

date, he said.

Investors await the latest batch of US data later on Tuesday that could provide more clues on the strength of economic recovery, including May durable goods and April consumer confidence.

Greece's debt crisis kept pressure on the euro. Time is running out for Greece to reach an agreement on reform with lenders and there will be no further funds for Athens without it, the head of the European Stability Mechanism, Klaus Regling, told Germany's *Bild* newspaper on Tuesday.

"The Greek political saga will remain in the spotlight as the deadline for payments to the IMF approaches", strategists at Barclays wrote in a note to clients. "A light data calendar and continued political uncertainty in Greece should continue to weigh on EUR," they said.

The euro skidded about 0.5 percent at \$1.0917 EUR=, breaking below its overnight nadir and wallowing at its lowest levels since late April.

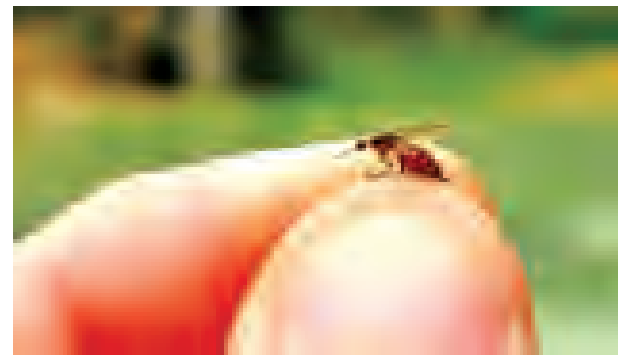
The dollar surged 0.6 percent against the Japanese currency to 122.36 yen JPY=, breaking above the 122 level for the first time since March 10 and reaching an eight-year peak.

Crude oil firmed, extending gains made in Monday's thinned trading as firm global demand offset the effects of a stronger dollar.

Brent crude LCOc1 was up slightly at \$65.54 (43 pounds) a barrel, while US crude CLc1 added 0.2 percent to \$59.86.

Reuters

Brazil set to see more dengue fever cases



RIO DE JANEIRO, 26 May — The number of dengue fever cases in Brazil is expected to further increase, Health Minister Arthur Chioro said on Monday.

"We have 745,000 registered cases from January to 18 April, and we know that these figures will increase, because new reports keep coming. Brazil has a situation of epidemic, concentrated in nine states," Chioro said.

Brazil registered a high number of dengue cases this year, but the majority of them are located in Sao Paulo state, the most populated in the South American nation. The cases in Sao Paulo amount to about half of the cases registered in the entire country.

In other eight states, the incidence of dengue this year also reached epidemic level. According to

the World Health Organization, an incidence of 300 cases for every 100,000 inhabitants can be considered an epidemic.

Chioro urged the country's hospitals to keep vigilant and asked the population to collaborate with government agents who visit households in an effort to identify areas in which *Aedes aegypti*, the mosquito that transmits dengue, can be reproducing.

Dengue is a potentially lethal disease. Brazil has registered four types of dengue, and a person can have each one of them one time. In addition, the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito also transmits other diseases, such as yellow fever, chikungunya fever and Zika virus, all of which have been registered in Brazil.

Xinhua

Japan to urge Indonesia to cut auto tariffs as agreed in FTA

TOKYO, 26 May — Japan will urge Indonesia to lower its tariffs on Japanese automobiles as agreed under a bilateral free trade pact that entered into force in 2008, Japanese trade minister Yoichi Miyazawa said on Tuesday.

Miyazawa said Japan and Indonesia are expected to hold bilateral discussions on the matter possibly within this month. "It is true that (Indonesian) auto tariffs are not at the agreed levels. Naturally we will discuss the matter in our consultations," the minister told a regular Press conference.

Under the deal, Indonesia has agreed to cut its 45 percent tariffs on some Japanese passenger cars with an engine displacement of 3,000 cc or less to 20 percent by the start

of 2015, and eventually to 5 percent in 2016. But Jakarta is still imposing 22.5 percent tariffs as of 2015, according to the Economy, Trade and Industry Ministry.

Indonesia is a promising market for Japanese automakers. In 2014, exports of Japanese passenger cars to Indonesia totaled some 40 billion yen (\$328.60 million).

Jakarta has explained that it has not been able to adopt the agreed tariff rates due to procedural errors, the ministry said.

The two countries launched free trade negotiations in July 2005. Japan's key export items include automobiles and other industrial goods, while Indonesia ships natural gas and petroleum products.

Kyodo News



A pedestrian walks past an electronic board showing the Japan's Nikkei average outside a brokerage in Tokyo, Japan, on 20 May, 2015.—REUTERS

lower on the first day of the trading week for several countries after a holiday weekend, with Greece's ongoing debt drama in focus and after a poor local election result for Spanish Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy.

Financial spreadbetters expected Britain's FTSE 100 .FTSE to open 4 to 8 points higher, or around 0.1 percent, Germany's DAX .GDAXI to open 40 to 45 points lower, or 0.4 percent, and France's CAC 40 .FCHI to open 14 to 17 points lower, or 0.3 percent.

"A bright spot for European equities could come from a weaker euro as EUR/USD is now below 1.1000 and could come under further selling pressure," Stan Shamu, a market strategist

at IG in Melbourne, said in a note to clients.

European shares had a weak finish in thin trade on Monday, with many markets in the region closed. US markets were closed for Memorial Day.

MSCI's broadest index of Asia-Pacific shares outside Japan .MIAPJ0000PUS was up 0.4 percent in late after-

Higher altitude linked to slightly increased SIDS risk: study

WASHINGTON, 26 May — Babies who live at high altitude may face a slightly increased risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), a US study said on Monday.

The study, published in the *US journal Pediatrics*, examined birth and death registries of nearly 395,000 infants in the US state of Colorado from 2007 to 2012, and com-

pared the records with the altitudes of the children's homes.

Colorado is the highest state in the US with elevations ranging from 3,315 feet (1,010 metres) above sea level to 14,433 feet (4,399 metres).

Compared with infants who lived below 6,000 feet (1,828 metres), infants who lived at an altitude higher than 8,000 feet (2,438 me-

tres) had a 2.3 times higher rate of SIDS, according to the study led by David Katz of the University of Colorado Denver.

However, despite doubling the risk, the absolute risk remains very low, it noted. During the six years studied, there were only 0.8 SIDS deaths for every 1,000 infants who lived above 8,000 feet.

The study suggested

that high altitude hypoxia, or low oxygen levels, may explain the increased SIDS risk. Hypoxia has been previously cited as a risk factor for SIDS.

SIDS is defined as the sudden unexplained death of an infant less than one year of age. Globally it resulted in about 15,000 deaths in 2013, down from 22,000 deaths in 1990.

Xinhua

Donor fatigue hits Nepal one month after mega earthquake — UN

NEW DELHI, 26 May — The international community's response to devastating earthquakes in Nepal has been disappointing, a United Nations official said on Monday, adding that donors were focusing more on reconstruction than much needed aid such as food and shelter.

The impoverished Himalayan nation is reeling from a 7.8 magnitude earthquake which struck on 25 April, disrupting the lives of almost a third of the 28 million population.

A second quake of 7.3 magnitude struck on 12 May, worsening the situation and further hampering efforts to get aid to survivors in remote regions. Over 8,600 people have died.

"I am disappointed in the sense that there was such an impressive response in terms of search and rescue — all the teams that came in to do the work, they did very impressively and comprehensively — and maybe they think that's the job done," said Jamie McGoldrick, UN resident coordinator in Nepal.

"The talk now is about re-

construction, but we are trying to remind people that in between search and rescue and recovery, there is a phase called relief and we can't forget that," he told the Thomson Reuters Foundation by phone from Kathmandu.

In the weeks following the earthquake, scores of international agencies and foreign governments rushed to send search and rescue teams, doctors and relief materials to the country which is sandwiched between India and China.

The UN appealed for \$423 million to be able to provide up to two million survivors with basic relief such as tents or tarpaulin sheets, dry food rations, safe drinking water and toilets for the next three months.

As of Monday, the UN Financial Tracking System showed \$92.4 million has been raised, 22 percent of the required funds.

McGoldrick said the slow response was partly due to donor fatigue where governments were being torn between competing humanitarian crises across the world such as the civil conflict in



A man carrying a block of wood recovered from his house walks along the debris of collapsed houses, a month after the 25 April earthquake in Bhaktapur, Nepal on 25 May, 2015.

REUTERS

Syria or in Yemen.

Nepal's traditional donors were also more "development" focused and were likely holding back funds for long-term reconstruction and recovery projects, he added.

But he warned that there was only a small window of opportunity to buy and get relief supplies delivered to survivors in remote

mountain hamlets ahead of the annual monsoons which run from June to September.

The heavy rains in areas which were already damaged by the earthquakes would "complicate relief efforts all the more" as they would trigger more landslides and block roads, hampering the delivery of aid by trucks, he said.

"It only gives us a limited window to get the much needed supplies to the very remote areas, where some people have been very badly affected by the earthquakes," said McGoldrick.

"We have to make sure there is enough materials - shelter, blankets, food, water and sanitation."

Reuters

China breaks ground on lighthouse project in South China Sea



Chinese dredging vessels are purportedly seen in the waters around Mischief Reef in the disputed Spratly Islands in the South China Sea in this still image from video taken by a P-8A Poseidon surveillance aircraft provided by the United States Navy on 21 May, 2015.

REUTERS

BEIJING, 26 May — China hosted a ground-breaking ceremony for the building of two lighthouses in the disputed South China Sea, state media said on Tuesday, a move that is likely to escalate tensions in a region already jittery about Beijing's maritime ambitions.

China's Ministry of Transport hosted the ceremony for the construction of two multi-functional lighthouses on Huayang Reef and Chigua Reef on the disputed Spratly islands, state news agency *Xinhua* said, defying calls from the United States and the Philippines for a freeze on such

activity.

The reefs are known in English as Cuateron Reef and Johnson South Reef.

The Ministry of Transport did not answer calls for comment.

Last year, the Philippines accused China of reclaiming land on Johnson South Reef, apparently to build an airstrip.

China claims most of the South China Sea, through which \$5 trillion in ship-borne trade passes every year, and the Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, Taipei and Brunei have overlapping claims.

Xinhua said the lighthouses were built "to im-

prove the navigation safety in the South China Sea". It did not elaborate.

In recent weeks, the United States has clashed with China over Beijing's construction activities in the South China Sea. The Pentagon believes the work is aimed at cementing China's claim to the vast majority of the South China Sea — an area thought to have significant energy reserves and rich fishing grounds.

Washington is particularly concerned that China may at some point declare an exclusion zone in the sea that could limit free movement of ships and aircraft.

On Monday, China's foreign ministry said it had lodged a complaint with the United States over a US spy plane that flew over parts of the South China Sea.

The Philippines' defence minister said on Monday that Manila was seeking a "stronger commitment" from the United States to help its ally with activities in the South China Sea.

Beijing says the South China Sea issue should be resolved by direct talks between those involved and has bristled at what it sees as unwarranted US interference.—Reuters

Washington Post reporter goes on trial behind closed doors in Teheran

DUBAI, 26 May — *Washington Post* reporter Jason Rezaian went on trial on espionage charges behind closed doors in Iran on Tuesday, the semi-official *Tasnim* news agency reported.

The *Post*'s Teheran bureau chief, an Iranian-American, was detained in his home in July and taken to Teheran's Evin prison.

The Iranian authorities have not elaborated on the charges and pressed on with the case in the face of calls for his release from US President Barack Obama, family members and rights groups.

"He has been charged with espionage for collecting confidential information ... and handing it to hostile governments, writing a letter to Obama and acting against national security," lawyer Leila Ahsan told *Tasnim*.

His wife and other family members have been barred from attending the Revolutionary Court session, his brother Ali told *Reuters* Television on Monday.

"I think the only reason you could possibly im-

agine that the trial would be closed would be to prevent people from seeing the lack of evidence," Rezaian said.

"It's unlike the Iranian court system, Iranian government, to keep things private when they can go out and use propaganda up against people."

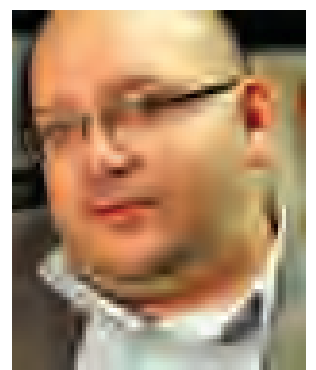
Ali Rezaian said the family had hoped that Rezaian's wife, journalist Yeganeh Salehi, and his mother would be allowed to attend the trial. He said his brother had lost 40 pounds (18 kg) in prison.

Rezaian, who is from Marin County, California, was arrested at his home in Teheran alongside his wife and two Iranian-US friends who have not been named.

Salehi was freed on bail while the couple were released. The three have not been publicly charged.

Douglas Jehl, the *Post*'s foreign editor, called the charges baseless. "What Jason did was act as a journalist, which involves gathering information, verifying information, and ultimately publishing it," he told *Reuters* Television.

Obama has called the



Washington Post reporter Jason Rezaian

charges against Rezaian "vague" and pressed Iran to release all American detainees.

Teheran and six major world powers, including the United States, are trying to meet a 30 June deadline for a final nuclear deal to end a decade-old standoff with the West.

Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said in April that an intelligence operative, possibly linked to the US government, may have "taken advantage" of Rezaian.

The New York-based Committee to Protect Journalists has called on Iranian authorities to ensure a "fair and transparent trial" for Rezaian.

Reuters

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Consignees of cargo carried on MV ASIATIC GLORY VOY NO (002N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 27.5.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.W.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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AGENT FOR: M/S CMA CGM**

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**CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV MARCLOUD VOY NO (0007N)**

Consignees of cargo carried on MV MARCLOUD VOY NO (0007N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 27.5.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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

Phone No: 2301185

WEATHER REPORT

BAY INFERENCE: Monsoon is moderate to strong in the Andaman Sea, South Bay and East Central Bay and weather is partly cloudy elsewhere in the Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL EVENING OF THE 27th May, 2015: Rain or thundershowers will be widespread in Taninthayi Region, Kachin and Mon State, fairly widespread in Bago and Yangon Regions, Kayin State, scattered in Upper Sagaing and Ayeyarwady Regions and isolated in the remaining Regions and States. Degree of certainty is (80%).

STATE OF THE SEA: Squalls with moderate to rough sea are likely at times off and along Myanmar Coasts. Surface wind speed in squalls may reach (35) m.p.h.

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**Two pilots die in China
Navy aircraft crash**

BEIJING, 26 May — An instructor and his student died in a Navy aircraft accident on 13 May in northeast China's Liaoning Province, the Navy said on Tuesday.

The Navy released the news on its microblog, saying that the two pilots were killed after failing to engage their parachutes after they had successfully avoided crashing in a densely populated area.

After discovering that the aircraft's engine was on fire shortly after taking off, the two pilots turned the aircraft away from villages, residential buildings, hospitals and a business area and dived into woods.

It was only 17 seconds between observing the fire and the crash. There was not enough time or sufficient height for the two pilots to parachute from the aircraft, according to the Chinese Navy. The instructor was Jiang Tao, 27, and the student was Lu Pengfei, 22. They were both from the Chinese People's Liberation Army Navy Flight School.—Xinhua

38 dead in China rest home fire

A journalist works at the accident site after a fire broke out in a rest home in Lushan County, Pingdingshan City, central China's Henan Province on 26 May, 2015.

Thirty-eight people were killed and six others injured in the fire which broke out at 7:55 pm on Monday in an apartment building of the privately-owned Kangle Yuan rest home.—XINHUA

ZHENGZHOU, 26 May — Thirty-eight people were killed and six others injured after a fire broke out in a rest home in central China's Henan Province late Monday, said authorities on Tuesday.

The fire broke out at 7:55 pm on Monday in an apartment building of the privately-owned Kangle Yuan rest home in Lushan County, Pingdingshan City, said the Henan Provincial Work Safety Administration.

The six injured, two in serious condition, have been rushed to hospital.

The search and rescue operation is under way. The cause of the fire is unclear.—Xinhua

The search and rescue operation is under way. The cause of the fire is unclear.—Xinhua

**US fighter jets escort Air France
flight to New York after threat**

NEW YORK, 26 May — An Air France (AIRF.PA) flight from Paris was escorted by two US F-15 fighter jets to New York's John F. Kennedy International Airport on Monday after an anonymous threat was made against the flight, the US military said.

Air France flight 22, travelling from Charles de Gaulle Airport, landed safely in New York, officials said.

The anonymous threat came in a telephone call to a Maryland State Police barracks on Monday morning, and the caller made a bomb threat involving commercial aviation, Maryland State Police said.

Two US Air Force F-15 jets were launched as a precaution to monitor the flight as it approached New York, said Navy Lieutenant Commander Richlyn

Ivey, a spokeswoman for US North American Aerospace Defence Command and US Northern Command.

The plane was cleared in New York with no incidents or hazards reported by passengers or crew, said J Peter Donald, an FBI spokesman.

The New York Post reported 165 passengers and 11 crew members on board the Air France Airbus A-330 though those figures could not be confirmed.

Air France could not be reached for comment.

Separately, New York's WNBC television reported that a threat had been made against a separate American Airlines (AAL.O) flight headed to JFK, but that threat was deemed not credible and the flight was cleared.

That report also said an Saudi Arabian Airlines flight was being checked out due to an unspecified

threat, and that threats had been made against three other flights at Newark Liberty International Airport.

The FBI was not immediately available to comment on the WNBC report.

The US military spokeswoman said the command had not received information about additional threats against commercial airliners.

It was the first time US military aircraft had escorted a private airplane or commercial aircraft since 13 February, when two F-15s followed a general aviation aircraft that was out of contact while flying in a restricted area near San Francisco. The aircraft eventually re-established communications and was followed by the jets until it landed at Half Moon Bay.—Reuters

Johnny Depp could face 10 year imprisonment for pet dogs

LOS ANGELES, 26 May — Hollywood superstar Johnny Depp could be facing jail time over his decision to illegally bring his two dogs into Australia.

An Australian Senate committee said if the matter goes to court and the “Pirates of the Caribbean” star is found guilty, he could face up to 10 years in jail or a maximum fine of USD 265,000, reported *People* magazine.

Depp, 51, landed in hot water earlier this month after flying into Australia on a private jet with his Yorkshire Terriers — Pis-



Hollywood superstar Johnny Depp could be facing jail time over his decision to illegally bring his two dogs into Australia.—PTI

tol and Boo — breaking the country’s strict quarantine laws. According to the reports, an ongoing investigation found that Depp, his fellow passengers and the flight crew did not declare the dogs’ presence, and they were only discovered after the pups were taken to a local groomer and photos were posted on social media.

The Australian Minister for Agriculture, Barnaby Joyce, then threatened to have the Yorkies euthanized unless they were flown out of the country within 50 hours.—PTI

Homicide probe to be launched into BB King’s death: officials



US blues legend BB King performs onstage during the 45th Montreux Jazz Festival in Montreux in this file 2 July, 2011 photo.—REUTERS

CARSON CITY, (Nevada), 26 May— Nevada officials said on Monday they would conduct a homicide investigation into the death of BB King who died this month at age 89, after two of his daughters levelled accusations that the blues great was murdered.

The Clark County, Nevada coroner’s office said in a posting on Twitter that it had taken jurisdiction over King’s body, and that autopsy results would take a minimum of six to eight weeks.

“Our coroner takes jurisdiction over #BBKing body, performs autopsy. Results:6-8wks min,” it said, adding that a homicide investigation would be conducted along with the

Las Vegas police department.

Two of King’s children, Karen Williams and Patty King, alleged that King was poisoned, ostensibly by two of his longtime associates including one who had power of attorney over his affairs, the *Associated Press* reported.

“I believe my father was poisoned and that he was administered foreign substances. I believe my father was murdered,” each woman said in statements submitted to the AP by their lawyer.

An attorney for King’s estate called the allegations unfounded and disrespectful, AP said.

Reuters

Lady Gaga goes blond for ‘American Horror Story: Hotel’



Singer-actress Lady Gaga

LOS ANGELES, 26 May — Singer-actress Lady Gaga has been preparing for her role on “American Horror Story: Hotel”, including dying her hair blond.

The “Applause” hit-maker recently debuted her new look in a picture she posted on Twitter.

She also documented the process of her hair makeover in a series of Instagram pictures.

“American Horror

Story: Hotel” recently added “Girls” star Max Greenfield to the cast.

He joined the previously announced cast members including Gaga, Kathy Bates, Sarah Paulson, Angela Bassett, Evan Peters, Wes Bentley, Chloe Sevigny, and Matthew Bomer.

Plot details have been kept under wraps as filming is set to begin next month in LA.

PTI

Melody Gardot eager for album release



Singer Melody Gardot

LONDON, 26 May — Singer Melody Gardot feels like she’s waiting for a baby to be born with her new album.

The 30-year-old singer/songwriter is gearing up to release her fourth studio record ‘Currency of Man’ and said she’s eager for the collection to be available, reported Contactmusic.

“It’s like waiting for a baby to be born, it’s like,

‘Get it out! Come on!’ I feel like I’m on those last little labour pains in a way because we worked on this album almost a year ago, so now it’s like an overdue thing. I’m happy that it’s finally going to be in people’s hands,” Gardot said.

The “Preacherman” singer’s LP will be her first since “The Absence” which released in 2012.

PTI

Dave Grohl joins Paul McCartney on stage

LOS ANGELES, 26 May — Foo Fighters frontman Dave Grohl surprised Paul McCartney fans by singing with the Beatles star on stage during a show in London.

Grohl joined McCartney at the O2 Arena and the duo went on to perform a rendition of the Beatles’ track “I Saw Her Standing There”, reported Entertainment Weekly.

The evening also saw McCartney perform “Tem-

porary Secretary” from his 1980 album McCartney II live for the first time.

The pair previously collaborated together in 2012 on “Cut Me Some Slack”, alongside Nirvana members Krist Novoselic and Pat Smear.

Alice Cooper revealed last month that both McCartney and Grohl will appear on his new album, which will also feature the likes of Johnny Depp and Brian Johnson.—PTI



Foo Fighters frontman Dave Grohl surprised Paul McCartney fans by singing with the Beatles star on stage during a show in London.—PTI

Alexander Payne to be honoured at Munich Film Festival



The Munich Film Festival is all set to pay tribute to filmmaker Alexander Payne with a complete retrospective of his movies.—PTI

LONDON, 26 May —The Munich Film Festival is all set to pay tribute to filmmaker Alexander Payne with a complete retrospective of his movies.

Payne’s last visit to the event was in 1997 when he won the High Hopes Award for “Citizen Ruth”, the predecessor of the festival’s CineVision Award, reported Variety online. The film starred Laura Dern as a white trash antihero who becomes a cause celebre when she gets pregnant with her fifth child. Among the movies to play in Munich this year are “Election”, which was the international breakout role for Reese Witherspoon, “About Schmidt”, starring Jack Nicholson, “Sideways”, which stars Paul Giamatti, “The Descendants”, starring George Clooney, and “Nebraska” with Bruce Dern toplining.

The Munich retrospective will show all Payne’s shorts, features and TV films. On June 26, there will be a gala held in his honour, and the director will also speak about his life and movies at Filmmakers Live in the Gasteig Black Box.—PTI

GENERAL

Blatter misled us all, says Platini



FIFA chief Sepp Blatter (L) receives a gift from Palestinian children during his visit to Dura al-Qar' village in the West Bank city of Ramallah on 20 May, 2015.—REUTERS

PARIS, 26 May — FIFA president Sepp Blatter misled the world of football by reneging on a commitment to step down in 2015, UEFA president Michel Platini said on Monday.

Platini backed him in the 2011 election on that basis but is angry that Blatter, 79, is seeking re-election on Friday for a further term.

"I am mostly disappointed for the European federations, whom I had asked to support Sepp in 2011, on the basis of a promise he had made," the former French international told the sports newspaper *L'Equipe*.

"It was more than a promise actually, it was a true commitment. He had asked us ... to support him for what would be his last term. And now he's back on again as if nothing had happened."

"Maybe I'm too naive, sensitive or idealistic but I have the unpleasant feeling that my commitment was based on a lie and that I indirectly have lied to the federations."

Platini reiterated that he would be supporting Prince Ali Bin Al Hussein of Jordan, the only other candidate in Friday's election.

Reuters

Battle ropes become popular go-to fitness tools in US gyms

NEW YORK, 26 May — Battle ropes, the thick and heavy ropes that look as if they could tether a ship to shore, have become go-to fitness tools in gyms for people seeking a tough workout that is also engaging and fun.

Whipping, slamming, dragging and drumming the long, anchored ropes have long been used in training for sports like football, but fitness experts said they have now gone mainstream in gyms as an efficient workout routine.

"It's a little like running with the upper body," said Jonathan Ross, spokesperson for the American Council on Exercise. "It's not just using different muscles but training muscles in different ways."

The Washington, DC area-based trainer and author of the book "Abs Revealed," said a ropes workout engages the mind as well as the body with what he calls the grace of the wave.

"The ropes show you how you're moving," he explained. "You see the physical manifestation of the body movement as you watch the ropes. If you do them well, your body is moving well."

Posture and coordination are inherent elements of the workout, Ross said.

Battle rope workouts also pack a calorie-burning cardio punch.

A study published in the April 2015 *Journal of Strength & Conditioning Research* showed that a 10-minute bout of rope training resulted in high heart rates and enough energy expenditure to increase cardio respiratory fitness.

Crunch, the national chain of fitness centres, has built a group fitness class around battle ropes.

"It's great core training. The abs, back, and glutes (muscles of the buttocks) are all engaged," said Donna Cyrus, senior vice president of programming at Crunch.



Powerwave Battle Roping fitness class at Crunch seen in this 2013 handout photo in New York.

REUTERS

"Obviously there's toning to the upper body and it burns a lot of calories."

Rope classes typically include a warm-up segment followed by teams competing to see who can keep the wave, or movement of the rope, going the longest time.

Ross said battle ropes, which come in various diameters and lengths, require shoulder mobility and stability, so people dealing with shoulder issues should

use them with caution.

"The longer the rope, the more challenging because you have to generate more force," he said. "You want to see that move travel all the way down to that anchor point."

Another mistake, he added, is pulling the ropes too tight.

"You can't make a wave if the rope is tight," he said.

Reuters

Book your place for another celebration, Mourinho tells fans

LONDON, 25 May — Thousands of Chelsea fans turning out in west London to celebrate winning the Premier League title on Monday were told to prepare for more success next season by manager Jose Mourinho.

Addressing the supporters, Mourinho said: "Thank you for everything, for all your support. Book another place for the parade next season. I hope we can give you that."

Chelsea last won the title in 2010 under Carlo Ancelotti. In Mourinho's previous period in charge they were champions for



The bus carrying the players and the Premier League Trophy travels down the King's Road during the Chelsea FC Premier League Victory Parade in London, England on 25 May, 2015.—XINHUA

two years running, in 2005 and 2006.

But he warned it would be harder to retain the title

this time, telling Chelsea TV: "We have to be better if we want to be successful again. The other opponents are not going to accept this without a fight."

"Next year will be more difficult, but because it's difficult is one of the reasons why I came back to England. I will enjoy it again."

Owner Roman Abramovich took part in the parade.

Among the players and staff enjoying the occasion on three special buses were goalkeeper Petr Cech and striker Didier Drogba, who have been part of all four title successes.—*Reuters*

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China's Huawei wins bid to build Malaysia-Cambodia-Thailand undersea communications cable

PHNOM PENH, 26 May — China's Huawei Marine Networks, a global submarine network provider, said on Monday that it won a bid to build the Malaysia-Cambodia-Thailand (MCT) undersea cable system.

Telekom Malaysia Berhad, Cambodia's Telcotech and Symphony Communication of Thailand are the members of the consortium.

Spanning approximately 1,300 km, the MCT cable system will provide connectivity between Cherating in Malaysia and Rayong in Thailand with a branching unit connecting from the main trunk into Sihanoukville in Cambodia, Huawei said in a statement, adding that access to neighboring counties such as Laos and Myanmar will be achieved through further connection to terrestrial based networks.

"We're honored to partner with our customers and start working on the development and construction of the MCT optical superhighway to deliver state-of-the-art infrastructure which will contribute to the economic growth and development of the Indochina region," said Ma Yanfeng, vice president of Huawei Marine Networks.

The MCT cable system adopts the latest 100G technology with a total design capacity exceeding 30 Tbps. The system will be commissioned and ready for commercial service by the end of 2016.

According to a statement released by Telcotech on Monday, the project, estimated to cost some 70 million US dollars, will be the first time for Cambodia to be connected to the region by a submarine cable.—*Xinhua*

Indonesia to host badminton super series tournament

JAKARTA, 26 May — Indonesia was scheduled to host international badminton tournament of 2015 Indonesia Open Super Series from 2 to 7 June, offering a total reward of 800 thousand US Dollars, a tournament organizer official said here on Monday.

The tournament sanctioned by BWF (Badminton World Federation) would be

participated by around 500 players from 20 countries, Indonesian Badminton Federation (PBSI) Chairman Gita Wirjawan said.

"BWF has assessed that the organizing of Indonesia Open Super Series 2014 was one of the bests in the world. The PBSI was very proud to become the party trusted by the BWF," Gita told a press conference here.—*Xinhua*

Myanmar women golfers to take part in 32nd Malaysian Ladies Amateur Open 2015

YANGON, 26 May—A women's golfers team led by Daw Myint Myint Than, central executive committee of Myanmar Golf Federation, left for Malaysia to take part in the 32nd Malaysian Ladies Amateur Open 2015 at Templer Park Country Club from 26 to 28 May.

The Myanmar team included golfers Yin May Myo, May Oo Khaing and Phu Pwint Yati Khaing.

Myanmar Golfers Federation manages participation of Myanmar golfers in the international golf tournaments for improving skills of players to be able to take part in the 28th SEA Games in Singapore in 2015.—GNLM



Drogba may join Lampard and Gerrard in US

LONDON, 26 May — Didier Drogba will not play for another English team when he leaves Chelsea and may follow Frank Lampard and Steven Gerrard by ending his career in the United States.

The 37-year-old former Ivory Coast forward played his final game for Chelsea when the Premier League champions beat Sunderland 3-1 at Stamford Bridge on Sunday.

"There are some really fantastic teams in the Premier League but my love for this club...I can't share it with another English team," he told the *Daily Telegraph* on Monday.

"Since I put the news I am leaving Chelsea on social media, I was in the dressing-room and I was receiving some calls from teams which is really unusual.

"It showed that maybe I can still bring something to a team. Of course I'm

interested in the USA," added Drogba. "Now I'm going to have a few days and weeks to think about what is good for me next but all I want is to play."

His former Chelsea team mate Lampard, who was on loan with Manchester City this season, is about to start a new career with New York City FC.

Gerrard, who used to patrol England's midfield alongside Lampard, played his last game for Liverpool on Sunday before joining the Los Angeles Galaxy.

Drogba re-signed for Chelsea last year after leaving in 2012 following a highly successful eight-year spell with the London club. The Ivorian has won four Premier League titles with Chelsea, three League Cups, four FA Cups and the Champions League.

Drogba was voted the club's greatest-ever player by supporters in 2012.

Reuters



Chelsea's Didier Drogba celebrates after winning the Barclays Premier League during Barclays Premier League at Stamford Bridge on 24 May, 2015.—REUTERS

Real sack coach Ancelotti after mediocre season

MADRID, 26 May — Real Madrid have sacked coach Carlo Ancelotti after the world's richest club by income failed to win major silverware this season and, according to local media, Napoli's Rafa Benitez is the favourite to succeed him.

"The board of directors have decided this evening to relieve Carlo Ancelotti of his duties," president Florentino Perez told a news conference on Monday.

"It was a very difficult decision ... but we have not come to Real Madrid to take easy decisions but to take decisions that we believe are the best for an institution that is a reference point around the world," added the construction magnate.

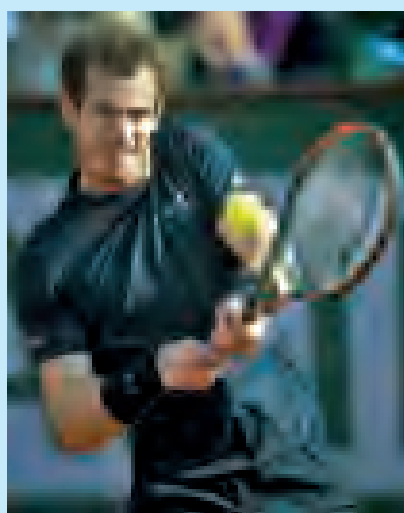
"The demands are huge and we believe it is the right moment to give fresh impetus that will allow us to win

more titles and reach our optimum competitive level in a new phase." The club will announce a successor next week, Perez said, and local media say former Liverpool and Chelsea boss Benitez, who once had a stint as a Real youth team coach, is the frontrunner to replace Ancelotti. Others to have been linked with the job are German Juergen Klopp, who has quit Borussia Dortmund, and former Real player Michel who has had spells running the B team at the Bernabeu and clubs including Getafe and Sevilla. Italian Ancelotti, who had a three-year contract that was due to run until the end of next season, led the club to a record-extending 10th European crown and a King's Cup triumph in his first term in charge in 2013-14.

Reuters

Sharapova and Murray show off title credentials

Andy Murray of Britain competes during the men's singles first round match against Argentina's Facundo Arguello at 2015 French Open tennis tournament at Roland Garros, in Paris, France on 25 May, 2015. Andy Murray won 3-0. XINHUA



PARIS, 26 May — Maria Sharapova got back in the groove at her happiest hunting ground while Andy Murray's growing love of clay blossomed as both posted easy first-round wins at the French Open on Monday.

Defending champion Sharapova was nursing a cold but opened her bid for a third Roland Garros title in four years with a 6-2, 6-4 victory over Estonian Kaia Kanepi on a breezy Court Philippe Chatrier.

Men's third seed Murray then took his winning streak on the red dust to 11 matches by overpowering Argentine lucky loser Facundo Arguello 6-3, 6-3, 6-1, maintaining his unbeaten run since marrying long-term partner Kim Sears.

Sharapova, who was also champion in 2012 and runner-up in 2013 despite an intense dislike for the surface earlier in her illustrious career, produced her usual power tennis to ease through to the second round.

It was not a perfect performance, perhaps due to the cough that was troubling her, but she never looked in danger as she set up a meeting with fellow Russian Vitalia Diatchenko.

Sharapova left to a few boos though after declining an on-court interview.

"Unless I'm really in my coffin I'm going to be out there," she told reporters. "I got sick a week before the tournament, not right before.

"I guess it's a little bit better timing but it's just the way it is. I'm getting over it, hopefully it will pass soon."

The world number two is in the opposite side of the draw to her old nemesis, top seed Serena Williams, and will need to be 100 percent to negotiate her way through to the final.

Former runner-up Samantha Stosur, an easy winner against American Madison Brengle, could await in the third round while eighth seed Carla Suarez Navarro of Spain, tipped as a dark horse for



Maria Sharapova of Russia plays a shot to Kaia Kanepi of Estonia during their women's singles match at the French Open tennis tournament at the Roland Garros stadium in Paris, France, on 25 May, 2015. —REUTERS

the title, is a possible foe in the quarter-finals.

Suarez Navarro beat Monica Niculescu of Romania 6-2, 6-2 but several seeds tumbled on day two in swanky western Paris.

Spain's Feliciano Lopez, the men's 11th seed, became the highest casualty so far, losing 6-3, 7-6 (9), 6-3 to Russian Teymuraz Gabashvili while women's 14th seed Agnieszka Radwanska's slump continued as the former world number two succumbed 6-2, 3-6, 6-1 to Germany's Annika Beck.

American veteran Venus Williams, seeded 15, also lost, although a 7-6 (5), 6-1 defeat by compatriot Sloane Stephens barely registered on the shock

scale.

With nine-times champion Rafa Nadal and top seed Novak Djokovic keeping their powder dry until Tuesday, Murray joined Roger Federer in getting a head start with a confident display on Court Philippe Chatrier.

There were a few early nerves, a double-fault in the opening game giving Arguello a break point that he could not convert and again when he allowed his 137th-ranked opponent to recover from 3-0 down to level at 3-3 in the first set.

Once Murray, twice a French Open semi-finalist, broke in the eighth game though he was untroubled.—Reuters