

President U Thein Sein hosts special advisor to UN Secretary-General

NAY PYI TAW, 27 May — President U Thein Sein received Mr Vijay Nambiar, the United Nations Secretary-General's special advisor on Myanmar, and his delegation at the Presidential Palace in Nay Pyi Taw on Wednesday.

The president said at the meeting that Myanmar is deeply concerned with the issue of boat people but ready to provide humanitarian assistance in accordance with United Nations policy and international obligations.

He added that although the boat people recently rescued at sea by the Myanmar navy were Bangladeshis and not from Myanmar, the country is providing them with emergency relief.

The two sides discussed regional cooperation to fight people smugglers and address the issue of migrants by creating job opportunities, as well as the need to increase international awareness of the real situation in Myanmar.

Also present were Union Ministers Lt-Gen Ko Ko, Lt-Gen Thet Naing Win, U Wun-na Maung Lwin, U Soe Thane, U Aung Min, U Khin Yi, Dr Daw Myat Myat Ohn Khin and officials.— MNA

President U Thein Sein shakes hands with Mr Vijay Nambiar, United Nations Secretary-General's special advisor.

MNA



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SECM to announce underwriter licensees in June

By Aye Min Soe

YANGON, 27 May — The Securities and Exchange Commission of Myanmar will announce successful applicants for underwriters' licenses next month, an official of the Ministry of Finance and Revenue said Wednesday.

The SECM has received 57 service provider applications for the Yangon Stock Exchange, SECM chairman and deputy minister for Finance Dr. Maung Maung Thein said last month. Among the applications, 20 are for underwriters, 30 for consultants or advisers and seven for brokers and dealers.

SECM invited applications for the service licenses — underwriters, dealers, brokers and consultants — setting different levels of capital requirements for each in January.

The Yangon Stock Exchange will debut in October this year.

A license for underwriting requires K15 billion (around \$15 million); for dealing K10 billion; for brokerages K7 billion and for consultancy business K30 million as paid-up capital, according to the deputy minister. An underwriting license, which tops the capital requirements, also allows operation in the other three businesses areas.

The four kinds of service providers are also allowed to form joint ventures with foreign firms in anticipation of speeding up the development of the stock market.

The Yangon Stock Exchange, Myanmar's first, will have the abbreviation YEX. Japan's Tokyo Stock Exchange and Daiwa Institute of Research Ltd signed an agreement with the Myanma Economic Bank to help establish and run the exchange in December, 2014. The market will be run by Yangon Stock Exchange Joint-Venture Company, with a 51 percent stake owned by the Myanma Economic Bank under Myanmar's Finance and Revenue Ministry and the remainder by the Japanese partners.— GNLM



Staff of UNHCR gather addresses of Bengali boat people from Bangladesh

TAUNGPYO, 27 May — Staff from Maungtau 3-mile office from United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), AZG, IOM and WFP collected ad-

resses of Bengali boat people from Bangladesh and provided drinking water and some equipment in Taungpyo Letwe, Maungtau District, on 25 May.

They staff gave talks to 21 youths of under 18 years old and helped them call their families from Bangladesh.

Township IPRD

River Ayeyawady Gallery plans 1-yr anniversary exhibition

By Khaing Thanda Lwin

YANGON, 27 May — River Ayeyawady Art Gallery plans to mark its one-year anniversary with an exhibition in June, founder U Nay Min Latt said Wednesday.

The event is scheduled to open to the public from 27 June to 1 July, with the organizer planning to feature about 100 paintings by local artists in a wide range of styles and media.

Subject matter may include traditional arts and

culture, still life and landscapes, and ethnic nationalities of Myanmar, U Nay Min Latt said.

The gallery has commissioned original contributions from partner artists, with 15-20, including renowned veteran U Win Pe, promising to provide artworks for the coming exhibition, the gallery's founder told *The Global New Light of Myanmar*.

"We also invited unknown artists with the aim

of exploring their artistic skills," he said.

"Three exhibitions, including a collection of watercolour paintings, will be sponsored by the gallery for participating artists who want to exhibit their handiworks in July and August."

The rental for the ground floor of the gallery is K70,000 per day and for ground plus first floor is K100,000, an official from the gallery said.

The River Ayeyawady Gallery is located on 35th Street (middle block) in Kyauktada Township in downtown Yangon. It has hosted more than 100 exhibitions since opening in April 2014.—GNLM

People walk past the former building of Central Bank of Myanmar which is being renovated for the Yangon Stock Exchange (YEX).

PHOTO: AYE MIN SOE

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw suspends commercial tax for all recharges from mobile users until new fiscal year

NAY PYI TAW, 27 May — The Pyidaungsu Hluttaw on Wednesday discussed an important motion concerning a 5% commercial tax for all recharges from mobile users, with members of parliament calling for its suspension until the 2015-2016 fiscal year.

Union Minister for Finance U Win Shein cited

two foreign mobile operators, Telenor Myanmar and Ooredoo Myanmar, as stating that the service of telecommunications is internationally regarded as the same as that of information and technology.

“Their complaint has caused confusion in differentiating the two kinds of services.”

According to the union minister, the government has informed the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw of the rescheduling of the new tax for the new fiscal year in line with the 2015 Union Tax Law.

He said he would accept the parliament’s decision on whether to excuse the application of the new

tax in 2015-2016 fiscal year.

The parliament decided in favour of the suspension of the 5% commercial tax for all recharges from mobile users.

Another motion discussed at the parliament was concerned with inviting tenders for privatization of an old broadcasting

station, which was built on nearly 90 acres of land in Mayangon township in 1958. The current broadcasting station is on Pyay Road near the Hanthawady Roundabouts in Kamayut township.

Mps called for the suspension of the selloff, demanding the requirements of the tender be reexamined and stressing the need to form an investigative

committee to ensure transparency.

Deputy Minister for Information U Pike Htway pledged greater transparency in tendering. According to him, the old station will be turned into a media complex.

The parliament approved the suspension of the tenders for privatization of the old broadcasting station.—MNA

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw

Pyithu Hluttaw

New exams to improve outcomes for students: deputy education minister

NAY PYI TAW, 27 May — Myanmar’s new examinations for fourth and eighth standards will help teachers improve educational outcomes for

students, Deputy Minister for Education Dr Zaw Min Aung told the Pyithu Hluttaw on Wednesday, at the 53rd-day session of the Lower House.

The deputy minister was responding to a question from U Kyin Thein of Bago Constituency about whether the new examinations are an improvement to the education system.

Dr Zaw Min Aung said the new examinations were introduced in order to scrutinize qualification of students and to provide necessary assistance to schools in townships, districts, regions and states with a high rate of “D” grade students in both examinations.

U Sai Uam Hsai Mai of Kehsi constituency asked whether education staff receive travel allowances promptly and without hassle. The deputy minister said the Ministry of Education delivers travel allowance to staff for their trips on duty under the financial rules as quickly as possible. The ministry has installed facsimiles and e-mail services at departments at different levels for smooth processing of paperwork.

MNA

Plan to open Myanmar Theravada Buddhist Centre (Moscow) on 1 July

NAY PYI TAW, 27 May — The merit sharing ceremony for Myanmar Theravada Buddhist Centre (Moscow) will be held at the centre in Moscow in Russia on 1 July.

Sitagu Sayadaw Dr Ashin Nanissara, Dhammaduta Sayadaw Dr Ashin Chekinda, families of Defence Services (Army, Navy and Air) led by the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services and wife, Myanmar Ambassador U Tin Yu and wife and Myanmar trainees made donations for the centre.

The merit sharing ceremony will be attended by eight members of the Sangha led by the Sitagu Sayadaw, one each from the US, England and Ger-

many, one nun from Singapore, Theravada Buddhist monks from Russia and members of the Sangha from Mahayana Buddhist organizations and laypersons.

Well-wishers may donate USD 50 each for 200 trust funds, USD 20,000 for a 20x50-foot reception building and USD 10,000 for water pipelines and septic tank.

Well-wishers may call U Hsan Min Nating (PyinOoLwin) on 09-30125171, U Kyaw Zaw Ye (Russia) on 79099422796, Kyawzawye85@gmail.com, and Kyaw Myat Thu (Russia) on 79299693184 and other trainees.

MNA

New Era Union Party, United Kayin National Democratic Party apply for registration as political parties

NAY PYI TAW, 27 May — The Union Election Commission has been scrutinizing and passing the applications for registration as political parties.

New Era Union Party and United Kayin National Democratic Party applied for registration as political parties to the UEC on Wednesday.—MNA

Information for Public Remonstrance

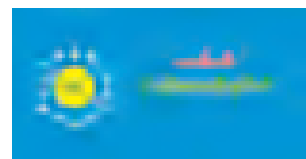
1. New Era Union Party, headquartered at No 647 on Merchant Street in Ward 3, Pabedan Township, Yangon Region, has submitted its application for the registration as a political party to the Union Election Commission on 27 May, 2015, in accord with Section 5 of the Political Parties Registration Law, along with the following party’s name, flag and emblem.

2. It is hereby announced that those who want to remonstrate with the UEC about the party’s name, flag and emblem they may submit a complaint along with the strong evidences within seven days starting from issuance of this announcement in line with the Section 14 (d) of the Political Parties Registration Rules.

Flag of New Era Union Party



Emblem of New Era Union Party



Union Election Commission

Information for Public Remonstrance

1. United Kayin National Democratic Party, headquartered on Bogyoke Road in Yadanadipa Ward 9 in Hpa-an, Kayin State, has submitted its application for the registration as a political party to the Union Election Commission on 27 May, 2015, in accord with Section 5 of the Political Parties Registration Law, along with the following party’s name, flag and emblem.

2. It is hereby announced that those who want to remonstrate with the UEC about the party’s name, flag and emblem they may submit a complaint along with the strong evidences within seven days starting from issuance of this announcement in line with the Section 14 (d) of the Political Parties Registration Rules.

Flag of United Kayin National Democratic Party



Emblem of United Kayin National Democratic Party



Union Election Commission

President U Thein Sein sends messages of felicitations to Azerbaijan, Nepal

NAY PYI TAW, 28 May—U Thein Sein, President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, has sent messages of felicitations to His Excellency Mr Ilham Aliyev, President of the Republic of Azerbaijan and His Excellency Mr Artur Rasizade, Prime Minister of the Republic of Azerbaijan, on the occasion of the National Day of the Republic of Azerbaijan, which falls on 28 May 2015, and His Excellency Dr Ram Baran Yadav, President of Nepal and His Excellency Mr Sushil Koirala, Prime Minister of Nepal, on the occasion of the National Day of Nepal, which falls on 28 May 2015.—MNA

China.com website launched



Union Minister U Yet Htut speaking at the launch of China.com website.

MNA

Union Attorney-General meets French Ambassador for Human Rights

NAY PYI TAW, 27 May—Attorney-General of the Union Dr Tun Shin Wednesday received a delegation led by Mrs Patriziana Sparacino-Thiellay, French Ambassador for Human Rights, at the Office of the Attorney-General of the Union.

They discussed draft status of four marriage and religious bills in Myanmar, arrangements for signing peace agreement, economic development and investment laws.—MNA

YANGON, 27 May—Union Minister for Information U Yet Htut, together with Chinese Ambassador Mr Yang Houlan, Chairman of China-Myanmar Friendship Association Mr Geng Zhiguan and the Chairman of Global CAMG International Media Group, attended the launching of China.com website in Myanmar at Novotel Hotel on Pyay Road, here, Wednesday.

The union minister, the Chinese ambassador and the chairman of Global CAMG International Media Group extended greetings.

The website posts news, movies, Today China, E magazine, Made In China and health sectors for enabling Myanmar people to know China and global issues in Myanmar language. People may enjoy not only news but TV series in Myanmar language through computer and mobile phones.

MNA



People marching through streets in Yangon protesting against foreign media for their unfair blame on Myanmar for boat people crisis.

Ko Ko ZAW

ca as Myanmar nationals.

Shouting slogans and holding placards, more than 800 people marched through the streets of Yangon after seeking permission for the protest from the authorities.

During the rally, they protested against foreign media, accusing them of unfairly putting blame on Myanmar for the boat people crisis and trying to portray the boat people as coming from Myanmar.

Ko Ko ZAW

Oscar winner Whitaker visits Myanmar as part of UNESCO ambassadorship

By Ye Myint

YANGON, 27 March—Oscar-winning actor and UNESCO ambassador Forest Whitaker on Wednesday visited the Yangon office of a non-governmental organization promoting peaceful co-existence between ethnic communities.

The American movie star, on his first trip to Myanmar, visited the Centre for Diversity & National Harmony to learn about and discuss its programs, CDNH director Dr Kyaw Yin Hlaing said.

Given Mr Whitaker's international profile, his visit to the CDNH and Myanmar could raise public awareness of the need for greater tolerance in society, as well as drawing local and international

attention to efforts toward peace and reconciliation in the country, Dr Kyaw Yin Hlaing said.

With a resume spanning dozens of films as an actor, director and producer, Mr Whitaker won a best actor Academy Award for his portrayal of Ugandan dictator Idi Amin in 2006's Last King of Scotland.

The actor and peace activist was named a UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador for Peace and Reconciliation in 2011. Since then, he has worked with UNESCO to support or

develop initiatives that empower youths and keep them from entering or remaining in cycles of violence.

During his visit to the CDNH, the Mr Whitaker heard about Myanmar's ongoing peace process and works carried out in Rakhine State for mitigation of violence there, the CDNH director said.

The CDNH was established in the wake of communal violence in Myanmar's Rakhine State in 2012 and aims to promote harmony between communities.

GNLM



Oscar-winning actor and peace activist Forest Whitaker is welcomed by Dr Kyaw Yin Hlaing, Director of the Centre for Diversity & National Harmony, in Yangon on Wednesday.—PHOTO: YE MYINT

Kalay fire damage bill already surpasses 2014 total

KALAY, 27 May — As of May, Kalay in Sagaing Region has recorded five cases of fire this year, with the damage bill already higher than last year's total, according to the Fire Services Department.

Local people suffered losses worth roughly K500,000 in four fires in 2014. This year, five separate fires have caused damage in excess of K1.5 million. "Some vendors sell fuel along roadsides in Kalay and do not abide by the rules of the Fire Services Department," a local resident said. "They do not keep fire extinguishers at the shops. In fact, the authorities should not allow any fuel station in downtown Kalay."

Staff Officer U Phone



Er of Kalay District FSD said, "Most of the outbreaks of fire were based on negligent acts of users. Moreover, they have made poor attempts at following the

regulations of the Fire Services Department."

Fire stations in Kalay Township have received 15 fire trucks to bolster firefighting capacity. Personnel

of FSD and firefighters are working hard in disseminating knowledge about fire prevention measures to local residents.

Shin Nay Min

Taninthayi Region Police Force selects model officers



DAWEI, 27 May — Taninthayi Region Police Force held the police code of conduct examination for selection of model officers

at its headquarters in Dawei, Taninthayi Region, recently.

Eleven shortlisted candidates took the

examination.

According to the Taninthayi Region Police Force, a plan is under way to select the police of the

year based on performance in the field and in the examination.

The police sat the written examination at Ye Zarni Hall and physical test at the region sports ground, prior to interviews at police headquarters.

Region IPRD

New school buildings under construction in Seikpyu Tsp

SEIKPYU, 27 May — New school buildings are under construction in Seikpyu Township, Magway Region, as part of the government's strategy to upgrade the education sector

across the nation.

Mya Khaing Mar Company was assigned by local authorities to construct a 90-foot-long, 30-foot-wide one-storey concrete building at the basic education school

in Letse Village. Magway Region Hluttaw allotted funding to improve the school buildings and repair damage where necessary in its fiscal 2014-15 budget.

Township IPRD

Villagers receive funds through Emerald Green Project



NAY PYI TAW, 27 May — The Department of Rural Development held a ceremony to provide funds for implementation of the Emerald Green Project,

aimed at eliminating rural poverty, in Thagala Village, Pobbathiri Township, on Tuesday.

Staff officer of the department U Than Win

Soe gave a speech, while chairman of the project supervisory committee U Tin Shwe delivered K160,000 each to 213 villagers participating in the project.

The villagers are required to spend the amount on livestock breeding, agriculture, fishery and small-scale industries.

Shwe Ye Yint



Basic education students begin enrolment in Natogyi Tsp

NATOGYI, 27 May — Basic education schools launched enrolment for the 2015-16 academic year in Natogyi Township, Mandalay Region, on 25 May.

A total of 161 basic

education schools started admission of students free of charge, according to the Township Education Office.

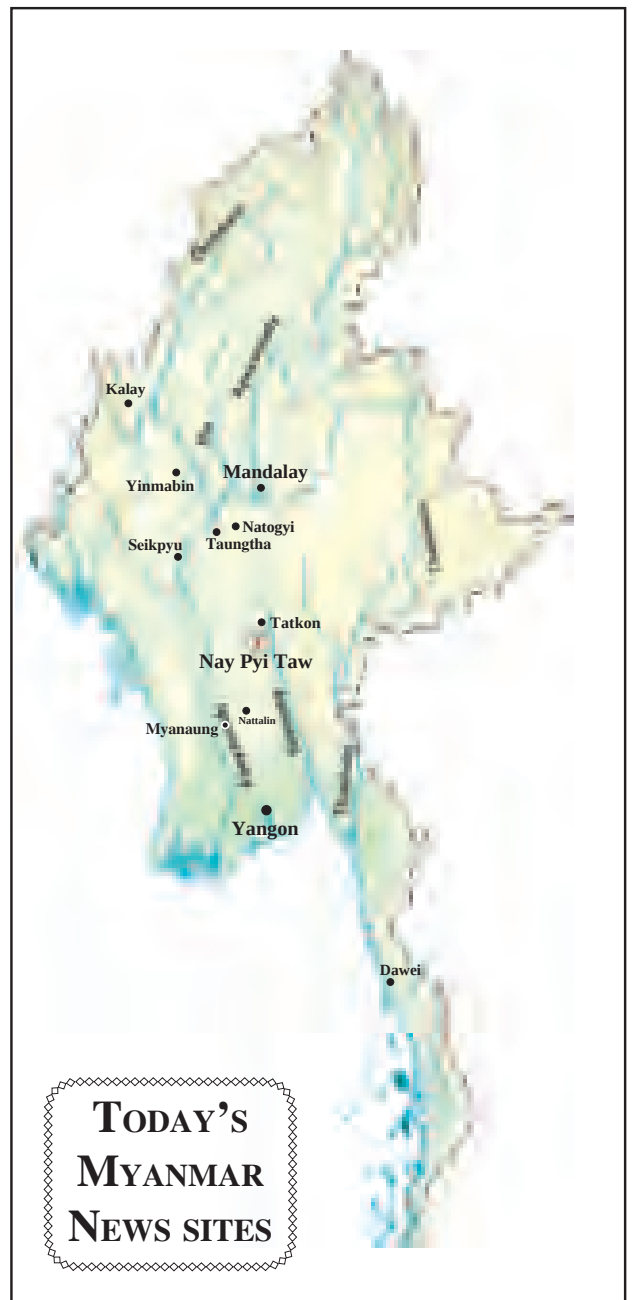
"We have delivered notebooks and school text-

books to the students. This year, the Ministry of Education gives one uniform each to students at the primary level," headmaster U Win Maung Myint of Natogyi Basic Education High

School said.

About 30,000 students are pursuing basic education in Natogyi Township this year.

Khin Zar Mon Myint (Law)



LOCAL NEWS

Police lecture residents on crime reduction, traffic safety



MANDALAY, 27 May — No. 9 police station in Mahlaingmye Township organized an educational talk on crime reduction at the Dhammayon on 36th Street in the township on 26 May.

Police Captain Kyi Soe of the station spoke of the

need for local residents to cooperate with the police force to reduce crime, while also explaining operations against gambling and people smuggling.

Police Captain Than Htut of No 18 Anti-Drug Squad spoke about oper-

ations targeting narcotic drugs and stimulant tablets in Mandalay Region while IP Win Ko Ko of No 55 traffic police squad explained prevention of traffic accidents and the need to abide by road rules.

Thiha Ko Ko (Mandalay)

Free clinic provides healthcare in Myanaung Tsp

MYANAUNG, 27 May — A free clinic in Myanaung, Ayeyawady Region, provided health care services to rural people at Basic Education Primary School in Shadaw Village, on 26 May.

Dr Phone Pyae Naing, Head of Township

Traditional Medicine Department Daw Than Than Swe and health staff treated 230 local people, with the assistance of Deputy Township Administrator U Aung Win and local authorities.

Under the leadership of Township Administra-

tor U Min Min Tun, the free clinic has been running its tasks since May 2013 at Myoshwe monastery in Myanaung every Saturday.

Local residents donate cash to the fund of the clinic for its longevity.

Win Bo (Township IPRD)



Water supply eases shortage in rural areas

TAUNGTHA, 27 May — Local residents in Taungtha Township, Mandalay Region, are facing water shortages stemming from this summer's extremely hot and dry weather conditions.

With reservoirs running dry, chairman of the Township Management Committee U Aung Kyaw Nyunt organized supplies of drinking water for the villages.

In the morning of 26 May, Township Fire Services Department and Department of Rural Development distributed 2,000 gallons of water to Minhla, Mohnaungkhin, Pintaw, Thasi, East Magyibin and Khatetkon villages with the

assistance of township authorities and departmental officials.

As of 10 April, Town-

ship FSD, the Township Development Affairs Committee and DRD have been supplying potable water to

local residents via four water bowsters.

Kyaw Myo Naing (Taungtha)



Local people crowd water bowser to take drinking water for their families in rural areas of Taungtha Township.



While undertaking School Enrolment Week activities for 2015-16 academic year, basic education schools admit students in Dawei, Taninthayi Region, from 25 to 31 May. Photo shows teachers accept admission forms from students at Basic Education High School No 1 in Dawei on 26 May.—Po SHWE THUN (DAWEI)

Bullock-cart and equestrian contests mark umbrella-hoisting at Jade Pagoda



MANDALAY, 27 May — To commemorate the hoisting of a golden umbrella atop Wairawsana Jade Pagoda, bullock-cart and equestrian contests are being held at a nearby field in Hsinywa Myin-hmu village, Amarapura Township, Mandalay, until 5 June.

At the opening of the contests, jointly organized by the Myanmar Equestrian Federation and Mandalay Region Sports and Physical Education

Department, pagoda supporter and President of the Asian Chinlone Federation U Soe Naing said the event aimed to promote Myanmar's traditional sports to tourists.

A total of 130 pairs of oxen and more than 20 horses are involved in the contests. The bullock-cart contest includes senior and junior classes, with the overall first prizewinner set to receive K2.2 million.—*Thiha Ko Ko (Mandalay)*

Modi urges farmers to boost output, skirts issue of rural distress

NEW DELHI, 27 May — Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday urged farmers to boost lentils and oilseeds output to cut expensive imports but skirted the issue of rural distress that has turned peasants against his one-year-old government.

There has been an increase in suicides by farmers after untimely rains and hailstorms damaged crops and weak prices hit farm income in the countryside, home to 70 percent of Indians. “We spend a lot of money to import lentils and (edible) oils and we must resolve to raise production so that we become self-sufficient in the next 10 years,” Modi said after launching a TV channel for farmers.

India, among the world’s leading producers of grain, cotton and sugar, imports edible oils and lentils at an annual cost of

about \$10 billion and \$2 billion respectively. Vegetable oils are its No 3 import item after crude oil and gold. Modi, who is trying to boost investment in industry that would create new jobs outside agriculture, said farmers should increase productivity so that they can prosper even as the average size of farms shrinks due to a growing population.

“Our average farm productivity comes to two tonnes per hectare against the global average of three tonnes a hectare and we must strive to reach the global level,” he advised.

India’s near 250 million tonnes of grain output pales in comparison with rival China, which produces nearly 600 million tonnes despite having a lower farm area and smaller average land holdings. To overcome the problem, Modi

has asked scientists to work closely with farmers to introduce high-yielding crop varieties. India is also flirting with the idea of adopting genetically modified (GM) technology to raise productivity. Scientists have already completed final trials of a GM variety of mustard and will submit a report to the government in a month.

Modi’s clarion call cut little ice with farmers.

“It’s a pity Modi asks us to raise production and productivity but refuses to address the issue of agrarian distress and farmers’ suicides,” said Dharmendra Kumar, a farmer from Uttar Pradesh.

“Please remind Modi about his election promise of paying 50 percent profit over farmers’ cost of cultivation,” Kumar said by telephone when told about Modi’s speech.—Reuters

Japan to expand support to Myanmar on postal services

TOKYO, 27 May — Japan agreed on Tuesday to help Myanmar launch new postal services in the hope of making its postal system more convenient for users.

Based on a memorandum signed on Tuesday, Japan will support Myanmar in introducing money transfer services at its post offices and other services using information-communication technology, officials of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications said.

The two countries signed the first memorandum on postal business in April last year, enabling Japan to start offering its technical expertise to Myanmar by sending experts from Japan Post Co.

The move has helped Myanmar improve over-the-counter services at its post offices and shorten the



Sanae Takaichi (R), Japan’s internal affairs and communications minister, shakes hands with Myat Hein, Myanmar’s communications and information technology minister, in Tokyo on 26 May, 2015.

KYODO NEWS

period of postal delivery, according to the ministry.

The internal affairs and communications minister, Sanae Takaichi, said

she expects the postal-related business in Myanmar to provide “a lot of business chances” to Japanese companies.—Kyodo News

Indonesian court delays appeal hearing of French death row convict

JAKARTA, 27 May — An Indonesian court has fixed 3 June to hear a last-ditch appeal by a French drug trafficker on death row, after a verdict expected this week was delayed by the absence of the presiding judge, a judge said.

Serge Atlaoui had been due to face the firing squad with other convicts last month, but won a last-minute reprieve for the completion of his legal appeals.

France’s foreign minister has warned Indonesia it would face repercussions if the Southeast Asian nation went ahead with his execution.

Indonesia has harsh penalties for drug trafficking and resumed executions in 2013 after a

five-year lull.

President Joko Widodo has rejected clemency pleas from foreign nationals who are among a group of around 60 drug convicts scheduled for execution. Fourteen have been executed this year.

The Jakarta administrative court is reviewing Atlaoui’s challenge against the president’s refusal of clemency. “As our presiding judge is in training, the court hearing could not take place and we postponed to next week,” Judge Indaryadi said in a court session on Tuesday.

The hearing has been rescheduled for 3 June and a verdict is expected soon after. The Attorney General’s Office has



Indonesian judge Ujang Abdullah (C) speaks with the lawyer of French drug trafficker Serge Atlaoui and the government prosecutors during a hearing at the administrative court in Jakarta, Indonesia on 13 May, 2015.—REUTERS

said Atlaoui’s current legal challenge would be his last appeal. Atlaoui was sentenced to death for his involvement in an ecstasy

factory in Jakarta that was capable of producing 100 kg (220 lb) of the illegal pills every week.

Reuters

Thailand revokes passports of ousted former PM Thaksin

BANGKOK, 27 May — Thailand has revoked two passports belonging to ousted former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra after he gave an interview that posed a risk to national security and the country’s reputation, the foreign ministry said on Wednesday.

Thaksin, who lives abroad to avoid a jail sentence handed down for graft in 2008, was ousted in a 2006 coup but remains a major influence over Thai politics.

The country has been divided for a decade between the former telecommunications tycoon, and his legions of supporters from the poor countryside, and the Bangkok-based elite which sees him as a threat to the old royalist-military establishment.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs said in a statement an interview Thaksin recently gave was being investigated.

It gave no details of the interview but last week

Thaksin spoke to South Korean media about who he thought was behind a military coup last year in which a government loyal to him and led by his sister, former premier Yingluck Shinawatra, was ousted.

“The content of what Thaksin Shinawatra said in an interview affects national security and the reputation and honour of Thailand,” the ministry said in its statement.

It referred to three sections of the criminal code,

including one that relates to insulting the monarchy, and the Computer Crimes Act.

The ministry gave the numbers of two passports held by Thaksin which it said were revoked.

He was stripped of his passport in 2009 but his sister’s government returned it in 2011. Thaksin, who has in the past said he carries a Montenegro passport, is based in Dubai but travels frequently in Asia and Europe.—Reuters

Singapore Airlines jet flying to Shanghai lost power in both engines

SINGAPORE, 27 May — A Singapore Airlines plane flying from Singapore to Shanghai suffered a temporary loss of power in both engines during bad weather last Saturday, the airline said on Wednesday.

The Airbus A330-300 plane, which was carrying 182 passengers and 12 crew, “encountered bad weather at 39,000 feet about three-and-a-half hours after departure,” it said in a statement. “Both engines experienced

a temporary loss of power,” it said. The pilots “followed operational procedures to restore normal operation of the engines” and the flight, SQ836, continued its journey and arrived at its destination. “The engines were thoroughly inspected and tested upon arrival in Shanghai with no anomalies detected.” The airline said it is “reviewing the incident” with Rolls-Royce, the maker of the engines, and Airbus. — Kyodo News

Cambodia rescues another 59 trafficked labourers from Thai fishing vessels in Indonesia

PHNOM PENH, 27 May — Cambodia has saved another 59 Cambodian people, who were trafficked to work as illegal fishermen in Indonesia, Koy Kuong, spokesman for the Cambodian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, said on Wednesday.

“With the cooperation from the Indonesian authorities, the Cambodian Embassy (to Indonesia) has rescued 21 Cambodian labourers from Thai fishing vessels in Ambon Island and 38 others from Thai fishing boats in Benjina Island in Indonesia,” he said in a news statement.

The spokesman said the first group will return to Cambodia later this week, as the second one will arrive in the first week of next month. Early this month, a group of 59 Cambodian trafficked labourers was also rescued from fishing vessels in Indonesia and returned home on 11 May.

Trafficked fishermen are frequently forced to work long hours while being physically and psychologically abused. They are often unpaid and forced to serve on voyages for months or even years.

Xinhua

S Korea, US, Japan agree to ramp up pressure on N Korea

SEOUL, 27 May — Top negotiators of the United States, Japan, and South Korea — three of six countries involved in stalled talks aimed at ending North Korea's nuclear programme — agreed on Wednesday to increase “pressures and sanctions” on North Korea to dissuade the North from military provocations.

“We agreed on the importance of enhancing pressures and sanctions on North Korea even as we keep all diplomatic options on the table and open,” Sung Kim, US special representative for North Korea policy, told journalists after the trilateral meeting with his counterparts from South Korea and Japan.

Kim also said the three governments also agreed to work with the international community to address the “grave” human rights situation in North Korea.

Junichi Ihara, director general of the Japanese Foreign Ministry's Asian



Top negotiators of Japan, South Korea and the United States — (from L to R) Junichi Ihara, Hwang Joon kook and Sung Kim — shake hands in Seoul on 27 May, 2015 before their talks on North Korea. The three countries are among the six parties involved in stalled talks aimed at ending the North's nuclear programme.

KYODO NEWS

and Oceanian Affairs Bureau, told reporters they held “earnest discussions” on how to deal with nuclear and missile-related devel-

opments in North Korea and views “converged on many points.”

As for steps to be taken against North Korea, South

Korea's chief delegate Hwang Joon-kook, special representative for Korean Peninsula peace and security affairs, said, “Discus-

sions are under way (on) what concrete steps may be taken in the context of which kind of steps will be effective.”

Kim and Hwang are scheduled to visit China on Thursday for similar consultations with Wu Da-wei, China's chief nuclear envoy. Kim stressed the importance of maintaining “five-party unity” along with Russia and China in dealing with the North Korea issue.

The six-party talks, which also involve those two countries as well as North Korea, have been deadlocked since late 2008.

The trilateral talks came at a time of heightened tensions on the Korean Peninsula.

North Korea's National Defence Commission announced in a statement issued on 20 May that the country has succeeded in miniaturizing nuclear warheads, saying its “nuclear striking means have en-

tered the stage of producing smaller nukes and diversifying them.”

It's 9 May announcement that it had succeeded in test-firing of a submarine-launched ballistic missile triggered security concerns in South Korea that the North could deploy SL-BMs in a year or two after completing the last stages of development.

In addition to the fresh show of force, South Korea's state intelligence agency presented a report to parliament recently on North Korean leader Kim Jong Un's reported reign of terror.

The National Intelligence Service, in a closed-door report to parliament, said North Korea's Defence Minister Hyong Yong Chol was executed for treason by anti-aircraft gunfire around 30 April and more than 70 senior officials have been killed since he took power in December 2011.

Kyodo News

G7 finance chiefs meet with growth problem to fix

DRESDEN, (Germany), 27 May — Little more than a gentlemen's club in recent years, G7 finance ministers and central bankers have their work cut out this week to revive stuttering global growth and defuse tensions over China's claims to economic power.

Topping the agenda for the finance chiefs from the Group of Seven industrial nations is how to keep a faltering global recovery on track as the threat of a Greek default, rising oil prices and bond market turmoil fuel investor nervousness.

The United States is likely to use the talks, beginning late on Wednesday and running through to Friday, as an opportunity to press Europe to reach a funding-for-reforms deal with Greece, an official close to the discussions said. “I would expect the Americans to put pressure on the Europeans in Dresden about Greece,” the official said. “The Americans are stressing the geopolitical risks and telling us we have to find a solution, that we cannot really put the euro area and Europe at risk because of Greece.”

Hosts Germany have given the meeting in Dresden the heading “Towards a Dynamic Global Econo-

my”, but they and officials from the United States, Japan, Canada, France, Italy and Britain must also grapple with the rise of a power not even present: China.

German Finance Minister Wolfgang Schauble told *Reuters* last week that officials could talk informally at the meeting about the increased importance of the Chinese yuan.

The inclusion of the yuan in the International Monetary Fund's currency basket would mark another stage in China's rise as a global economic player, requiring the United States to accept a dilution of its power in international finance.

Having ignored US urgings not to sign up to a China-led development bank, European G7 members have signalled an openness to add the yuan this year to the basket of currencies makes up the IMF's Special Drawing Rights (SDR) — a virtual currency that defines the value of IMF reserves, used for lending to countries in financial difficulty.

The United States and Japan are again more cautious. Including the yuan in the basket would increase China's influence at the IMF — an institution Washington was instrumen-

tal in designing and through which it has projected ‘soft power’ for the last 70 years.

The yuan, also known as the renminbi, is already the world's fifth most-used trade currency. Beijing has made strides this year in introducing the infrastructure needed to float it freely on global capital markets.

A senior US Treasury official said on Tuesday China's currency liberalisation plans were welcome and would be needed before the yuan was able to join the IMF currency basket.

While the Europeans are vying for commercial advantage in the world's second biggest economy, Washington sees Beijing also as a strategic challenger that may not feel bound by rules written by the West. Greece, which is scrambling to strike a deal with its international lenders before an IMF loan falls due on 5 June, poses a more pressing problem.

A senior US Treasury official said Washington would emphasise the need to find a pragmatic solution. Failure could have unpredictable consequences for the European and even global economies, said the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

Reuters

Iran nuclear deal unlikely by 30 June — French envoy



Gerard Araud addresses the Security Council during a meeting about the situation in the Middle East, including Palestine, at United Nations headquarters in New York on 22 July, 2014.—REUTERS

WASHINGTON, 27 May — An Iran nuclear deal is not likely by 30 June because technical details will remain to be defined and Iran will not get sanctions relief before the end of the year in the best of cases, western ambassadors said on Tuesday.

Six major powers are seeking to negotiate an agreement under which Iran would limit its nuclear programme in exchange for the easing of economic sanctions that have crippled its economy.

Envoys to Washington from Britain, France and Germany, three of the P5+1 group that also includes China, Russia and the United States, sketched out their expectations for the end game as a self-imposed 30 June deadline approaches.

“It's very likely that we won't have an agreement before the end of June or even (right) after,” French ambassador Gerard Araud said in an appearance at the Atlantic Council think tank.

The Iranians want to force the six powers' ministers to decide the issues, rather than lower-level officials, Araud

said, saying he expected some melodrama toward the end with late nights and doors slammed as both sides jockey for a deal.

“Even if we get the best deal ... afterwards, you will have to translate it into the technical annexes, so it may be ... we could have a sort of fuzzy end to the negotiation,” he said.

Speaking after the event, Araud said it could take a few weeks of July to complete the technical annexes envisaged under an agreement, if one can be reached.

Iran and the P5+1 reached a framework agreement on 2 April, but several issues remain unresolved, including the pace of sanctions relief and the monitoring and verification measures to ensure Iran does not pursue a clandestine nuclear programme.

Iranian officials say they must receive sanctions relief immediately upon reaching an agreement.

Western officials argue that sanctions will be eased gradually and only after Iran has taken steps to limit its nuclear programme.

“Iran needs some time to start the implementation of this agreement, so in the best case sanctions relief would not happen before the end of this year,” German ambassador Peter Wittig said.

Peter Westmacott, Britain's ambassador, said it would be hard to tighten sanctions if no deal is struck, particularly if the major powers are blamed for the failure.

“My sense is that we are probably not far away from the high-water mark of international sanctions against the Iranian economy,” he said.

Reuters



Thursday, 28 May, 2015

There is no such thing as an unproductive life

By Kyaw Thura

LIFE is not like in movies. Despite this, many people seem to take life for granted, living as if in a daydream. As Bill Gates put it simply, it is one thing to be born poor, but it is quite another to die poor.

People tend to abandon themselves to their fate when they encounter a number of difficulties. They are nonetheless born with potential to be tapped. Some are able to act on their own initiative, while others need someone to motivate them to action by sharpening their aptitude. Sadly, the number of unfortunate people is not small. Such people in need can contribute a lot to their community unless their potential remains unrealised.

Philosophically, a purposeful life is to make best use of one's talent and ability. In this respect, a prime example is the success story of Singapore over several decades under the dynamic leadership of Lee Kuan Yew, who transformed the country from a small port city into a wealthy global

hub. Lee convinced his people that "man" is the greatest resource of all in improving the socio-economic status of a country. It is therefore important for the government to develop a framework for human talent to flourish. Singapore is living proof that building capacity for unfortunate people is in deed a change for the better.

Write for us

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

Myanmar, Bulgaria to exchange forest management

NAY PYI TAW, 27 May—Union Minister for Environmental Conservation and Forestry U Win Tun received Bulgarian Ambassador Mr Evgueni Stefanov Stoychev at the ministry, here, Wednesday to hold talks on technical exchange of forest management between Bulgaria and Myanmar.

They also discussed

the ministry's policy, law and rules for management of forests, conservation of bio-diversity, preparations for designating Inlay Lake as a human and bio society, drafting rules and standards for environment impact assessment, emergence of national land utilization law and national land resources law, investment in wood-based indus-

tries and cooperation in mapping technology.

MNA

Union Minister for Environmental Conservation and Forestry U Win Tun holds talks with Bulgarian Ambassador Mr Evgueni Stefanov Stoychev.—MNA



Japan grants US\$116,644 for school in Kawa Township, Bago Region

YANGON, 27 May—The Japanese Government, under its Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects (GGP) Scheme, has granted US\$116,644 for a humanitarian assistance program entitled "The Project for Construction of Moe Ganein Basic Education Branch Middle

School in Kawa Township, Bago Region."

The handover and opening ceremony of the school took place in Moe Ganein Village, Kawa Township, Bago Region on 26 May 2015. Mr. Kazuyoshi SUZUKI, Second Secretary of the Embassy of Japan, U Htay Win,

Bago Region Director for Education Department, U Ye Lwin, Bago District Education Officer, Daw Khin Mar Yee, Kawa Township Education Officer, U Soe Than, Kawa Township Administrator, governmental officials, Committee Chairman, committee members of the construction project,

and local residents attended the ceremony.

The two school buildings of Moe Ganein Basic Education Branch Middle School could not fulfill the classroom needs of the increasing students. Due to insufficient number of classrooms, the students had to study in very congested classrooms. Under such circumstances, the Japanese Government, under its GGP scheme, provided funding for construction of a two-storey R.C.C building with 6 classrooms and full furniture. The project will benefit 613 students of the school.

GNLM

Union Electric Power minister meets Vice Administrator of NEA, Yunnan Province governor

NAY PYI TAW, 27 May—Union Minister for Electric Power U Khin Maung Soe on his trip to China held a meeting with Mr. Liu Qi, Vice Administrator, Chinese National Energy Administration (NEA), on progress of electric power projects being implemented by the two countries, on 22 May.

They agreed on discussions on implementation of the projects in Myanmar with investment of China without environmental and social impacts. They also

exchanged views on difficulties in technology and investment for the projects.

Deputy Minister U Maw Tha Htwe and Mr Lui Qi signed the minutes of the second China-Myanmar electric power cooperation commission meeting.

On 25 May, the union minister discussed further cooperation in border trade promotion and economic development of Myanmar and China with Yunnan Province governor Mr Chen Hao in Kunming.

MNA



Mr. Kazuyoshi SUZUKI, Second Secretary of the Embassy of Japan, poses for documentary photo with students.

Industrial Bank of Korea to donate computers, school equipment to monasteries

YANGON, 27 May—A total of 66 employees from Industrial Bank of Korea (IBK) plan to donate 30 sets of computer, 50 sets of desks and chairs, and school remodeling paint worth US\$ 9,150 to Aungzayarmin Monastery, near Shwepyitha Bridge, Hline-

thaya Township, and US\$ 137,000 to a child development centre, community learning centre, library, summer child development training, treatment and support of children affected by AIDS, excursion at Shwechinthae monastery in Seikkhunsu Ward,

Shwebo, Sagaing Region, from 2 to 4 June.

Two donations will amount to USD 146,150 in total. In 2014, IBK donated USD 120,000 to construct a school building at Kantetkon monastic education school in Mandalay.

GNLM

ARTICLE

Amphibian discovery illuminates Myanmar's "hidden biodiversity"

By Tim Johnson

TAUNGGYI, Myanmar, May 27 Kyodo - A team of Japanese and Chinese biologists has discovered a new species of crocodile newt from Myanmar, a forerunner of a wave of new amphibian species awaiting description as the relatively unexplored country's "hidden biodiversity" is gradually revealed by science.

Conservationists, however, warn that the new species' only known populations in and around Taunggyi, the capital of Shan State in eastern Myanmar, are threatened by habitat loss, degradation and fragmentation, as well as commercial exploitation.

Describing their find in the latest issue of a Thai scholarly journal, the Natural History Bulletin of the Siam Society, the taxonomists from Kyoto University and the Kunming Institute of Zoology named the new species "Tylototriton shanorum," dedicating its scientific name to the people of Shan State.

"Effective management for the protection of this new narrow-ranged species must be taken into action urgently," they advised, underscoring the need for timely conservation measures for the Shan Crocodile Newt.

Some 20 species of crocodile newts—also known as "knobby newts" due to two rows of blunt protrusions that run down their back—are found in Myanmar, China, Vietnam, Laos, Thailand, Nepal, India and Bhutan. More than half of these medium to large-sized newts have been identified only in the last decade and most are legally protected -- at least on paper.

In Taunggyi, which is set spectacularly on a mountain ridge at an altitude of 1,436 meters, the newts, which are mostly terrestrial, live under rocks, logs, and debris in the vicinity of permanent or temporary shallow ponds, ditches and marshes to which they migrate during the rainy season for breeding.

According to Pe Than Kyaw, a Taunggyi University biology professor who

has studied the newts' population dynamics and reproduction, they were long thought to be the more wide-ranging Himalayan Crocodile Newt, a closely related species found in neighboring countries and commonly encountered in the international pet trade.

He hoped the identification of the Shan Crocodile Newt as a genetically distinct species will stimulate local research into its life cycle and habitat requirements, while he stressed the need for field studies to determine its distribution and come up with effective conservation measures.

However, considering the fast pace of decline in the extent and quality of newt and other wildlife habitats in the growing township of some 400,000 people, the clock may be ticking for these possibly rare tailed amphibians.

Some once-pristine spots where locals recalled finding newts in their youth were found littered with plastic bags and other rubbish, while their main breeding ponds on the campus of Taunggyi University, despite being in an area set aside as a "newt preserve," may soon dry out completely as nearby construction of a university building is poised to cut off the inflow of water in the absence of mitigation measures.

Other factors in the newts' decline include being run over by vehicles during their seasonal migrations to and from breeding ponds, as well as loss of shady, moist places to hide, according to Pe Than Kyaw.

"Their populations have been decreasing year by year," he lamented.

Like other newts in the enigmatic Asian genus *Tylototriton*, the new species, though not as colorfully appealing as some, is also menaced by overharvesting for the international pet trade.

"Many *Tylototriton* kept in Europe seem to be *Tylototriton shanorum*, some of which might be captive-bred," said Kyoto University associate professor Kanto Nishikawa, the lead author of the new species description paper, adding that ones cap-



This photo shows a local resident of Taunggyi, the capital of Shan State, examining a Shan Crocodile Newt. The species discovered by a team of Japanese and Chinese scientists is increasingly under threat from habitat loss and collection for use in Chinese traditional medicine. Photo taken on Dec. 13 in Taunggyi. (Kyodo)

tive-bred ones are sometimes found in Japanese pet shops as well.

Indeed, another source said many, if not most, crocodile newts imported into Europe in the 1980s and 1990s and sold as the Himalayan Crocodile Newt may well have been the newly described species.

Commercial trade in wild newts "should be stopped from the viewpoint of conservation," Nishikawa said, while noting that the often unregulated and sometimes illegal newt trade also helps spread a dangerous fungus of Asian origin that has been killing off native salamander species in Europe in recent years.

An even more serious threat to these stout-bodied newts -- which are sluggish and easily captured when found in shallow water in the breeding season -- is from being collected for export to China where they are used in traditional medicine, according to Pe Than Kyaw.

A decades-old account from Taunggyi states that certain superstitious locals used to regard these then-abundant "water lizards" as omens of bad luck and would maliciously trample them at every op-

portunity, a fate which befell 10 out of 40 newts that were tagged and released on the university's campus in an experiment.

These days, however, locals who come across a newt are more likely to consider it fortuitous, representing as it does "money...something to sell to China," the professor said.

The new species was identified on the basis of type specimens collected from Taunggyi over a decade ago by Kyi Soe Lwin, currently a project officer with Indo-Myanmar Conservation, an NGO that works to conserve Myanmar's wildlife, and other local scientists.

Teaming up with researchers from the California Academy of Sciences, they pushed the zoological frontier by extensively surveying Myanmar's am-

phibians and reptiles, to the extent possible given the country's delicate political and security environment. According to American biologist Jeffery Wilkinson, who was deeply involved in that landmark project, most of Myanmar's reptiles are likely already known to science, but when it comes to amphibians, "we have only scratched the surface."

The project, which began in 1991 and ended some six years ago, resulted in the collection of over 17,000 specimens out of which 26 new species were discovered, 19 of them reptiles.

"One might conclude (from this) that there's a higher hidden reptile diversity in the region than amphibian diversity. However, this is far from the truth," Wilkinson said.

He said morphological and DNA analyses of these specimens suggest there may be "at a minimum 50 new species of frogs" awaiting scientific description—possibly as many as 100, meaning the process of taxonomically uncovering Myanmar's hidden amphibian diversity has only really begun.

Due to insufficient funding, however, the task will probably take years to accomplish. "I think this is a shame, because as I once read 'No names, no conservation'," Wilkinson said.

With some of the most extensive intact forest in Southeast Asia, despite having suffered massive deforestation, Myanmar is one of the region's most biologically diverse nations.

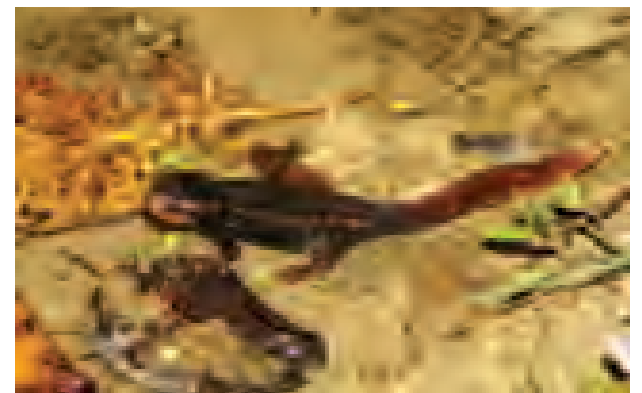
But as the country reengages with the world after decades of isolation, civil conflict and economic decline, its impressive biodiversity faces numerous challenges, ranging from wildlife poaching and both legal and illegal logging to extensive conversion of forest land for agribusiness.

On Wednesday, international wildlife conservation group WWF featured the Shan Crocodile Newt in its annual "Magical Mekong" report, which highlighted 10 new species discovered in 2014 in the Greater Mekong Region including Myanmar.

They were among a total 139 new species of flora and fauna -- including 16 amphibians, 23 reptiles, nine fish and one mammal -- discovered last year in the region that also encompasses Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, and Vietnam. In total, the report says, over 800 amphibian and reptile species, 430 mammals, 1,200 birds, 1,100 fish and 20,000 plant species call this region home.

Citing the myriad threats facing the Shan Crocodile Newt, some of which mirror those that confront potentially thousands of other as-yet-undiscovered species in the country, the report warned that these newts "may disappear just as we're getting to know them."

"Even if we can't stop construction and/or destruction, we can do something like mitigation," Nishikawa said. "Practically, it's important and much better than doing nothing."—Kyodo



This photo shows the Shan Crocodile Newt, a species discovered by a team of Japanese and Chinese scientists. The new species is increasingly under threat from habitat loss and collection for use in Chinese traditional medicine. Photo taken on Dec. 13 in Taunggyi, the capital of Shan State. (Kyodo)



Queen Elizabeth to unveil EU referendum plans as parliament opens



Britain's Queen Elizabeth arrives at Westminster Abbey for a thanksgiving service on the final day of 70th anniversary Victory in Europe (VE) day commemorations in central London on 10 May, 2015.

REUTERS

LONDON, 27 May — Queen Elizabeth will set out the government's plans for a European Union membership referendum on Wednesday as Prime Minister David Cameron faces pressure to explain when it will be held and what changes to the EU he wants before then.

Cameron, who says he would prefer to stay inside a reformed EU but isn't "ruling anything out" if it fails to change, was re-elected on 7 May on a pledge to reshape ties with the bloc before allowing Britons to vote on whether to stay or leave.

Queen Elizabeth, 89, will detail the plans in a speech written for her by Cameron's government as she opens parliament with an annual display of pomp.

Among other measures expected to feature was a reform of human rights laws designed to weaken the influence of the European Court of Human Rights, but several newspapers reported hours before the speech that the bill had now been delayed.

Cameron's Conservative Party is divided over the plan, and the newspapers said the prime minister had backed away from an early fight within his own camp.

On the EU, the Queen will say the new government plans to pass a law in its first year that would allow the referendum to occur by the end of 2017.

In a gesture meant to under-

score Cameron's seriousness, the law will be introduced into parliament just a day later, on Thursday, as Cameron embarks on a European tour to try to charm sometimes reluctant counterparts into backing EU reform. It will include talks with French President Francois Hollande in Paris and German Chancellor Angela Merkel in Berlin.

Cameron has said he would be ready to hold the referendum before 2017 if he completes the renegotiation early, something some pro-EU campaigners advocate. But he is under pressure from some Eurosceptic lawmakers who want him to ask for more and to take his time.

"I think we need a proper grown-up debate — it's the most important constitutional issue of my lifetime. It's something that we should properly take our time over," Liam Fox, a senior Conservative and a former defence secretary, told BBC radio.

Some EU politicians have complained they don't know enough, beyond what they say are broad and nebulous goals,

about what it is Cameron wants to change. He says he wants to decouple Britain from the EU's aim of "ever closer union" and to be able to restrict EU migrants' access to Britain's welfare system.

Cameron is adamant that such changes would require re-opening the EU's founding treaties, something countries such as France are opposed to.

In a potential setback for the prime minister, a Franco-German paper seen by *Reuters* shows the two countries have agreed plans to strengthen cooperation among the 19 countries using the euro, without changing existing treaties.

The blueprint would bolster the euro zone, of which Britain is not a member, by holding more regular summits of its leaders and strengthening the Eurogroup forum of finance ministers.

Other laws the queen will outline on Wednesday include a crackdown on illegal immigration, more powers for Scotland, and a bill preventing any rise in key taxes before 2020.—*Reuters*

Austria ready to sue over subsidised nuclear plants

VIENNA, 27 May — Austria will take legal action to block any subsidised nuclear power plants in an effort to discourage use of the technology in Europe and scare off investors, the country's environment minister, Andrae Rupprechter, said in a newspaper interview.

Rupprechter's comments to business daily *Wirtschaftsblatt* reflect non-nuclear Austria's tough stance, as evidenced by its intent to take the European Commission to court over approval of Britain's plans for the Hinkley Point nuclear plant.

Neighbouring Czech Republic also plans to extend its nuclear capacity.

"Should other countries present similar subsidy plans, we will fight these in court," the minister said in the interview published on Wednesday, saying such state backing hindered the rollout of renewable energy technology.

"Giving preference to nuclear power is unacceptable. Nuclear energy is neither safe nor economical. A lawsuit may also make potential investors hesitant."—*Reuters*

Erdogan aims to turn Turkey into major defence industry power

ANKARA, 27 May — For years Turkey has boasted NATO's largest army, bar only the United States, and now President Tayyip Erdogan wants a defence industry to match.

Erdogan's dream that Turkey will make all its own military equipment within a few years reflects his ambition to play a greater role in a turbulent region and achieve independence from long-time allies in the West.

Trying to drum up nationalistic support as the ruling AK Party heads into tough parliamentary elections next month, Erdogan has also called repeatedly for the country to become a major exporter of everything from rifles to

fighter jets.

This chimes with his declared aim of returning Turkey to the glories of the Ottoman empire — Erdogan has already built a 1,000-room presidential palace, drawing accusations from opponents that he is behaving like a modern-day sultan.

"As long as there are assailants in the world, we will always be required to be ready for defence," he told a defence industry conference in Istanbul this month.

Erdogan's sights are set on the centenary of the modern Turkish republic's foundation. "Our goal is to completely rid our defence industry of foreign de-



Turkey's President Tayyip Erdogan

pendency by 2023," he said.

Ankara spends around \$18 billion a year on defence with just over half of its equipment made domestically. Defence exports rose 18 percent last year to \$1.65 billion (1.07 billion pounds), and

a tank and infantry rifle are nearly ready for mass production.

Warship and fighter jet projects are in the early design phase but Erdogan hopes they will go into production by 2023, when he wants defence exports to total \$25 billion.

"Turkey's rulers firmly believe that Turkey cannot be the regional power they wish it to become without a really deterrent military force," said Burak Bekdil, a defence analyst and columnist with the *Hurriyet* newspaper.

Ankara had to ask NATO to deploy Patriot missiles in 2014 to bolster security along its frontier with Syria. This kind of depend-

ency has long grated on Turks.

Last month Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu remarked on Turkey's "painful experience" in World War One when it was forced to buy arms from abroad.

"A nation without its own defence industry cannot fight the cause of liberation," he said at the 100th anniversary of the Battle of Gallipoli, adding that by 2023 a locally-made combat plane will "fly the Turkish skies".

Turkey's desire for self-reliance is understandable as it shares a 1,200 km (750-mile) border with Syria and Iraq, where Islamic State has carved out a self-declared caliphate.

Reuters

Northern Irish assembly faces potential collapse after reforms rejected



Democratic Unionist Party leader Peter Robinson speaks at the party's policy conference in the village of Templepatrick twenty miles north of Belfast on 28 March, 2015.—REUTERS

BELFAST, 27 May — Northern Ireland's power-sharing government failed to pass a social welfare bill on Tuesday that several senior figures have said could lead to the collapse of the regional assembly in the British-controlled province.

A deal struck between the Northern Ireland parties and the British Government late last year was supposed to have eased the way for welfare reforms by promising the local administration a package including loans which would have helped mitigate the cuts enacted in other parts of the United Kingdom.

However the social welfare reforms, submitted by the ma-

jor Democratic Unionist Party (DUP), were voted down by the nationalist Sinn Fein and SDLP parties via a mechanism where they can essentially veto legislation.

The DUP leads the power-sharing government with Sinn Fein under the terms of a 1998 peace deal that ended three decades of sectarian violence in Northern Ireland.

The devolution of corporation tax setting powers to Northern Ireland to allow it to compete with the lower rate across the border in Irish Republic is also contingent on the reforms being implemented.

The administration is expect-

ed to be able to survive until the end of July, but at that point either Britain's Secretary of State to the region would likely have to step in to enact a budget or London would take back control of welfare.

Senior ministers say either option could prompt a walkout by one of the major parties and a collapse or suspension of the administration.

The debate came the day after Northern Ireland First Minister Peter Robinson, leader of the DUP, was admitted to hospital. He remains in hospital where his condition was said by DUP deputy leader Nigel Dodds to be improving.—*Reuters*

Iraq Shi'ite militia take lead in campaign to reverse Islamic State gains

BAGHDAD, 27 May — Iraq's Shi'ite paramilitaries said on Tuesday they had taken charge of the campaign to drive Islamic State from the western province of Anbar, giving the operation an openly sectarian codename that could infuriate its Sunni Muslim population.

The United States described the codename as “unhelpful” while France, which will host a meeting of nations fighting Islamic State next week, accused the Shi'ite-led government of failing to represent fully the interests of all Iraqis.

The Iraqi government is scrambling to reverse the fall of Ramadi, its biggest military setback in nearly a year. Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi has vowed to recapture the city, the Anbar provincial capital, within days. Shi'ite militiamen, supported by a smaller group of government troops, advanced on Tuesday to within a few kilometres of a university on Ramadi's southwestern edge, police sources and



Iraq's Shi'ite paramilitaries and members of Iraqi security forces gather in Nibai, in Anbar Province on 26 May, 2015. Iraq's Shi'ite paramilitaries said on Tuesday they had taken charge of the campaign to drive Islamic State from the western province of Anbar, giving the operation an openly sectarian codename that could infuriate its Sunni Muslim population. —REUTERS

Sunni tribal fighters allied to the government said.

As they passed through farmland south of Ramadi, the militiamen told people to return home and stay inside, promising they would not be harmed.

The loss of Ramadi a week ago was swiftly followed by the fall of the

UNESCO heritage city of Palmyra in Syria, the two biggest gains by Islamic State fighters since the United States began air strikes on them in Iraq and Syria last year.

Islamic State controls swathes of territory in both countries, where it has proclaimed a caliphate to rule

over all Muslims according to strict mediaeval precepts.

Its gains in the past week have raised doubts about the US strategy to bomb the militants from the air but leave fighting on the ground to local Iraqi and Syrian forces.

In Iraq, the regular

military's failure to hold Ramadi has forced the government to send in the Iran-backed Shi'ite paramilitaries. Washington fears this could enrage residents in the overwhelmingly Sunni province and push them into the arms of Islamic State.

A spokesman for the Shi'ite militias, which are known as Hashid Shaabi, said the codename for the new operation would be “Labaik ya Hussein”. This is a slogan in honour of a grandson of the Prophet Mohammed killed in a seventh century battle that led to the schism between Shi'ite and Sunni Muslims.

“The Labaik Ya Hussein operation is led by the Hashid Shaabi in cooperation and coordination with the armed forces there,” the spokesman, Ahmed al-Assadi, told a news conference. “We believe that liberating Ramadi will not take long.”

In Washington, Pentagon spokesman Colonel Steve Warren said the key to victory would be a uni-

fied Iraq “that separates itself from sectarian divides, coalesces around this common threat”. Asked about the sectarian codename, he said: “I think it's unhelpful.”

France, a leading member of the coalition against Islamic State, took the Iraqi government to task, saying there could be no military solution without a political solution among Iraq's communities. “We linked the coalition's support to political commitments by the new Iraqi government, what we call an inclusive policy,” Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius told lawmakers. “This contract is what justified our military engagement and I say clearly here that it must be better respected.”

The Paris meeting on 2 June, which more than 20 foreign ministers including US Secretary of State John Kerry are due to attend, aims to plot a strategy including on how to reverse the recent losses to Islamic State.

Reuters

Afghan Taliban gunmen killed after attack on Kabul guesthouse

KABUL, 27 May — Four Taliban insurgents armed with assault rifles and a grenade launcher stormed a guesthouse in the diplomatic quarter of the Afghan capital overnight and held out for hours until they were killed by government forces early on Wednesday, officials said.

No casualties other than the attackers were reported, Afghanistan's deputy interior minister General Ayoub Salangi said. Kabul police chief Abdul Rahman Rahimi said the guesthouse was owned by a prominent Afghan political family that includes Foreign Minister Salahuddin Rabbani.

The Afghan Taliban claimed responsibility for the attack after it ended and said numerous “invaders” had been killed, although it often makes exaggerated claims about casualties in attacks against Afghan government and foreign targets.

The Islamist group, which has been waging an insurgency since it was toppled by US-backed Afghan forces in 2001, considers the foreign presence in Afghanistan an invading force and the Afghan government a puppet regime.



Afghan policemen arrive near the site of an attack in Kabul, Afghanistan early on 27 May, 2015.

REUTERS

The Afghan capital has been hit by a series of high-profile attacks on foreigners and government targets over the past two weeks, deepening concerns over whether Afghan security forces can cope after most foreign troops left at the end of 2014.

Salangi said at least one rocket-propelled grenade launcher and three AK-47 assault rifles were seized after the attack in the heavily guarded Wazir Akbar Khan district had ended.

More than a dozen blasts were heard by *Reuters* witnesses in the first hour of the attack, while bursts of gunfire and ex-

plosions continued until a clearance operation was launched at day break more than five hours later.

Police chief Rahimi declined to identify the occupants of the guesthouse, which Afghan and Western security sources said is known to accommodate foreigners as well as Afghans.

Teams of elite Afghan security forces responded to the attack in an upscale part of the capital where many embassies and government buildings are located. Police vehicles set up roadblocks to stop vehicles from approaching the area.

The late Burhanuddin Rabbani served as presi-

dent of Afghanistan in the 1990s. Salahuddin Rabbani is his son. The recent escalation in high-profile Kabul attacks started two weeks ago, when the Taliban attacked the Park Palace hotel and killed more than a dozen people. Most of the casualties were Afghan civilians, although an American, a British-Afghan national, four Indians, an Italian and a Kazakh were also among the dead.

NATO's 13-year combat mission officially ended in December and the small contingent that remains is mostly focused on training Afghan security forces.

Afghan civilians, however, are bearing the brunt of the bloody conflict that has escalated around the country as foreign troops have withdrawn.

An EU vehicle was bombed near Kabul's airport a few days after the Park Palace attack, killing a British security contractor and at least two Afghan civilians.

Last week, at least five Afghans were killed and dozens more wounded by a car bomb in the parking lot of the Afghan Ministry of Justice.—*Reuters*

Amnesty International: Hamas committed war crimes against Gaza civilians

GAZA, 27 May— Amnesty International said in a report on Wednesday that Islamist Hamas committed war crimes against Palestinian civilians in the Gaza Strip during last year's war with Israel.

A ceasefire last August ended 50 days of fighting between Gaza militants and Israel in which health officials said more than 2,100 Palestinians, mostly civilians, were killed. Israel put the number of its dead at 67 soldiers and six civilians. “Hamas forces carried out a brutal campaign of abductions, torture and unlawful killings against Palestinians accused of ‘collaborating’ with Israel and others during Israel's military offensive against Gaza,” the human rights group's report said. A Hamas spokesman criticised the report as being unfair, unprofessional and not credible.

“The report is dedicated against Palestinian resistance and the Hamas movement ... it deliberately exaggerated its descriptions without listening to all sides and without making an effort to check the truthfulness of details and information,” said Fawzi Barhoum, a Hamas spokesman.

In a previous report in March, Amnesty also criticised Israel and accused it of war crimes during the conflict. Apart from the many deaths, at least 16,245 homes were destroyed or rendered uninhabitable. Gaza militants fired thousands of rockets and mortar bombs at Israel.

In Wednesday's report, Amnesty listed a number of cases it described as “spine chilling” in which Palestinians accused by Hamas of helping Israel were tortured and killed. “The de facto Hamas administration granted its security forces free rein to carry out horrific abuses including against people in its custody. These spine-chilling actions, some of which amount to war crimes, were designed to exact revenge and spread fear across the Gaza Strip,” Amnesty said. Hamas controls the Gaza Strip, a coastal enclave on the Mediterranean which borders Israel and Egypt.

The Palestinians have joined the International Criminal Court since the end of the war, a move opposed by Israel, and the ICC is examining possible war crimes in the conflict. But joining the court also exposes Palestinians to possible prosecution if a case is opened.—*Reuters*

Dutch ex-POW sues Japan for not getting full A-bomb medical support

NAGASAKI, 27 May — A 94-year-old Dutchman who survived the US atomic bombing of Nagasaki as a prisoner of war has sued the Japanese government, demanding compensation for the mental anguish he says he suffered for not being granted full medical coverage provided to domestic atomic bomb survivors, his lawyers said on Wednesday.

Willy Buchel filed the lawsuit with the Nagasaki District Court on 7 May, seeking 1.1 million yen (\$8,985) from the state. It is the first time in Japan a former prisoner of war who was exposed to radiation from an atomic bomb has taken such an action, according to a civic group supporting atomic-bomb survivors abroad.

According to the suit, Buchel was in a prison camp in Nagasaki in western Japan when he was exposed to radiation from the atomic bomb that devastated the coastal city on 9 August, 1945. He returned to the Netherlands in 1950 and received an atomic-bomb survivor certificate from the Nagasaki municipal government in 2014.

The suit said the plaintiff “was forced to continue living while suffering from peculiar health damage caused by his exposure to radiation” from the atomic bomb. For a long time, he was also left without the medical support offered to atomic-bomb survivors under Japanese laws, it added.—*Kyodo News*

Arrested FIFA officials face extradition to US

ZURICH, 27 May — Six football officials, including some high-ranking members of world governing-body FIFA, were arrested by Swiss police on Wednesday and detained pending extradition to the United States.

The arrests were made shortly after a dawn at a Zurich hotel where FIFA officials are staying ahead of this week’s FIFA presidential election.

The Swiss Federal Office of Justice (FOJ) released a statement saying the six officials, who were not formally named, were suspected by US investigators of having received or paid bribes totalling millions of dollars.

The FOJ also confirmed that FIFA president Sepp Blatter was not among those arrested.

“The US Attorney’s Office for the Eastern District of New York is investigating these individuals on suspicion of the acceptance of bribes and kickbacks

between the early 1990s and the present day,” the statement said.

“The bribery suspects — representatives of sports media and sports promotion firms — are alleged to have been involved in schemes to make payments to the football functionaries — delegates of FIFA and other functionaries of FIFA sub-organizations — totalling more than US\$100 million.”

The New York Times, citing anonymous law enforcement officials, said the US federal charges include racketeering, money laundering and wire fraud and span two decades of misconduct in football’s world governing body.

More than 10 officials were expected to be indicted, but not all were in Zurich, the newspaper reported.

Most of the officials are in Switzerland for the FIFA Congress, where Blatter faces a chal-



Members of the media stand outside the Baur au Lac hotel in Zurich, Switzerland on 27 May, 2015.—REUTERS

lenge from Jordan’s Prince Ali Bin Al Hussein in a presidential election on Friday when the Swiss administrator will attempt to secure a fifth term at the helm.

FIFA did not make any immediate comment on the arrests.

The New York Times said more than a dozen plain-clothed Swiss law enforcement officials arrived at Zurich’s Baur au Lac hotel early on Wednesday, took keys from the registration desk and headed up to the rooms.—*Reuters*

No special treatment for Australian Islamic State fighter’s family

CANBERRA, 27 May — The wife of Australian Islamic State fighter Khaled Sharrouf will face “the full severity of Australian law” if she returns from Syria with her five children, Australia’s Prime Minister said on Wednesday.

Sharrouf hit headlines around the world last year after he tweeted a photograph of his son holding a severed head in Syria. It came shortly after a photograph was released where Sharrouf and his three sons, dressed in camouflage and wielding weapons, posed in front of an Islamic State flag.

There is no indication Sharrouf, for whom an Australia arrest warrant remains outstanding,

wants to return but inquires have been made on behalf of Sharrouf’s wife, Tara Nettleton, according to Fairfax Media.

Nettleton’s mother, Karen, is believed to have made a trip to Malaysia recently in an effort to arrange a return for Nettleton and her five children.

Prime Minister Tony Abbott told reporters on Wednesday that Nettleton would receive no special treatment if she returned home.

“Crime is crime is crime,” he said. “Criminals will face the full severity of Australian law and it is a crime, a very serious crime under Australian law, for people to go abroad and fight or assist terrorist

organizations.” Discussing the possibility of a returned fighter being used as a mentor to stop others to take up arms for Islamic State, Abbott said that could only happen after punishment.

“I’m absolutely delighted when a criminal comes out of jail, reformed and rehabilitated, for that criminal or former criminal to go and spread a message of obeying the law to others,” he said.

“But I’m afraid you don’t get off scot-free just because you say ‘oh I’ve seen the error of my ways’.” When asked how the children of Nettleton will be cared for, Abbott said authorities would follow the regular procedure.

“These are not the first criminals to have had children,” he said. “I mean, there are criminals who go to jail all the time and they have children, and the children of these particular criminals will be dealt with in the same way that the children of criminals are normally dealt with.” Opposition Leader Bill Shorten likened the children’s case to child abuse, saying they should never have been taken there and would be “scarred” from the experience.

He said he would seek a briefing from the government’s security agencies but supported foreign fighters facing the full force of the law.—*Xinhua*

Oxford University unveils new Hadid-designed Middle East wing

OXFORD, 27 May — Zaha Hadid, the Iraqi-born architect, has designed a futuristic addition to the Oxford University campus: a curvy bridge building for St Antony’s College’s Middle East Centre that was inaugurated on Tuesday.

The 1,127-square-metre-structure, which connects two existing Victorian premises, will house the centre’s archive, library and 118-seat lecture theatre. The 11 million pound cost has been covered by Investcorp, an investment company which will give its name to the building and was founded in 1982 by Iraqi-born financier Nemir Kirdar.

Hadid in 2004 became the first woman to win the Pritzker Architecture Prize. Eight years later, having completed the Aquatics Centre for the London 2012 Olympic Games, she was made a Dame Commander of the Order of the British Empire.

Oxford University’s Middle East Centre was founded in 1957

to enable research on the modern Middle East: the Arab world, Iran, Israel and Turkey from the 19th century to the present day.

Explaining her decision to take on the commission, Hadid recalled that she was born in Iraq, and that it was therefore “an honour” for her to design the building.

“The Middle East Centre’s work encourages discourse and debate,” she said, adding that it also contributes to a “greater understanding of the region”.

The Centre’s US-born director Eugene Rogan said that when an architectural model of the building was first revealed to alumni, many objected that the design didn’t look Middle Eastern. They were expecting domes and geometric patterns typical of the region’s historic architecture, he said.

The new building “looks like the Middle East of the 21st century, so why should we be lagging behind the region we study?” Rogan said.—*Reuters*



Photo taken with cellphone shows the water level of the Danjiang River rising in Leishan County, southwest China’s Guizhou Province on 27 May, 2015. Leishan County has lost access to power and water supplies after torrential rain battered the area from Tuesday night to Wednesday, according to local authorities.—XINHUA

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Consignees of cargo carried on MV PANJA BHUM VOY NO (052N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 28.5.2015 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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No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.

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INVITATION TO OPEN TENDER

Sealed tenders are invited by the Department of Medical Care, Central Medical Stores Depot for the supply of Medical Equipment & Ambulances.

Tender documents are available during office hours at the Central Medical Stores Depot office, commencing from (27.5.2015).

Sealed bids are to be submitted to the office, not later than (26.6.2015) 14:00 hour, after which no bid will be accepted. No telegraph/telex proposal will be accepted.

For detail information please contact the Deputy Director (Medical Stores) Phone No. 01-371969, 01-372362, 01-371284.

Central Medical Stores Depot
Department of Medical Care

WEATHER REPORT

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

FORECAST VALID UNTIL EVENING OF THE 28th May, 2015: Rain or thundershowers will be widespread in Taninthayi Region, fairly widespread in Yangon and Ayeyarwady Regions, Mon State, scattered in Upper Sagaing Region, Kachin, Rakhine and Kayin States, isolated in the remaining Regions and States. Degree of certainty is (80%).

STATE OF THE SEA: Sea will be moderate in Myanmar water.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Likelihood of thundery activities in the Central Myanmar areas.

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Nepal restricts children's movement, fearing post-quake trafficking

KATHMANDU, 27 May — Nepal has banned the movement of children without accompanying parents or certified guardians amid concerns that traffickers could target kids rendered homeless or orphaned by recent earthquakes, an official said on Wednesday.

"Children have been temporarily barred from travelling without their parents. Guardians will need to get certificates from

District Child Welfare Board for taking children from one district to another," Ram Prasad Bhattarai, spokesman of the Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare, told Kyodo News.

Bhattarai said police and local administration across the nation have been issued instructions to keep an eye on suspicious people traveling with children.

He said the measure

was taken after 54 children were found to have been bused out from Dhading district and five from Nuwakot district by strangers promising food and education earlier this month.

"Those children are now under our protection and the people who were taking them away are under investigation for suspected trafficking attempt," Bhattarai said.

The ministry has

also put on hold for three months the process of international adoptions, and has banned the registry of new orphanages.

"The existing orphanages are under-occupied and sufficient to accommodate children affected by the quake," he said.

Thousands of children are trafficked from Nepal, mainly to India, every year to work as prostitutes and labourers.—Kyodo News

India heat wave kills over 1,100

NEW DELHI, 27 May —The death toll linked to an intense heat wave in India since mid-April topped 1,100, hitting southern and eastern parts of the country particularly hard in the worst scorching weather in recent years, authorities said on Tuesday.

The India Meteorological Department said daily temperatures of over 45 degrees Celsius have been logged in southern and eastern areas as well as in capital New Delhi, and forecasted the stifling heat wave across the country will continue through this week.

Among the southern states, Andhra Pradesh has reported 852 deaths, while Telangana has marked 266 deaths, according to the country's disaster management authority. Many other deaths have also been reported in Orissa in the east and West Bengal, with the causes of death being investigated.

Kyodo News

Storms kill 17 in Texas, Oklahoma; Houston flooded

HOUSTON, 27 May —Torrential rains have killed at least 17 people in Texas and Oklahoma, including four in Houston where floods turned streets into rivers and led to about 1,000 calls for help in the fourth-most populous US city, officials said on Tuesday.

The death toll is set to rise with numerous people still missing in Texas after the storms slammed the states during the Memorial Day weekend, causing record floods that destroyed hundreds of homes, swept away bridges, and even unearthed a coffin from a Houston cemetery. It washed ashore on the banks of a bayou.

"A lot of folks drove their car into high water and had to abandon those vehicles," Houston Mayor Annise Parker said at a news conference.

Two of the dead in Houston were found in their cars and another two were found in a bayou.

The Oklahoma Medical Examiner's office said six people died in weather-related incidents over

the holiday weekend in the state.

Though Parker said parts of the city were unscathed, more than 1,000 vehicles were submerged in the Houston floods and people took instead to bicycles, kayaks and surfboards to navigate water-covered streets.

The Houston Fire Department brought about 500 people to safety in boats, local media reports said.

President Barack Obama said on Tuesday he had assured Texas Governor Greg Abbott that he could count on help from the federal government as the state recovers from the floods. Abbott has declared a state of disaster in at least 40 Texas counties, including Harris County, which includes Houston.

Abbott said he has deployed the state's National Guard and was worried the death toll could rise.

"It's devastating to see what I saw on the Blanco River when this tidal wave of water just swept away neighborhoods," he said, recalling a disaster area in central Texas.

Eleven people are confirmed missing due to flooding that hit along the Blanco River, and Hays County officials increased to three the number of bodies that have been found in that area. The missing are from two families whose vacation home was swept off its foundation in Wimberley, a town about 30 miles (50 km) southwest of Austin.

About 30 other people who were previously unaccounted for have been contacted, Hays County officials said.

Dogs and boats were being used to search for the missing. The river rose so quickly and with such force, it caused a flood gauge to break, Hays County officials said.

There was no damage estimate available for Tex-

as, which has a \$1.4 trillion-a-year economy and is the country's main domestic source of energy as well as an agricultural and manufacturing power.

Houston resident Dutch Small, 40, climbed onto the roof of his car when the water came up to his knees inside his vehicle and was eventually rescued by a passing tow truck driver.—Reuters



Vehicles are stranded by flood waters in south Houston, Texas on 26 May, 2015.

REUTERS

Jessica Lange to return to Broadway in 'Long Day's Journey Into Night'

NEW YORK, 27 May — Two-time Oscar winner Jessica Lange will return to Broadway next year in a revival of American playwright Eugene O'Neill's masterpiece "Long Day's Journey Into Night," the Roundabout Theatre Company said on Tuesday.

The Pulitzer Prize-winning play, which will be part of the theatre company's 50th anniversary season, will be Lange's third time on Broadway. The 66-year-old also starred in "The Glass Menagerie" in 2005 and "A Streetcar Named Desire" in 1992.

"Long Day's Journey Into Night" will begin previews on 31 March, 2016, and officially open on 19 April, the company said.

Lange will reprise her role as the morphine-addicted matriarch, Mary Tyrone, from the London



Jessica Lange in Los Angeles, California in this on 6 Feb, 2014 file photo.—REUTERS

stage production in 2000, for which she was nominated for an Olivier Award. She will star opposite Irish actor Gabriel Byrne, 65, in O'Neill's semi-autobiographical family drama.

Lange won the best actress Academy Award for her role in 1994's "Blue Sky" and a supporting Oscar in 1983 for "Tootsie," opposite Dustin Hoffman.

Reuters

Doubt Zayn and I will get married this summer: Perrie Edwards

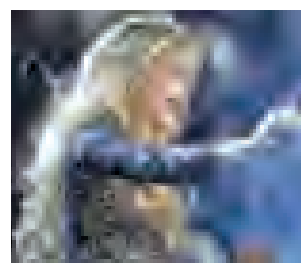
LOS ANGELES, 27 May — Singer Perrie Edwards says this summer wedding for her and beau Zayn Malik seems unlikely due to her busy work schedule.

Edwards, 21, pointed out that after Malik's crazy schedule with One Direction sidelined their wedding plans in the past, it is now she who has not had time to plan their wedding because she has been busy promoting her band Little Mix's new single "Black Magic", reported Aceshowbiz.

"I don't know when the wedding will be. We're still planning it but I'm so busy with Little Mix now 'Black Magic' is coming out," she said.

"Me and Zayn want it to be perfect, so as soon as I have a bit of time we'll plan it. I doubt it will be this summer — but I'll let you know!" she added.—PTI

Judge to hold hearing on whether Shakira's copyright accuser lied



Musician Shakira performs "Empire" onstage at the 2014 Billboard Music Awards in Las Vegas, Nevada May 18, 2014.—REUTERS

NEW YORK, 27 May — A US judge who ruled that pop star Shakira's 2010 hit single "Loca" was an illegal copy of a Dominican songwriter's work now says the songwriter may have lied on the stand and is prepared to head to Puerto Rico to sort out the truth.

US District Judge

Alvin Hellerstein said in federal court in Manhattan on Tuesday that new evidence presented by two Sony Corp (6758.T) units, the defendants in the case, have caused him to "lose trust" in the trial testimony.

He ordered Sony and Mayimba Music, owner of the rights to the song "Loca con su Tiguer," composed by Ramon Arias Vasquez, to appear for a seven-day hearing in August on what Sony says is proof a cassette tape at the centre of the copyright accusations was fabricated.

Since several of Sony's new witnesses might have trouble obtaining visas to travel to the United States from the Dominican Republic, Hellerstein offered to hold the hearing in Puerto Rico, a US territory,

and asked the attorneys to find out whether that would solve the visa issues.

Mayimba sued Sony in 2012. Last August, Hellerstein ruled that Shakira's single and another artist's song illegally copied from Arias' work and found Sony/ATV Latin and Sony/ATV Discos liable for distributing the infringing songs. In his August ruling, Hellerstein found that Arias's song was recorded onto a cassette tape in 1998. A copy of the song on the tape was registered at the Copyright Office in 2011.

In the past few months, however, Sony submitted evidence that the tape was a fabrication made in 2011, and that Arias lied under oath about it, Hellerstein said in an April order.

Reuters

"Tetsuko's Room," talk show already in Guinness, hits another milestone

TOKYO, 27 May — A talk show, recognized by Guinness World Records in 2011 for achieving the most TV talk show episodes hosted by the same presenter, achieved another milestone on Wednesday as it reached its 10,000th episode in its 40th year.

Tetsuko Kuroyanagi, veteran actress and host of "Tetsuko's Room," a talk show broadcast daily on weekdays by TV Asahi, celebrated the feat with the day's guests, Masahiko Kondo and Noriyuki Higashiyama — middle-aged singers/actors Kuroyanagi has known since their teenage debuts in show business.

Asked about her new goal after reaching the 10,000 mark, the 81-year-old presenter said on the latest episode she would like to continue 10 more years until she turns 90.

Domestic and foreign celebrities who appeared on the show include actor Hisaya Morishige, the guest on the first episode broadcast on 2 February, 1976, actor Ken Takakura, Nobel laureate for literature Kenzaburo Oe, cartoonist Osamu Tezuka, former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and US singer Lady Gaga.

"It's like a dream. I'd like to say thank you to all the guests and the staff who worked with me 10,000 times," Kuroyanagi said in a statement released by TV

Asahi.

"Tetsuko's Room" is recorded but undergoes little editing, so its content is almost exactly the same as it would have been if it were a live programme. There is no script prepared but Kuroyanagi pens the run sheet for each episode. She has never missed a recording of the show, according to the broadcaster.

With her clipped speech, she has drawn out of the guests countless anecdotes related to their professions but also prompted them to speak up about their personal problems and sometimes make surprise announcements.

Yoichi Matsuo, an 85-year-old broadcast critic, said that for celebrities, appearing on "Tetsuko's Room" is regarded as "a kind of status" and the show is like "a salon in the TV world."

Untold stories spoken by celebrities on the show also included those related to their World War II experiences, as Kuroyanagi, a goodwill ambassador for the UN Children's Fund, or UNICEF, for 30 years, believes in "the power of TV to change the world" and puts her wishes for peace in making the programme, she told *Kyodo News* in an interview earlier this year.

She considers herself as being in the "last generation to manage to talk about the war." Being a survivor of the 1945 massive bomb-



Tetsuko Kuroyanagi, veteran actress and host of "Tetsuko's Room," a talk show broadcast daily on weekdays by TV Asahi, poses for a photo on the set of the show in Tokyo on 24 Feb, 2015. The show, recognized by Guinness World Records in 2011 for achieving the most TV talk show episodes hosted by the same presenter, achieved another milestone on 27 May, 2015, as it reached its 10,000th episode in its 40th year.

KYODO NEWS

ing of Tokyo by the US military, Kuroyanagi was in Aomori in northeastern Japan to which she had evacuated when the war ended. She hopes her program's episodes featuring the stories in the archive will be broadcast repeatedly.

Kuroyanagi's personal accounts as a UNICEF ambassador have also been broadcast on the programme. "I want the viewers to know about the children who are trying to live positively despite being in tragic circumstances, and that there are certainly things they can do (to help the children)," she said in the interview.

As a goodwill ambassador, Kuroyanagi has visited more than 30 countries including Kosovo, Afghanistan and South Sudan, and raised more than 5 billion yen (\$40.8 million) for UNICEF's programmes to protect children from conflict, disasters and poverty.

She is also known for her best-selling childhood memoir "Totto-chan: The Little Girl at the Window." About eight million copies of its Chinese translation have been sold since it was put on sale in China in 2003, with the phenomenon earning the name "a miracle in the Chinese children's book industry."

Kyodo News

Marilyn Monroe's final photoshoot to be auctioned in London

LONDON, 27 May — Rare photos of screen icon Marilyn Monroe, taken just weeks before her untimely death, are going to auction in London.

The stunning snapshots were taken by her friend, photographer George Barris, on Santa Monica beach on 13 July, 1962, just three weeks before she was found dead at 36 in her Los Angeles bedroom.

The set also includes photos of Monroe in her Brentwood, California, home, reported *Daily Mirror*.

Eight of the prints, several of which show Monroe romping on the beach in a towel or bikini, are expected to sell for 8000 pound at Dreweatts & Bloomsbury Auctions in London



The set also includes photos of Monroe in her Brentwood, California, home, reported Daily Mirror—PTI

on 4 June.

Barris, who met Monroe in 1954 on the set of her hit film "The Seven Year Itch", originally in-

tended to use the pictures for a book he was working on about the iconic actress, but he scrapped it after her death.—PTI

GENERAL

World Cup perfect at 32 teams, says CONCACAF chief Webb

ZURICH, 27 May—The World Cup is football's jewel and should not be tarnished by being increased to more than 32 teams, CONCACAF confederation president Jeffrey Webb said on Tuesday.

Webb, whose region represents north and central American countries and the Caribbean islands, said he would welcome another spot for his confederation but said 32 teams was the right number for the globe's most popular sporting extravaganza.

"The World Cup is the jewel of football and, for me, you shouldn't increase the spaces in a World Cup for political reasons," he told reporters after a meeting of CONCACAF member associations in Zurich for this week's FIFA Congress.

"You should only increase the spaces in the World Cup because of the development of the game.

Are we going to dilute the World Cup to appease various associations?"

"No, we must have real leadership and courage to stand up and address this issue," added Webb.

"Thirty-two countries is great. If you look at the television ratings, it's tremendous. Every single game. Do you want to go to a World Cup where you know what the score is going to be every single game?"

FIFA's executive committee is meeting on Saturday, the day after the vote for the next president, to decide on the allocation for the 2018 and 2022 World Cups even though qualifying for Russia is underway in Asia and in CONCACAF.

During their election campaigns Luis Figo and Michael van Praag, who have since withdrawn their bids to be president, advocated expanding the World Cup to possibly as many as



FIFA President Joseph "Sepp" Blatter (R) gestures next to CONCACAF President Jeffrey Webb during a news conference at the CONCACAF congress in Panama City on 19 April, 2013. —REUTERS

48 teams.

Prince Ali Bin Al Hussein of Jordan, the only candidate left to challenge incumbent Sepp Blatter, said he would be in favour of discussing the issue if he won.

At last year's World Cup in Brazil, CONCACAF had four teams at the finals: the United States, Mexico, Honduras and Costa Rica

with the latter reaching the quarter-finals for the first time.

Mexico qualified for the finals after beating New Zealand in a continental playoff.

Asked if he would welcome four teams qualifying directly without one having to go through a playoff, Webb said: "I'd love it, I'd welcome it a lot".—Reuters

Second sea lion rescued from California oil spill dies at SeaWorld



SeaWorld animal care specialists Nick Northcraft (L to R), Gareth Potter and Heather Armentrout, and Dr Pam Yochem examine a sea lion affected by the Refugio Beach oil spill in this handout photo provided by SeaWorld on 23 May, 2015.—REUTERS

LOS ANGELES, 27 May — A second sea lion rescued from along California's oil-fouled coastline near Santa Barbara has died at SeaWorld San Diego, where veterinarians are still caring for 15 surviving marine mammals brought in for treatment, a spokesman said on Tuesday.

The petroleum-stained pinnipeds are among the earliest apparent wildlife casualties documented from a pipeline rupture that dumped as much as 2,400 barrels (101,000 gallons or 382,327 liters) of crude oil onto the shoreline and into the ocean west of Santa

Barbara one week ago.

The spill left an oil slick stretching for more than 9 miles (14.5 km) along the coast and forced the indefinite closure of two popular beaches. The area also has been placed off-limits to fishing and shellfish harvesting.

The stricken region lies at the edge of a national marine sanctuary and underwater preserve that is home to whales, dolphins, sea lions and other marine mammals, along with some 60 species of sea birds and over 500 species of fish.

As of Tuesday, 15 oil-contaminated California

sea lions and two elephant seals had been brought to SeaWorld to be cleaned and nursed back to health.

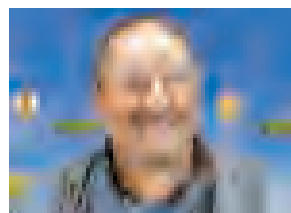
The first arrival, a young sea lion streaked with oil over a third of its body, died late on Friday or early on Saturday after being cleaned, SeaWorld spokesman David Koontz said. A second sea lion died there on Monday, leaving 13 sea lions and two elephant seals still to be rehabilitated and hopefully released.

"Our team is working very, very hard, doing everything they can to give these animals a second chance at life," Koontz said.

Meanwhile, the carcasses of four sea lions and two dolphins have turned up with no visible signs of oil, including a dead dolphin found on Friday in Santa Barbara Harbor, according to officials overseeing the spill response.

Post-mortem exams must still be conducted on all dead animals recovered from the disaster zone, and those that die under care, to determine whether they were spill victims. The latest official tally of oil-soaked birds indicated that nine pelicans and one western grebe had been discovered alive and five pelicans found dead. —Reuters

Napoli to hold news conference amid Benitez speculation



Napoli's coach Rafael Benitez smiles during a news conference at the Olympic stadium in Kiev, Ukraine, on 13 May, 2015. —REUTERS

MILAN, 27 May — Napoli coach Rafael Benitez will hold a news conference on Thursday amid speculation that the Spaniard is set to take over at Real Madrid, the Italian club announced on Tuesday. Napoli said the news conference would be held jointly with club president Aurelio De Laurentiis.

Spanish media have made former Liverpool, Inter Milan and Chelsea coach Benitez the favourite to replace Carlo Ancelotti, who was fired by Real Madrid on Monday. Benitez, whose contract runs to the end of the season, has had mixed fortunes during his two seasons with Napoli.

Reuters

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(28-5-2015, Thursday)

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| 6:00 am | 2:00 pm |
| • Paritta by Venerable Mingun Sayadaw | • Documentary |
| 6:30 am | 3:30 pm |
| • Physical Exercise | • Head Line News |
| 7:35 am | 4:35 pm |
| • Weekly Entertainment | • University of Distance Education (TV Lectures) — First Year (Physics) |
| 8:00 am | 5:35 pm |
| • News | • Teleplay |
| 8:30 am | 6:00 pm |
| • Head Line News | • News/ Weather Report |
| 8:35 am | 7:00 pm |
| • Documentary | • News |
| 9:35 am | 7:30 pm |
| • Beautiful ASEAN | • Head Line News |
| 10:35 am | 8:00 pm |
| • Teleplay | • News / International News / Weather Report |
| 11:35 am | 9:00 pm |
| • Science and Technology Programme | • News |
| 12:00 noon | • Hluttaw Image |
| • News / International News / Weather Report | • Clever |
| 12:35 pm | |
| • Hluttaw Image | |
| 1:35 pm | |
| • Teleplay | |

MRTV Entertainment Channel

(28-5-2015, Thursday)

- | | |
|------------------------|---------------------|
| 6:00 am | 8:40 am |
| • Mono Classical Songs | • Pyi Thu Ni Ti |
| 6:20 am | 9:10 am |
| • Myanmar Series | • Colour of ASEAN |
| 6:40 am | 9:25 am |
| • Fashion Show | • Myanmar Viedo |
| 7:05 am | 10:10 am |
| • TV Drama Series | • Musical Programme |
| 7:50 am | 10:30 noon |
| • TV Drama Series | • Myanmar Viedo |
| 8:25 am | |
| • Musical Programme | |

All seems normal as Nadal begins pursuit of number 10



Rafael Nadal of Spain plays a shot to Quentin Halys of France during their men's singles match at the French Open tennis tournament at the Roland Garros stadium in Paris, France on 26 May, 2015.—REUTERS

PARIS, 27 May — The Eiffel Tower was still standing, the River Seine was flowing away to the sea, the traffic clogged the Peripherique and Rafa Nadal still ruled Roland Gar-

ros on Tuesday.

To all intents and purposes it was a normal day at the French Open as Nadal claimed victory number 67 since making his debut in the event in 2005.

It felt a little different though as the soon-to-be 29-year-old walked on to Court Phillippe Chatrier, the rectangle of red clay that has been the stage for his nine titles in a decade of unprecedented domination.

Such has been Nadal's malaise this year, with claycourt defeats piling up from Monte Carlo to Rome, the Spaniard arrived in Paris only second favourite to claim a record-extending 10th title.

Tasked with providing the first test of Nadal's supposed fragile confidence was French teenager Quentin Halys, a wildcard making his grand slam debut.

He did just that, pushing 14-times grand slam champion Nadal hard before succumbing 6-3, 6-3, 6-4.

Nadal often takes time to get fully into his stride at Roland Garros so Tues-

day's one hour 50 minute workout offered few clues over the health of his game.

His racket was equipped with computer technology, meaning he can download statistics for later analysis.

But the sixth seed knows he will have to reboot his game to win the title, having been placed in the same half of the draw as world number one Novak Djokovic and third seed Andy Murray.

Tournament favourite Djokovic, like Nadal, waited two days for his opening match but quickly found his stride with a 6-2, 7-5, 6-2 defeat of Finn Jarkko Nieminen.

The Serb, whose winning march now extends to 23 matches, came within a point of a 5-1 deficit in the second set but extricated himself to clinch victory with trademark precision.

Women's top seed Serena Williams joined

the party, lighting up a dull evening with a pink outfit and some powerful tennis to beat Czech qualifier Andrea Hlavackova 6-2, 6-3.

If Nadal was nervous, one can only imagine the thoughts going through the mind of 18-year-old Halys.

He dropped his opening service game but was clearly not intimidated, striking the ball with menace and occasionally having Nadal scrambling behind the baseline.

Another service game went begging when the wildcard served three double-faults but Halys broke Nadal's serve in the sixth game, prompting loud cheers from a crowd who revere the champion but adore a homegrown youngster taking it to one of the greats.

If the result was never in doubt, Nadal still looked relieved when he secured victory on his first match point.—Reuters

Bolt wins 200 metres, Powell takes 100 in rainy Ostrava

PRAGUE, 27 May — Usain Bolt won the 200 metres in his season's best time of 20.13 seconds in rainy, cold conditions at the Ostrava Golden Spike meeting on Tuesday as he builds up for the world championships.

His Jamaican compatriot Asafa Powell claimed the 100 in 10.04 seconds but failed to match his season's best of 9.84 and the world leading 9.74 set by Justin Gatlin on 15 May in Doha.

Isiah Young of the United States finished second in both races, trailing home behind Bolt in 20.35 and Powell in 10.13. American Dedric Dukes has the world leading 200 time of 19.99.

"Yes, it was a little colder than I thought it would be," said Bolt on his return to the meeting for a seventh time.

"But it's all about working on my technique, getting back into shape and I'll see what happens in the next one."

Before the race Bolt said he felt fine despite dropping out of the last day of a meeting in the Bahamas this month. He said he felt pain in his thigh there but that had gone away.

The 28-year-old Bolt is preparing for the Beijing worlds in August where he said he wanted to be better than at the 2008 Beijing Olympics where the Jamaican won three gold medals.

Bolt is the favourite to retain his world 100 title but knows he will have to be at the top of his game and fully fit to hold off the challenge of 2004 Olympic champion Gatlin.

Czech Zuzana Hejnova won the 400m hurdles, returning after a foot injury which had kept her out for most of last season.

Poland's Marcin Lewandowski claimed the 1,000 metre race in a world leading time of 2.17.25.

American Sharika Nelvis set a meet record of 12.55 seconds in the 100 hurdles, just missing her personal best of 12.54 set in Doha.

World record holder David Rudisha of Kenya dropped out halfway through the rarely-run 600 metres holding his right thigh, and limped off the track. The race was won by Poland's Adam Kszczot in one minute 16.02 seconds.

Reuters

Bale pledges to come back stronger for Real next season

MADRID, 27 May — Real Madrid forward Gareth Bale has promised to "come back stronger" next season and quashed media speculation he might leave the club he joined in 2013 for a world record fee.

The Welsh international had a disappointing second year in Spain as his team failed to win a major trophy, prompting the sacking of coach Carlo Ancelotti on Monday.

Whistled by some fans at Real's Bernabeu stadium, Bale's agent raised eyebrows this month when he complained the 25-year-old's team mates were not passing the ball to him

enough and he has also been criticised for what some perceive as selfishness in front of goal.

Reports in England have suggested he might leave, with Manchester United apparently interested in signing the former Tottenham Hotspur man.

However, Bale took to Twitter on Tuesday to say he would be vying for titles again with the world's richest club by income in 2014-15.

"Not the end of the season we had hoped for, we always want to win trophies," Bale wrote.

"Will be working hard in the off season and

looking forward to coming back next season stronger with @realmadrid."

Bale's woes have marked a startling turnaround for a player who scored in the finals of the Champions League and the King's Cup last term.

He has scored 17 goals in 48 outings in all competitions this season, compared with 22 in 44 appearances in 2013-14.

Bale has also produced slightly fewer assists, setting up 11 goals for team mates after 12 the previous year.

The statistics are similar but according to a survey of 725 Real members



Real Madrid's Gareth Bale

conducted by market research firm SigmaDos for Marca sports daily, Bale rated five out of 10 for the season.

That compared unfavourably with Portuguese

team mate Cristiano Ronaldo who scored 7.8 after netting a La Liga-best 48 goals and 61 in all competitions.—Reuters

Thais target soccer gold, Indos just want to play

SINGAPORE, 27 May — At the Southeast Asian Games, the men's soccer gold medal carries more weight than any of the other 400 on offer in a region where football bragging rights are the most priceless of commodities.

The importance of winning the 11-nation tournament led Thailand and Vietnam to move their World Cup qualifying fixture after a request to FIFA, while domestic action in other countries has also been put on hold.

The Thais want a 10th under-23 gold in 12 editions and are heavy favourites to achieve their goal with a

third of their 20-man squad part of the Suzuki Cup title success the senior side enjoyed over their Southeast Asian rivals in December.

Influential midfielder Charyl Chappuis maybe missing but their rivals remain wary. "In any regional tournament, Thailand are always going to be the favourites. But we proved in the SEA Games semi-final in 2013 that we can match them," Singapore striker Sahil Suhaimi told *The New Paper* last month.

"The pressure is there and not many Singaporeans think that we can go all the way. It's up to us to prove them wrong."

Singapore's scepticism stems from frustration at the stagnation of the senior national side in the two years since German coach Bernd Stange took over.

The under-23's have fared little better with preparation not going to plan. Last month, head coach Aide Iskandar contracted dengue while a tour of Japan resulted in defeat to a local fourth division team.

Singapore have never won the men's gold but they will have taken heart from local club side Lions XII upsetting the odds to win a first Malaysian FA Cup title last weekend.

That surprise win over

Kelantan in the final led to the Crown Prince of Johor lambasting the state of Malaysian soccer.

The Malaysians won gold in 2009 and 2011 but hopes of a third success are low with many fans sharing the Prince's view.

Concerns about a lack of adequate preparation have not been helped by the timing of Wednesday's money-spinning friendly between a local select and English side Tottenham Hotspur in Kuala Lumpur.

Those frustrations, though, are minor compared to the ones being endured by supporters of back-to-back runners-up Indonesia.

Whether the country even takes part in the tournament remains up for debate with FIFA threatening suspension if a row between the government and local football association (PSSI) is not resolved by Friday, the start of the football tournament.

"We are closing our eyes and our ears to FIFA's letter (threatening sanctions)," PSSI secretary general Azwar Karim told Reuters earlier this month.

"Hopefully, if things go well they will play on June 2 (against Myanmar). Otherwise they will have to return, which is quite sad."

Reuters