

Co-op Ministry promises billions of kyat in microloans to rural members

NAY PYI TAW, 30 May— The Ministry of Cooperatives has promised tens of billions of kyat worth of microloans to members of agricultural co-ops as part of a rural development plan, President U Thein Sein told a meeting in Ayeyawady Region on Saturday.

Microloans of over K31 billion will be disbursed to 329,841 members of 3,654 cooperatives to enable them to buy agricultural machinery in instalments.

The president said his government has strived to ensure stability, peace and higher socioeconomic status for the people over the past four years, citing endeavours to end armed conflict and initiate comprehensive political dialogues.

The implementation of strategies for rural development and poverty alleviation has seen some success, he said, adding encouragement is being given to the private sector as a driving force behind economic growth.

New momentum must be added to agricultural development, which he said



President U Thein Sein observes farm machinery provided to cooperatives members.—MNA

plays a crucial part in boosting the economy and food security.

A cooperative system enables its members to work together to meet their common needs and aspirations on the basis of sharing, with the president citing the 2015 theme of the International

Day of Cooperatives, which is “Choose cooperative, choose equality”.

The day is globally observed on the first Saturday in July.

Union Minister for Cooperatives U Kyaw Hsan spoke of small loans and hire-purchase schemes, stating microloans of over K31 billion will be dis-

bursed with a low interest rate at K1.15 per K100.

According to the union minister, half of the interest received from loans goes to local cooperatives.—MNA

Radio conference focuses on emerging media platforms

By Khaing Thanda Lwin

YANGON, 30 May—Radio stations must look beyond traditional broadcasting and utilize emerging platforms to engage with audiences and advertisers, industry figures heard Saturday, at a regional conference in Yangon.

In his address on the final day of the Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union’s Radio Asia 2015 conference, radio industry consultant Mr Barry Keohane said social media was crucial to attracting younger listeners.

“Radio will continue to appeal to older audiences, but it’s the younger listeners that you have to engage with on social media

now,” Mr Keohane, head of Australia’s Mind Media and Entertainment, told the audience at the Sule Shangri-La Hotel.

“Radio’s strength has always been delivering great content for audiences, and now the challenge is to extend this to multi platforms.

“Advertising clients are diverting more and more funds to social media and digital campaigns. Radio needs to show engagement with audience in this space to attract this revenue stream.”

In the morning session, speakers discussed topics including the use of (See page 3)

Myanmar categorically rejects unbalanced, negative comments (Press Release)

1. The issue of boat people in the Andaman Sea and the Straits of Malacca was escalated in Southeast Asia in mid May 2015, which affected Bangladesh, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar and Thailand.
2. At the time of the incidents, on 26 May 2015, the Oslo Conference to End Myanmar’s Persecution of Rohingyas” was held in Oslo, Norway. At the conference, Mr. George Soros, Mr. Mahathir Mohamad, Tan Sri Dato Seri Syed Hamid Albar and Desmond Tutu delivered their statements through pre-recorded video links and in person.

3. In their statements, they criticized and turned a blind eye to Myanmar’s efforts on rebuilding trust among two communities in Rakhine State; granting citizenship through national verification process to the Bengalis those living in Myanmar for many years; arrangements made for the two communities to live side-by-side with concrete documentation. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs objected such counterproductive comments.

4. Myanmar has been extending its full cooperation with countries in the region to solve the issue of boat people. (See Page 3)

Myanmar should allow foreign land ownership to boost agriculture investment: OECD

By Ye Myint

YANGON, 30 May—Allowing foreign ownership of land and creating a legal framework to encourage contract farming will attract foreign direct investment to Myanmar’s agriculture sector, according to a senior Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development official.

There will be concerns about agriculture investment unless land ownership is opened to foreign (See page 3)



OECD officials address media at press conference on the sidelines of a workshop on modernizing Myanmar in Yangon. — PHOTO: YE MYINT

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Martial arts course teaches youths self defence

MEIKTILA, 30 May — Bando Aung martial arts organization concluded a Myanmar martial arts course at the township sports ground in Meiktila, Mandalay Region, on 27 May.

Chairman of the township martial arts subcommittee U Hla Aung spoke about the course's dissemination of traditional Myanmar martial arts across the nation. He urged trainees to regularly practice the arts for self defence.

The head of the Sports and Physical Education Department presented certificates to the trainees. Assistant trainer Saw Khin Nyunt Aung donated K100,000 to the martial arts organization.

The trainees received training with weapons and in hand-to-hand combat.

Students and staff of departments attended the training from 10 to 26 May.

*Thein Myint Kyaw
(Meiktila)*



Yinmabin's GEC holds annual general meeting



YINMABIN, 30 May — The Government Employees Cooperative held its annual general meeting for fiscal 2014-15 in Yinmabin Township, Sagaing Region, on 29 May.

Chairman of the cooperative society U Myint Aung and Head of Township Cooperative Department U Than Htay gave speeches at the ceremony.

Executive U Zaw Tint Oo read out the executive committee report while leader of the auditing team U Kyaw Win Sein submitted the financial report.

Officials of the cooperative society presented prizes and cash awards to distinction winners in the 2014-15 academic year matriculation examination.

Tun Ko Ko (Yinmabin)

Photographers showcase works in Dawei to support fire victims



DAWEI, 30 May — Photographers in Dawei Township, Taninthayi Region, are exhibiting their works at a newly opened gallery to raise funds for people who suffered property damage in a fire last month in the township's Ohlok ward.

The exhibition runs until 2 June at a gallery supervised by award-winning photographer U Pyae Soe Tun (Pagyi), at the hall of No 3 Basic Educa-

tion High School in Dawei.

At the opening ceremony of the gallery, Deputy Speaker of Region Hluttaw U Kyi Win, Region Minister for Security and Border Affairs Col Zaw Lwin and Region Minister for Development Affairs U Aung Kyaw Kyaw Oo viewed the photos.

Local people, students and enthusiasts also visited the gallery.

Po Shwe Thun (Dawei)

Residents learn about consumer protection, healthy lifestyles



NAY PYI TAW, 30 May — Local residents attended a talk covering healthy lifestyles, consumer protection and soil conservation for farmers in Bawdigon Village in Lewe Township, Nay Pyi Taw Council Area, on 29 May.

Roughly 40 residents took part in the discussion organized by the Myanmar Consumer Protection and Education Association.

Members of the association distributed pamphlets about consumer protection to the local people.

Ko Pauk (Okkar Myay)

MCDC sells low-cost apartments to families of fallen soldiers, personnel

MANDALAY, 30 May — The Mandalay City Development Committee organized the sale of low-cost apartments to the families of fallen soldiers and 800 retired service personnel at City Hall on 29 May.

For the first batch, a total of 100 families of were allowed to purchase apartments in the Myayi Nanda housing complex in Chanmyathazi Township.

The Mandalay City Development Committee

plans to sell more apartments to government service personnel with more than 25 years of service for the second batch.

The apartments were sold through a lottery system, said secretary of the committee U Khin Maung Tin.

According to the officials, MCDC will sell apartments to 6,677 retired service personnel in the second batch.

Tin Maung (Mandalay)



Military is not attacking ethnic people, says Senior General

NAY PYI TAW, 30 May— The military is not attacking ethnic people, but fighting against enemies threatening sovereignty of the country, illegal trade of natural resources and drug traffickers, said Commander-in-Chief of Defenses Senior General Min Aung Hlaing on Saturday.

During the high-level meeting of the Defence Services, the senior general said after regaining independence the military could safeguard the sovereignty of the country after engaging in 1,557 major battles and 16,571 minor ones between 1948 and 2015.

He noted that the military needs to possess fighting power to be able to clear the threats. It also needs to



Commander-in-Chief of Defenses Senior General Min Aung Hlaing holds a meeting with senior military officers.—MYAWADY

cultivate fighting spirit and nationalistic spirit, he said.

The Defence Services is now constructing 11 bil-

lion kyats worth 546 apartments in five military commands, and it is planning to construct more apartments

estimated 6 billion kyats worth apartment in three commands.

Myawady

Constitution reviewing committee discuss charter amendment

NAY PYI TAW, 30 May— Committee for amendment of 2008 constitution held a meeting at the President Office Friday for reviewing the Schedule One and the Schedule Two in the charter.

At the meeting Union Minister at the President Office and Chairman of Constitutional Review Joint Committee U Soe Thane said the meeting is expect-

ed to be the final discussion about the amendments of the two chapters in the constitution.

The amendment of the Schedule One and the Schedule Two will be included in the bill, with sharing the power on amendment to union level and the states/ regions governments.

Union Minister U Tin Naing Thein, the vice chair-

man of the committee, said the amendment process for the Schedule One and the Schedule Two will need the contribution of Attorney-General Office, while Article 96 under the Schedule One will be concerned with the Union government and Article 188 of Schedule Two with states/regions governments.

He also said amendment of these schedules will

need contributions of states/ regions governments in a limited period.

Union Minister U Hla Tun, another vice-chairman of the committee, said it has seen some difficulties in the amendment process of laws, bylaws and instruction.

Senior officials from the government ministries then discussed matters related with the amendment.

MNA

Myanmar categorically rejects...

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On the other hand, Myanmar has been providing humanitarian assistance and search and rescue efforts in an individual capacity.

5. In addition, Myanmar participated in a special meeting on Irregular Migration in Indian Ocean held in Bangkok, Thailand on 29 May 2015 and together with other regional countries, exchanged of views were made to effectively solve the issue on smuggling, human trafficking and transnational crimes in a cooperative manner. The delegation of Myanmar also pointed out that the focus should be made on more cooperation in providing humanitarian and development assistance to the affected countries rather than finger pointing a country.

6. Against this backdrop, at the time when humanitarian needs are required for the boat people that become victims of smugglers and traffickers, placing an one- sided view on a country will not serve the purpose of the efforts being carried out in at-risk countries including Myanmar. And it would create misunderstanding from the international community. As such Myanmar categorically rejected the unbalanced and negative comments.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Nay Pyi Taw

May 30, 2015

Huawei launches latest smart devices with flagship P8

YANGON, 30 May— Huawei launched its flagship smartphone P8 and other smart devices in Bangkok, Thailand, on Thursday.

The event targeted for Southeast Asian market with 'Get ready to creativity in your hands,' while Chinese smartphone maker also introduced its P8 max and a wearable gadget Huawei TalkBandB2.

With a 78.3 percent screen-to-body ratio, the P8 features a 5.2-inch Full-HD display, 13-megapixel sensor for rear camera and

8-megapixel front camera. The company said that there have been some software-based improvements since the previous P7.

The Huawei P8 is powered by a non-removable 2,680mAh battery, 64-bit octa-core Cortex-A53 Hisilicon Kirin 935 processor clocked with 2GHz speed and coupled with 3GB of RAM. It also runs on Android 5.0.2 Lollipop operating system.

The P8, a big-seen edition of Huawei, carries a 6.8-inch display with a resolution of 1,080x1,920

pixels at 326ppi pixel count.

Kevin Ho, President of Handset Product line Huawei Consumer BG said, "Southeast Asia is one of the most promising and high-potential economic entities in the world, both now and in the future. It is regarded as a strategic market and an engine driving fast growth of Huawei Consumer Business."

He added that with the launch of P8, P8Max, and P8Lite, Huawei expect the total shipments to reach 8 million units, 1 160 percent

increase, in 2015 comparing its over 10 million total shipments in the region in 2014. Myanmar is the top player for Huawei smartphones with over 61 percent market share, according to the China-based company.

Huawei is also making plans to open up to 1,500 customer service centres throughout Southeast Asia region, and to release a customer service mobile application and Offer Mail in Service (MIS) in Hong Kong, Taiwan, Myanmar, India and Thailand.

GNLM



Myanmar should allow foreign land...

(from page 1)

investors, Mr Jan Rielander, head of the OECD's Multi-dimensional Country Reviews Development Centre, told The Global New Light of Myanmar on Friday. He also stressed the need to formulate regulations and legal frameworks that can facilitate contract farming.

Myanmar's agriculture sector ranks ninth out

of 11 sectors in terms of foreign direct investment, with approved capital of US\$242.686 million from fiscal 1988-89 to 2014-15.

"In order to make the agriculture sector really attractive, it is required to improve security of land, property rights of land ownership and allow contract farming," Mr Rielander said.

Officials from the

34-nation OECD held a press conference in Yangon on the sidelines of a workshop on modernizing Myanmar's economy building on a strong agricultural sector.

According to the press conference, the Myanmar government is closely working with the OECD to formulate a policy framework for investment in the agriculture sector.

The second volume of the OECD Mul-

ti-dimensional Review of Myanmar was released in January 2014, providing recommendations to support Myanmar's reform efforts. The report acknowledges the reforms initiated by the government in the many areas including management of external development finance, the tax structure and the financial system, and stresses the need for continued progress.

GNLM

Radio conference focuses on...

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social media by radio stations in Australia, and the "power of storytelling and social generation."

Earlier discussions at the three-day conference included the outlook for Myanmar's commercial FM stations, the relationship between public radio and national values and the implementation of digital

radio in the Asia-Pacific.

In conjunction with the conference, the ABU held its Radio Song Festival at the National Theatre in Yangon on 29 May.

Since 2012, the ABU has organized the Radio Asia Conference and ABU Radio Song Festival. Myanmar is the third host country after South Korea and Colombia.—GNLM

World No Tobacco Day 2015 *Dr Aung Tun*

Tobacco use is a major preventable cause of premature death and disease globally. Tobacco use causes at least 15 different cancers of the body, including lung cancer, cancer of the mouth, larynx, pharynx, esophagus, bladder, kidney, pancreas, liver, cervix, stomach, colon, rectum, and different types of leukemia. Other harmful health effects of tobacco use include:

- Risk factors for lung diseases and cardiovascular diseases
- The risks of miscarriage, premature delivery, stillbirth, low birth weight and neonatal death
- Fertility problems for men and women
- Other harms to health (Hearing loss and visual impairment, tooth decay, stomach ulcers.etc..)

Global Smoking Prevalence

Tobacco is used in many different ways around the world, but the global predominance is the use of manufactured cigarettes, which account for 96% of total worldwide sales. The next largest components are the smoking of bidis in South-East Asia, the chewing tobacco in India and Myanmar and the smoking of kreteks in Indonesia. New forms of tobacco are constantly being invented, while older forms historically localized to specific regions of the world (such as the hookah and bidi) are becoming global.

Nearly 20% of the world's adult population smokes cigarettes. . About 800 million adult men and nearly 200 million adult women worldwide smoke cigarettes. Cigarette consumption historically has been highest in high-income countries. Total consumption of tobacco products is increasing globally. More than 80% of the one billion smokers worldwide live in low- and middle-income countries, where the burden of tobacco-related illness and death is heaviest.

Smoking behaviors of current smokers in Myanmar

Myanmar has been participating in the Global Tobacco Surveillance System and has conducted Global Youth Tobacco Surveys (GYTS) in 2001, 2004, 2007 and 2011, the Global School Personnel Sur-

veys (GSPS) in 2004 and 2007 and a study on public opinion on tobacco control in selected townships of Myanmar in 2013. Comparing the surveys done in 2007 and 2011 the smoking prevalence became increased among school boys and adult males in 2011. In Myanmar, tobacco use has been socially and culturally accepted since ancient times. It is being used as a well-wishing gift to house guests and at weddings and donation ceremonies. This social and cultural context of tobacco use as a social norm greatly challenges tobacco control programs and calls for widespread education and information activities to promote community awareness on dangers of tobacco use.

Increasing Smokeless Tobacco Use in Myanmar

Although smoking predominates over smokeless tobacco in most of South East Asia countries today, smokeless tobacco use is increasing in some countries including Myanmar. Trends in smokeless tobacco use had been explored based on findings of previously conducted surveys and studies. According to the Myanmar Global Youth Tobacco Survey (GYTS) 2011, a school-based survey of students aged 13-15 years of 7th to 10th Grades, about one in five (18.6%) of students reported current use of any tobacco products where 6.8% were current cigarettes smoker, 8.2% were current cheroot smokers, 9.8% were current user of any Smokeless Tobacco (SLT) products and 7.5% were current user of tobacco with betel quit. The prevalence of Smokeless Tobacco (SLT) use among boys was about 4 times higher than the girls. A study on Effectiveness of School Tobacco Control Program has been conducted in capital city Nay Pyi Taw in 2011. An early age of initiation has been identified by this study that 5.2% of 5th, 6th and 7th Graders were current users of SLT products mainly in the form of betel quid with tobacco (6.3% among boys and 4.1% among girls).

Misconception of smokeless tobacco use as less dangerous than smoking tobacco products is a big challenge to the tobacco control measures added by ease of purchase and low prices of smokeless tobacco

products. In the current status of increasing smokeless tobacco use in Myanmar, it is necessary to carry out the systematic review for the extent and patterns of SLT use among the Myanmar people.

World No Tobacco Day 2015

World No Tobacco Day is celebrated around the world every year on May 31. It was first observed in 1987, after a cabinet of the WHA (World Health Assembly) passed a motion supported by the WHO, with guidelines to manage and curb tobacco consumption. The objective of observing World No Tobacco Day is to reduce tobacco consumption, which can lead to deadly diseases like cancer and early death. Individuals, non-profit organizations and public health organizations actively participate in making this day a success by distributing placards and displaying posters with the latest information on the ill-effects of consuming tobacco and smoking. To propel its cause and appeal globally, WHA selects a fresh theme every year. The theme of World No Tobacco Day 2015 is “**Stop Illicit trade in Tobacco products**”. Specific goals of the 2015 campaign are that:

- Raise awareness on the harm to people's health caused by illicit trade in tobacco products,
- especially the youth and low-income groups, due to the increased accessibility and affordability of these products due to their lower costs
- Show how health care gains and programs, and tobacco control policies, such as increased
- tax and prices, pictorial health warnings and other measures are undermined by the illicit trade in tobacco products
- Demonstrate how the tobacco industry has been involved in the illicit trade of tobacco
- Highlight how the illicit trade of tobacco products is a means of amassing great wealth for criminal groups to finance other organized crime activities, including drugs, human and arms trafficking, as well as terrorism.
- Promote the ratification of, accession to and use of the Protocol to Eliminate Illicit Trade
- in Tobacco Products

by all Parties to the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC) and its early entry into force through the active involvement of all relevant stakeholders.

The Illicit trade in tobacco products as a global problem

The illicit supply of tobacco products is a massive global problem that leads to tobacco-related death and disease. Smuggled cigarettes accounted for an estimated 10.7% of global sale of cigarettes in 2006. The illicit trade in tobacco is enabled by conflict, trade sanction, political instability and weak governance and border controls.

The illicit and counterfeit production of tobacco products may be carried out by legal manufacturers who declared only a fraction of their production to the tax authorities or by unlicensed manufacturers. It is done to avoid paying tax. The illicit distribution of tobacco involves the diversion of cigarettes through complex exporting and importing tactics during international transit when taxes are suspended.

The illicit supply of tobacco products leads to an increase in tobacco consumption by making cigarettes more affordable and accessible. This makes it more attractive, especially to people who are price sensitive, such as young people and poor. Tobacco smuggling is used as a tactics to undermine state monopolies on the sale of tobacco by reducing their market share.

Protocol to eliminate illicit trade in tobacco products

The illicit trade in tobacco can be best prevented by cutting off the supply of illegal tobacco products. Article 15 of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control on illicit trade in tobacco products requires Parties to adopt and implement effective measures to regulate the production and distribution of tobacco products.

As the control of illicit trade in tobacco products is one of the important obligation in WHO FCTC, the Protocol to eliminate illicit trade in tobacco products was adopted at the session of the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the WHO FCTC on 12 November, 2012 in Seoul, Republic

of Korea. The Protocol is aimed at combating illegal trade in tobacco products through control of supply chain and international co-operation. It is the first protocol to the WHO FCTC.

Myanmar also attended the 5th session of the Conference of the Parties to the WHO FCTC (COP 5), held in Seoul, Korea from 12th to 17th November, 2012. At COP 5, Myanmar has signed the Protocol on Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products on the day of the opening ceremony on 10th January, 2013 at Geneva, and it was the 1st country of signatories in South East Asia Region.

Myanmar's efforts to preventing Tobacco Industry Interference and Illicit trade in Tobacco products

In Myanmar, National Tobacco Control Program initiated in 2000. The Myanmar Tobacco Control Program has also implemented its activities in line with six WHO MPOWER policy package. With the objectives of protecting and reducing the dangers of tobacco and based on the provisions of the WHO FCTC, “The Control of Smoking and Consumption of Tobacco Products Law was enacted in May 2006 and it came into effect in May 2007.

Since the new government came into power in 2011, at least two cigarette companies have received approval to run businesses in Myanmar after decades of tight control over tobacco products. Due to weak enforcements of existing regulations, tobacco companies in Myanmar get about direct advertising bans through their corporate social responsibility arms, giving educational grants or sponsoring orphanages and entertainment events such as rock concerts.

Adoption of FCTC article 5.3 is being given priority to prevent tobacco industry interference in public health policy. Raising awareness and education campaign about Tobacco Industry Interference, Code of Conduct for civil servants, meeting/Interaction with Industry rules and Industry monitoring are main counter measures to tobacco industry interference in Myanmar. A Collaboration between Civil society and Government are being strengthened in order to improve surveillance, reporting and enforcement mechanisms.

Over the past two years,

Myanmar has strengthened the control cell within the Ministry of Health, worked with civil society to build support for tobacco control among the public, and partnered with related ministries and NGOs to prohibit all forms of direct and indirect advertising, promotion and sponsorship of tobacco. In 2015 Cigarette taxes in Myanmar are levied at 120% (commercial tax) of taxable turnover. Measures are underway to enforce regulations for the health warnings to be rotating, pictorial as well as textual and to be displayed taking at least **70%** of the front of cigarette packages. According to Ministry of Health's strong rejection, the Myanmar Investment Commission has agreed that they will not permit new cigarette plants in Myanmar. Ministry of Health has already done to amend the Smoke-free regulation ensuring 100% smoke free indoor in March 2014.

Stop Illicit trade in Tobacco products

According to Article 5.3 of the WHO FCTC, Member countries need to defend their tobacco control policies from the interests of the tobacco industry. We should resist the tobacco industry's attempts to weaken tobacco control legislations, such as bans on smoking in enclosed public places, tax increases, product regulation and prohibition on tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship. The Government should develop regulations on interaction with the industry if and when such interaction is necessary and prohibit any interaction that may lead to undue influence and or interference. Myanmar also needs to implement the following effective measures to regulate the production and distribution of tobacco products.

- To establish practical tracking and tracing system for tobacco products manufacture and distribution
- To enact legislation against the illicit trade in tobacco and to enforce with effective penalties and remedies
- To adopt a coordinated international response for cross border trade and smuggling

Governments, nongovernmental organizations, academia and individual citizens should work together to put an end to tobacco industry interference and illicit trade in tobacco products.

REGIONAL

China, Japan hope to sign MoU on maritime, aerial crisis liaison mechanism

SINGAPORE, 30 May — Both China and Japan hope to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on the maritime and aerial crisis liaison mechanism and launch the mechanism at an early date, military officials from the two countries said here Friday.

The hope was expressed by Chinese Vice Chief of Staff of the PLA Sun Jianguo and Hideshi Tokuchi, director general of the Japanese Defence Ministry's Defence Policy Bureau when they held a meeting here on the sidelines of the Shangri-La Dialogue. China attaches great importance to the development of Sino-Japan relations and pays high attention to Japan's attitude on historical issues, said Sun, expressing hope that the two sides would continue defence exchanges and cooperation, strengthen mutual understanding, and enhance management

and control over contradictions and crisis.

China is willing to work with Japan to promote the good-neighbourly relations and co-

operation, and earnestly safeguard the hard-won progress in the improvement of bilateral ties on the basis of the four political documents reached

between the two countries, said Sun.

For his part, Tokuchi said the Japanese government's stance on historical issues has not changed.

He admitted that there are difficulties and differences in the Sino-Japan relations and Japan is willing to make efforts to improve the bilateral ties.

The two countries' cooperation in the defence and security field would benefit the development of bilateral ties, he added.

Organized by the Britain-based International Institute for Strategic Studies, the Shangri-La Dialogue, widely recognized as Asia-Pacific's foremost defence and security summit, brings together defence ministers, senior officials and security experts to exchange views on key issues that shape the defence and security landscape of the region.—Xinhua



Admiral Sun Jianguo (R), vice chief of staff of China's People's Liberation Army (PLA), meets with Hideshi Tokuchi, Japanese vice minister of Defence for International Affairs, on the sidelines of the 14th Shangri-La Dialogue in Singapore, on 29 May, 2015.

XINHUA

Air India to launch direct New Delhi-Colombo flight

COLOMBO, 30 May — India's flag carrier Air India will start daily flights from capital New Delhi to Sri Lankan capital Colombo from 15 June, a local media report said on Friday.

General Manager at Indu Sky Aviation, Thanuja Lankatilaka said that an Airbus A321 will be deployed to fly the route with 170 economy seats and 12 business class seats.

The service is Air In-

dia's second Sri Lankan flight, as it currently flies daily between Colombo and Chennai, the report said.

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who visited Sri Lanka in March this

year, announced on arrival visas for Sri Lankans traveling to India and added that a new Air India flight would be launched, linking the two capitals, Lankatilaka said.

Xinhua

Break the vicious cycle, Singapore tells South China Sea rivals



Singapore's Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong delivers his keynote address of the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) Shangri-La Dialogue in Singapore on 29 May, 2015. — REUTERS

SINGAPORE, 30 May — Singapore's prime minister called on countries on Friday to break the "vicious cycle" of the South China Sea row, as the United States and China exchanged increasingly angry barbs over reclaimed islands in the disputed waterway.

Inaugurating Asia's biggest security forum, the Shangri-La Dialogue, Lee Hsien Loong also warned of the threat of Islamic State militancy in Southeast Asia and said it was not inconceivable that the ultra-radicals could establish a base in the region physically under their control, like in Syria or Iraq.

Just hours before Lee spoke, the Pentagon said China had placed mobile artillery weapons systems on a reclaimed island in the South China Sea.

US Defence Secretary Ash Carter, who is to address the three-day Shangri-La Dialogue on Saturday, has called for a halt to the reclamation work, saying it was out of step with the regional consensus. Admiral Sun Jianguo, a deputy chief of China's People's Liberation Army, will speak the following day.

Singapore's Lee said that if the rise of China in the international order

was to remain peaceful, US-Chinese relations had to remain strong.

"No country wants to choose sides between US or China," he said.

But after weeks of angry rhetoric, the two sides were at loggerheads again on Friday.

The US says China's actions undermine international law and interfere with the freedom of navigation in international waters. China says the islands are sovereign Chinese territory.

Pentagon spokesman Brent Colburn, who is travelling with Carter, said China's reclamation created "an air of uncertainty in a system that has been based on certainty and agreed-upon norms".

China's Xinhua news agency said some of the participants in the Shangri-La Dialogue "attempt to monopolize the right to speak in the field of international security."

"They echo each other, distort the truth, magnify differences, add fuel to fire, so that dialogue diverges from the path of strengthening exchanges and enhancing mutual trust."

Singapore's Lee said: "These maritime disputes... can and should be managed and contained. If the present dynamic continues, it must lead to more tensions and bad outcomes."

Lee's comments on Islamic State were the strongest made by a regional leader on the threat posed by the radicals.

"The idea that ISIS can turn Southeast Asia into a wilayat — a province of a worldwide Islamic caliphate — is a grandiose, pie-in-the-sky idea," he said. "But it is not so far-fetched that ISIS could establish a base somewhere in the region, somewhere where the governments' writs do not run."—Reuters



Sick children struck by the heat receive treatment at a hospital in Hai Phong city, northern Vietnam, on 30 May, 2015. A heat wave with temperature constantly rising over 40 degree Celsius hits northern Vietnam, which has badly affected local people's life. —XINHUA

Way of living, more eruptions among concerns for volcano evacuees

FUKUOKA, 30 May — A day after the eruption of a volcano on a small Japanese island, more than 100 evacuees and authorities began considering on Saturday how they could live away from their homes while the meteorological agency warned of the possibility of more eruptions.

All of the 137 residents

and visitors on Kuchinoerabu Island, some 1,000 kilometres southwest of Tokyo, were successfully evacuated to the nearby Yakushima Island by Friday evening, according to the government.

Government officials led by Ryosei Akazawa, senior vice minister of disaster prevention, arrived in Yakushima, Kagoshima

Prefecture, to discuss ways to support evacuees' living, including plans for building temporary housing.

"We'll ensure the safety of the islands and enhance our monitoring of the volcano. And we'll do everything to support evacuees' lives," Akazawa said when meeting with the Yakushima town mayor, Koji Araki. "Evacu-

ees worry about when they can return home. They did not bring necessities," Araki told Akazawa.

Among the evacuees, 16 are elementary and junior high school students. They have been accepted by schools in Yakushima and will start joining classes from Monday, officials said. In order to listen to evacuees

and ease their concerns, the municipality is also considering sending health workers to shelters.

"I couldn't sleep well," a 59-year-old woman said, describing her first ever experience of spending a night at a shelter. She said she and her husband will move to the city of Kagoshima where one of their sons

lives. Yoshifumi Konoo, the head of the elementary and junior high school on Kuchinoerabu Island, said there was no confusion among students on Friday night. But he also said, "We are not prepared enough. There is a worry that we may have to spend a long time living away from home."

Kyodo News

US and Iran address obstacles to nuclear deal as deadline nears

GENEVA, 30 May — US Secretary of State John Kerry met his Iranian counterpart Mohammad Javad Zarif on Saturday in a bid to overcome the remaining obstacles to a final nuclear agreement, a month ahead of a deadline for a deal between Teheran and world powers.

The meeting in Geneva is the first substantive talks since Iran and the six world powers — Britain, France, the United States, Russia, China and Germany — struck an interim deal on 2 April.

Among the issues still to be resolved is the push by the world powers for international access to Iran's military sites and its team of atomic experts. For its part, Teheran wants sanctions to be rescinded immediately after a deal is reached.

A senior US State Department official said there had been substantial progress in talks in Vienna in recent weeks on drafting a political agreement and three technical annexes on curbing Teheran's nuclear programme.

The United States has said it will not extend the talks beyond the 30 June deadline. "We really do believe we can get it done by (June) 30th and we're not contemplating an extension. We just aren't," the official told reporters traveling with Kerry to Geneva.

But France, which has demanded more stringent restrictions on the Iranians, has indicated talks are likely to slip into July. Iran's senior nuclear negotiator Abbas Araqchi also warned that the deadline might need to be extended.

"We are on a good track



US Secretary of State John Kerry (L) and Iran's Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif pose for a photograph before resuming talks over Iran's nuclear programme in Lausanne on 16 March, 2015. —REUTERS

right now to make progress and we absolutely believe it is possible we can get this done by 30 June," the senior State Department official said, adding that Kerry's schedule for June had been cleared to focus on the Iran talks.

"A lot of the decisions (left) are at the political level. You will see more involvement at (Kerry's) level for that reason," the official said, adding that the talks would likely occur in Vienna. Zarif, when asked at the start of the talks on Saturday whether the deadline would be met, replied: "We will try." One Western diplomat said inspections of military sites by UN nuclear watchdog the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and access to Iran's scientists were critical to monitoring and verifying whether Iran was pursuing a clandestine nuclear weapons programme.

"If the IAEA can't have access to (the scientists) or the military sites then it's a problem," the Western diplomat said. "The IAEA needs sufficient access quickly to those sites to ensure things don't just disappear."

The State Department official took a similar view, saying without access "we're not going to sign" a deal.

Iran denies any ambition to develop a nuclear weapon and says its program is purely peaceful. Its supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, has said Teheran will not accept "unreasonable demands" by world powers.

"The issue of interviews with nuclear scientists is generally off the table as well as the inspection of military sites," Araqchi told reporters as he arrived for the talks with Kerry. "How additional protocol would be implemented is still a matter of disagreement that we are still talking about." Iran's demand that sanctions be rescinded immediately after a deal is also among the issues holding up a settlement as the powers' have said they can only be lifted in phases depending on Teheran's compliance with the terms.

Teheran-based analyst Saeed Laylaz said he expected a deal to be finalized despite resistance from opponents in Iran and the United States. —Reuters

US military orders review as anthrax mishap widens

WASHINGTON, 30 May — The US military said on Friday it discovered even more suspected shipments of live anthrax than previously thought, both in the United States and abroad, and ordered a sweeping review of practices meant to inactivate the bacteria.

The Pentagon said a total of 11 states, two more than it first acknowledged, received "suspect samples," as did Australia and South Korea. It had previously only identified a foreign shipment to a US air base south of Seoul.

"There is no known risk to the general public and an extremely low risk to lab workers," the Pentagon said in a statement.

Still, in a sign the Pentagon was still coming to grips with the extent of the problem, it advised all laboratories for now to stop working with any "inactive" samples sent from the Defence Department.

To date, the United States has acknowledged that four US civilians have begun taking preventive measures that usually include the anthrax vaccine, antibiotics or both.

Twenty-two people at the base in South Korea were also given precautionary medical measures although none of them has shown signs of exposure, officials said.

The suspected live samples identified so far all appear to trace back to a US Army base in Utah, the Dugway Proving Ground, one of the military labs responsible for inactivation and shipping of biological material.

The US military disclosed earlier this week that suspected live samples sourced to Dugway were traced going to nine US states and a US air base in South Korea. A US official said those shipments took place between March 2014 to April 2015 before being discovered this month.

On Friday, US officials said the suspect sample sent to Australia came from a 2008 batch from Dugway.

In all, a total of 24 laboratories received the suspect samples, the Pentagon said.

The discovery has raised alarms in Congress.

The top Republican and Democrat on the Senate homeland security committee wrote to Defence Secretary Ash Carter, saying the incident "may have threatened countless human lives and caused millions of dollars in damage."

The Pentagon said Frank Kendall, undersecretary of defence for acquisition, technology and logistics, would lead the Pentagon's review, which

included an examination of procedures for inactivating anthrax.

The US Centres for Disease Control and Prevention has already begun an investigation.

The disclosure comes 11 months after the CDC, one of the government's top civilian labs, similarly mishandled anthrax.

Researchers at a lab designed to handle extremely dangerous pathogens sent what they believed were killed samples of anthrax to another CDC lab, one with fewer safeguards and therefore not authorized to work with live anthrax.

Scores of CDC employees could have been exposed to the live anthrax, but none became ill.

That incident and a similar one last spring, in which CDC scientists shipped what they thought was a benign form of bird flu but which was actually a highly virulent strain, led US lawmakers to fault a "dangerous pattern" of safety lapses at government labs.

Reuters



Spores from the Sterne strain of anthrax bacteria (*Bacillus anthracis*) are pictured in this handout scanning electron micrograph (SEM) obtained by Reuters on 28 May, 2015. —REUTERS



A woman walks past graffiti of revolutionary hero Ernesto "Che" Guevara and a Cuban flag of Mexican artistic group Azaro for the 12th Havana Biennial, in Havana, on 28 May, 2015. —REUTERS

US removes Cuba from list of state sponsors of terrorism

WASHINGTON, 30 May — The United States removed Cuba on Friday from a list of state sponsors of terrorism that had retained it for 33 years, a step for normalizing bilateral ties that have been severed since 1961.

The focus of attention will now be on when both countries will allow each other to resume operation of embassies and to what extent the United States will lift its economic sanctions for normalization

advanced by US President Barack Obama and Cuban President Raul Castro.

Secretary of State John Kerry has made the final decision to rescind Cuba's designation as a state sponsor of terrorism 45 days after Obama notified Congress of his administration's intent to do so in line with a pre-notification procedure, the State Department said.

Obama announced in December a major policy shift on Cuba, opening

talks on restoring diplomatic ties, which deteriorated after the 1959 revolution in the Caribbean country.

The US government put Cuba on the list in 1982, blaming Havana for supporting Basque separatists in Spain and leftist guerrillas in Colombia.

Iran, Sudan and Syria remain on the department's list of countries it alleges aid terrorism.

Kyodo News

US tried Stuxnet-style campaign against North Korea but failed

SAN FRANCISCO, 30 May —The United States tried to deploy a version of the Stuxnet computer virus to attack North Korea's nuclear weapons programme five years ago but ultimately failed, according to people familiar with the covert campaign.

The operation began in tandem with the now-famous Stuxnet attack that sabotaged Iran's nuclear programme in 2009 and 2010 by destroying a thousand or more centrifuges that were enriching uranium. *Reuters* and others have reported that the Iran attack was a joint effort by US and Israeli forces.

According to one US intelligence source, Stuxnet's developers produced a related virus that would be activated when it encountered Korean-language settings on

an infected machine. But US agents could not access the core machines that ran Pyongyang's nuclear weapons programme, said another source, a former high-ranking intelligence official who was briefed on the programme.

The official said the National Security Agency-led campaign was stymied by North Korea's utter secrecy, as well as the extreme isolation of its communications systems. A third source, also previously with US intelligence, said he had heard about the failed cyber attack but did not know details. North Korea has some of the most isolated communications networks in the world. Just owning a computer requires police permission, and the open Internet is unknown except to a tiny elite. The country has one main conduit for Internet connections to the out-

side world, through China.

In contrast, Iranians surfed the Net broadly and had interactions with companies from around the globe. A spokeswoman for the NSA declined to comment for this story. The spy agency has previously declined to comment on the Stuxnet attack against Iran.

The United States has launched many cyber espionage campaigns, but North Korea is only the second country, after Iran, that the NSA is now known to have targeted with software designed to destroy equipment. Washington has long expressed concerns about Pyongyang's nuclear programme, which it says breaches international agreements. North Korea has been hit with sanctions because of its nuclear and missile tests, moves that Pyongyang sees as an attack on its sovereign right to de-

fend itself. US Secretary of State John Kerry said last week that Washington and Beijing were discussing imposing further sanctions on North Korea, which he said was "not even close" to taking steps to end its nuclear programme.

Experts in nuclear programmes said there are similarities between North Korea and Iran's operations, and the two countries continue to collaborate on military technology.

Both countries use a system with P-2 centrifuges, obtained by Pakistani nuclear scientist AQ Khan, who is regarded as the father of Islamabad's nuclear bomb, they said.

Like Iran, North Korea probably directs its centrifuges with control software developed by Siemens AG that runs on Microsoft Corp's Windows operating system, the experts said.

Stuxnet took advantage of vulnerabilities in both the Siemens and Microsoft programmes.

Because of the overlap between North Korea and Iran's nuclear programmes, the NSA would not have had to tinker much with Stuxnet to make it capable of destroying centrifuges in North Korea, if it could be deployed there. Despite modest differences between the programmes, "Stuxnet can deal with both of them. But you still need to get it in," said Olli Heinonen, senior fellow at Harvard University's Belfer Centre for Science and International Affairs and former deputy director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

NSA Director Keith Alexander said North Korea's strict limitations on Internet access and human travel make it one of a few

nations "who can race out and do damage with relative impunity" since reprisals in cyberspace are so challenging.

When asked about Stuxnet, Alexander said he could not comment on any offensive actions taken during his time at the spy agency.

David Albright, founder of the Institute for Science and International Security and an authority on North Korea's nuclear programme, said US cyber agents probably tried to get to North Korea by compromising technology suppliers from Iran, Pakistan or China.

"There was likely an attempt" to sabotage the North Korean programme with software, said Albright, who has frequently written and testified on the country's nuclear ambitions.—*Reuters*

US considers airport preclearance centres in nine countries

WASHINGTON, 30 May — The Department of Homeland Security said on Friday it is considering expanding airline preclearance operations to 10 new foreign airports in nine countries, most of them in Europe.

The department said it was entering negotiations to add preclearance programs in Belgium, the Dominican Republic, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Turkey and the United Kingdom, where Heathrow and Manchester airports are on the list. Pre-clearance allows US customs officers stationed in other countries to decide if travellers and their baggage can be permitted into the United States.

That alleviates the

crush of people attempting to clear customs after arrival.

"Preclearance is a win-win for the travelling public. It provides aviation and homeland security, and it reduces wait times upon arrival at the busiest US airports," Homeland Secretary Jeh Johnson said in a statement.

Airlines for America, the industry trade organization for US airlines, applauded the move.

"US airlines drive \$1.5 trillion (£981.1 billion) in economic activity, and by improving the passenger experience for visitors or those returning to the United States, while improving security, we can build on that," said A4A President & CEO Nick Calio.

Reuters

Japan to cooperate with Africa in natural resource development



Photo taken on 30 May, 2015, shows the Japan-African Ministerial Meeting for Resources Development held in Tokyo, with Japan's trade minister Yoichi Miyazawa attending. Miyazawa and representatives of 16 African nations agreed to enhance their cooperation in boosting resource development.
KYODO NEWS

TOKYO, 30 May — Ministers from Japan and 16 African countries agreed on Saturday to enhance their cooperation in developing natural resources while addressing issues that have prevented foreign investment in the fast-growing continent.

Japan has been aggressively involved in financial

assistance as well as human-resource development in Africa, in a move that could eventually benefit the resource-poor country.

"Japanese manufacturers cannot operate without a stable supply from resource-rich countries," Japan's Economy, Trade and Industry Minister Yoichi Miyazawa told a meeting

in Tokyo that is seen as an opportunity for Japan to discuss measures to secure imports of mineral resources such as gold and manganese. In 2013, when the ministerial talks were held for the first time, Japan said it will contribute a total of \$2 billion over the following five years to back Japanese companies involved

in the development of resources in Africa.

But officials said there are problems that are slowing this investment, an apparent reference to low productivity and governance issues at local firms.

Japan is aiming to address these problems through bilateral as well as multilateral efforts, particularly at the next session of the Tokyo International Conference on African Development scheduled for 2016.

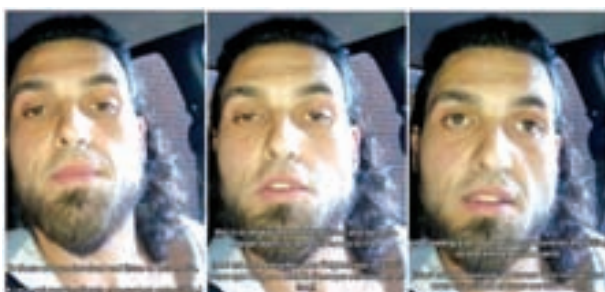
Saturday's meeting was attended by Angola, Botswana, the Republic of Congo, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Gabon, Madagascar, Malawi, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Kyodo News

Video shows Canada Parliament gunman praying before attack

OTTAWA, 30 May — A gunman who fatally shot a soldier in Canada's capital last October, and then stormed Parliament, prayed for guidance and cursed his foes, previously unreleased sections of a video he made before the attacks show.

Michael Zehaf-Bibeau made the short video on his cell phone, sitting in a car, before launching his attacks in Ottawa on 22 October. The unedited video



Michael Zehaf-Bibeau is seen making a short recording on his mobile phone just before he launched attacks in Ottawa on 22 October in a combination of frame grabs from video released by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) on 6 March, 2015. —REUTERS

was released by police on Friday.

A Canadian convert to Islam, Zehaf-Bibeau died in a gun battle with police and security guards shortly after entering the Parliament building.

The majority of Zehaf-Bibeau's video was released in March, except for about 18 seconds that had been held back for what the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) called op-

erational reasons.

The full video shows Zehaf-Bibeau, 32, beginning with a commonplace Muslim prayer. "Lord open for me my chest, ease my task for me and remove the impediment from my speech," he said in Arabic, according to the subtitles supplied by the RCMP. "Lord accept from me and peace be upon you and upon the mujahedin. May Allah curse you," he said at

the end of the video. The RCMP said it had believed the 18 seconds it had edited out of the video could assist in determining the origin of Zehaf-Bibeau's radicalisation. It said it also needed time to fully analyse the language used.

"This video is a stark reminder of the need to remain vigilant at home and abroad," Public Safety Minister Steven Blaney said in a statement.—*Reuters*

PERSPECTIVES

Sunday, 31 May, 2015

Technology and expertise more important than loans

By Aung Khin

Finance is a necessity for operating an individual business, and fundamental for the development of a country's economic sector. However, skills and expertise are also crucial for doing business and managing finance effectively.

Myanmar is an agricultural country, and its farmers need sufficient support ranging from high-yield seeds to agricultural technology, which are

more important than loans in the long term.

It is not certain that the farmers will use all the loans for agriculture. But if they receive advanced agricultural technology, they have the chance to make on-going profits.

Loans can help support small-scaled businesses. However, advanced technology and knowledge are more important, enabling the provision of good services or the manufacturing of quality products to penetrate the international market.

Some small businesses such as restaurants or convenience stores also need know-how to improve their services. If they fail to provide good service to their customers, expensive items and quality goods will not be enough.

Parents who provide their children with education and knowledge leave them a much more stable inheritance than those who only give money. If the children do not have education or knowledge, they will

lose their wealth or property due to mismanagement.

According to a Myanmar saying, while robbers may take money and property, knowledge and education can never be stolen. With this in mind, assistance from the government or international organizations should put more emphasis on expertise rather than loan programmes.

Write for us

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

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

Extinguish habit to preserve health, set example for youth

By Maung Hlaing

IF I have to tell you about the dire effects of smoking, I can wax lyrical about them. It is simple, because I started smoking when I was 10. At that time, I had no knowledge of the difference between good and evil. When I started to write, I could not finish a single article without smoking a big cheroot. I would have barely written a few lines or sentences before taking several puffs.

For the individual, smoking fills a lot of empty moments. It acts as a stress reliever. It gives smokers something to do with their hands and provides satisfaction. Some maintain that cigarette smoke itself provides visual stimulation and may act as a comforting smoke-screen.

These reasons occupy young men and they fall prey to tobacco. One of the reasons I started smoking was that I saw adults doing it. I thought it was a "grown-up" thing to do. So I began to smoke in order to impress my friends.

To be frank, I did not really believe tobacco would do me any harm. I was not impressed when adults warned me about the dangers of smoking. My argument at that time was that 'If smoking is dangerous, why do so many adults do it?'

However, most people come to know that this habit causes ill health. It has been established that smoking increases the risk

of deadly illnesses such as lung cancer, heart disease and emphysema. Despite knowing these facts, we find it hard to give up the bad habit.

In the 21st century we are fully aware of the dangers of smoking. The nicotine inhaled from cigarettes makes the heart beat faster, and makes the arteries contract. This can lead to blockages in the arteries, particularly in the legs. We need not teach the fishes to swim. However, the number of smokers has increased year by year. (Because of a lack of surveys conducted by ministries or authorities concerned, we are not able to get the exact figures of smokers).

Smoking is widespread. And this habit is within easy reach for every person. This is why youths start the habit at first as a fashion and soon become addicted. The Ministry of Health has been implementing tobacco control activities. School-based tobacco control activities are being conducted in co-ordination with the Ministry of Education.

Myanmar has been participating in the Global Tobacco Surveillance System and has conducted Global Youth Tobacco Surveys (GYTS) in 2001, 2004, 2007 and 2011 and the Global School Personnel Surveys (GSPS) in 2004 and 2007.

Furthermore, The Control of Smoking and Consumption of Tobacco Product Law was adopted in 2006 under the State Peace and Development

Council Law. When the Tobacco Control Law came into force, tobacco advertisements in all forms were strictly prohibited.

However, the number of young smokers, many of them only children, is still on the increase. We can see so many placards saying: "Stop smoking," "Tobacco kills," "Tobacco smoke can harm your children" and so on. In almost every government office, you may see a warning saying, "No smoking area, penalties apply." But you can still see some young men smoking with gusto under the warning placard.

New York City took the first step in outlawing sales of cigarettes to anyone under age 21, in an effort to reduce smoking among the age group in which most smokers took up the habit. The bill, which was introduced by the City Council and had the backing of the Mayor, would make New York City would make it illegal to sell cigarettes to people under 21. (At that the legal age was 18.)

It is worth reading the remarks made by City Council Speaker Christine Quinn who said, "By delaying our city's children and young adults access to lethal tobacco products, we're decreasing the likelihood they ever start smoking, and thus creating a healthier city."

Dr Prabhat Jha, who was the head of the Centre for Global Health Research at St Michael's Hospital in Canada, advised smokers to quit before age 40 and greatly re-

duce their risk of premature death. According to the doctor, a study found smokers who quit when they were young adults significantly reduced their risk of dying sooner.

Quitting smoking before age 40, and preferably well before 40, gives back almost all of the years potentially lost due to continued smoking.

Dr. Jha's team obtained smoking and smoking cessation histories from more than 200,000 people who were interviewed between 1997 and 2004 in the US National Health Interview survey, and related the data to the causes of deaths that occurred by the end of 2006. They found people who quit smoking between age 35 and 44 gained about nine years and those who quit between ages 45-54 and 55-64 gained six and four years of life, respectively. (Such a survey should be an example to us all including authorities, ministries and civil organizations concerned.)

Smoking is at its last gasp in advanced countries with the highest incomes and best health services. Unfortunately, many people in developing countries will go on smoking till death by suffocation, heart attack or cancer.

World No Tobacco Day has come around once again on May 31. The day has been designated by the World Health Organization to draw global attention to the tobacco epidemic and to advocate for strategies to reduce tobacco use.

Letter to the Editor**Trousers Culture**

Sir,

Mi Aye, daughter of my old pupil and a school dropout residing in an out-of-the-way village came on her bike to town for shopping. On return, she dropped in on me at home. Made cross by her baggy trousers for the lower pant and scanty brassiere for the upper part, my bull-dog howled and made a sudden attack on Mi Aye tearing her trousers into pant. Timely I shooed the devil away but Mi Aye trembled from head to foot-tears raining down her face. She was shamed and pained but I am not sure if she had learned a good lesson.

At home Mi Aye watched television eagerly. She stared with wide eyes at Myanmar actresses who wear trousers and brassieres partially exposed to view. Mi Aye as always envied their mode of dress and imitated them as much like as possible. She had no idea that imitation is nothing but imitation only.

Whenever or wherever you go, you can't miss any Mi Aye who wears no trousers. As far as I am concerned, the infiltration of alien culture is dangerous to the young people both urban and rural. We are Myanmar. Why can't we act Myanmar indeed and thought?

As an unacceptable intrusion of alien culture on Myanmar is ubiquitous, I see the number of Mi Aye increase at an alarming rate. National identity begins to dwindle and fade. Young ladies of super modern styles seen on television are a great cause to affect Myanmar culture. The innocent young girls all over the country are inclined to believe that if they imitate the style of dress and mode of behavior of actresses, it is like they would be modernized. The young actresses hope that if they dress scantily, they would become a centre of attraction. They expect loud applause from their young audiences.

They forget that as they are Myanmar, what they do should be Myanmaric. Let's have a look. Our famous vocalist Soe Sanda Htun looks more beautiful and graceful in Myanmar traditional costume. Why those who are neither here nor there are inclined to copy everything foreign. It should be assumed that they are bewildered and half-blinded by things exotic. Unaware, they have been drowned in the depths of cultural vanity. Don't forget that you are born a Myanmar, will die a Myanmar!

*Yours truly,
U Aye Pe (Padaung)*

Educative talks on dangers of tobacco will be broadcast on radio and television and will be held in public places. However, when World No Tobacco Day is over, the smokers will defend the status quo.

May I ask you a question? Can you proudly say that you have given up smoking?

I can proudly say that I successfully stopped torturing my lungs and my heart a decade ago.

(This article is dedicated to my fellow smoker writers who will read my articles while they are smoking.)

ARTICLE

Stop illicit trade of tobacco products

Op-ed by Dr Poonam Khetrpal Singh,
Regional Director WHO
South-East Asia Region

Every tenth cigarette consumed globally is part of the illicit tobacco trade. Illegal trade in tobacco today no longer stops with the small time, neighbourhood bootlegger. While the smuggling of contraband tobacco products across national borders has always been profitable, illegal tobacco trade is now the trademark for organized crime networks, which may also be involved in drugs, human and arms trafficking, as well as terrorism.

Cigarettes are becoming a preferred item to smuggle; they are easy to buy, easy to smuggle and provide a good return on the investment. Large quantities of cigarettes are sold on the black market at below retail cost and without tax. Besides, unlike smuggling narcotics or other hard-core trafficked products, punishment for smuggling tobacco is less severe. In addition, since tobacco products

are not a high priority for enforcement agencies, this makes them attractive to smugglers.

The tobacco industry claims that high taxes drive smuggling. It also lobbies governments to keep tobacco taxes low. However, experience from many countries shows that there is no direct correlation between high taxes and smuggling. High tax margins may provide the initial incentive to smuggle, but data show that there are other motivating factors leading to smuggling.

Globally, tobacco kills nearly 6 million people each year. Unless we act now, the epidemic will kill over 8 million people every year by 2030. More than 80% of these preventable deaths would occur in low- and middle-income countries.

Countries are constantly defining ways to curb tobacco consumption. Tax and price policies are widely recognized as most effective for reducing demand for and consumption

of tobacco products. These measures together with strong pictorial warnings have brought substantial health care gains.

However, illicit trade undermines tobacco control policy efforts and facilitates increased uptake of tobacco by youth and adults from low-income groups by making tobacco products more affordable and accessible, particularly to those from low-income groups. And because these products are not subject to legal restrictions and effective health regulations aimed at curbing tobacco use, such as pictorial warnings or banning sales to minors, this is fueling the tobacco epidemic.

Illicit trade also causes substantial losses in government revenues, depriving the health sector from additional finances that go into the hands of criminals. Besides that, this type of illegal trade further weakens good governance.

In a bid to respond to growing illegal trade in tobacco products and to

make a consolidated effort to put a break in this cycle of illegal transactions, The Protocol to Eliminate Illicit Trade in Tobacco products was developed. This international treaty was negotiated by the Parties to the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC), and was adopted by them in November 2012.

The Protocol is an international treaty with the specific goal of eliminating all forms of illicit trade in tobacco products through a package of measures taken by countries that sign to uphold it.

However, the Protocol will become international law only after 40 countries have ratified or acceded to it. Once the law is in force, this will enable the Protocol to establish a global tracking and tracing regime, including national and regional tracking and tracing systems, as well as a global information sharing point. It will also create provisions to ensure control of the supply chain including

licensing, record-keeping and regulation of Internet sales, duty-free sales and international transit. Importantly it will allow countries to strengthen their own laws to tackle related issues.

In the South-East Asia Region, many countries have porous borders that provide easy opportunity for the smuggling of tobacco products. All South-East Asian countries have enacted stringent laws to control tobacco consumption – both on pricing and sale of tobacco products in-country as well as against import of foreign brands – and despite these efforts, there is still a thriving trade in smuggled tobacco products.

We do not have concrete data and knowledge about the adverse health, socioeconomic and security impacts from the illicit trade of tobacco. We need to know whether this practice increases use of tobacco in children. Such data would be invaluable in mobilizing government and

public support against illicit trade. Since the health consequences of the tobacco illegal trade directly impact the health of populations, it is up to the health sector to undertake serious studies to obtain such data.

Although illicit trade in tobacco products has a high importance for public health, the national economy and national security, the role of health ministries is minimal in curbing this menace. The main action lies outside the health sector, with departments in charge of customs, police, revenue, trade and intelligence. Member States are urged to accelerate entry of the Protocol into force by advocating through forums such as the World Customs Organization, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the World Trade Organization and other relevant organizations.

WHO urges all Member States to speed up their process of ratifying or acceding to the Protocol. Ratification of the Protocol is necessary to respond to the financial, legal and health impacts of illicit trade in tobacco products.

Census Results Highlight Myanmar's Development Needs

NAY PYI TAW, 29 May—A comprehensive profile of Myanmar's 51.5 million people and how they live is available for the first time in three decades, after today's release of the 2014 Population and Housing Census main results.

They include detailed data on population size and growth, age and sex, marital status, migration, births and deaths, education, employment, disability, housing conditions and amenities in each state and region, district and township. Planners at all levels can use these to identify gaps and pinpoint needs for infrastructure and social services.

The reported total population of 51.5 million includes estimates for areas not enumerated in Rakhine, Kachin and Kayah states, a total of 1.2 million people.

The census results reported in today's launch show both progress since the last census in 1983 and

ongoing challenges, including regional disparities and social indicators that lag behind Myanmar's neighbours. Highlights include:

- Population growth, 0.89 per cent per year, is less than half the 1970s rate and slowing.

- There are only 93 males for every 100 females, reflecting significantly lower male life expectancy and higher migration by men.

- Half the population is under age 27, but the proportion of children has started to fall.

- The average number of children per woman has declined to 2.3 from 4.7 in 1983.

- Life expectancy at birth, 66.8 years, has improved but is still one of the lowest in South-East Asia. Life expectancy is six years longer for females than males.

- Infant and under-5 mortality rates are high nationwide (62 and 72 per 100,000 live births, respectively), and nearly twice as high in some states as in

others.

- Almost 90 per cent of adults are literate, but in Shan state only 63 per cent are.

- 85 per cent of adult males and 50 per cent of females are in the workforce;

- unemployment is 4 per cent, and nearly twice as high for those 15-29.

- Only a third of households have electric lights and a third have mobile phones, but half have televisions.

- Over 70 per cent of homes have improved water and sanitation, but far fewer do in some states.

Additional results that require more time for analysis and consultation—on ethnicity, religion, occupation and maternal mortality—are scheduled for release next year.

The census main results are available online at http://country-office.unfpa.org/myanmar/2015/05/25/12157/myanmar_census_2014/.

UNFPA

Campaign aims to improve dental hygiene of Myanmar children

By Khaing Thanda Lwin

YANGON, 30 May—Toothpaste maker Colgate plans to teach more than 200,000 children in Myanmar about oral hygiene this year, Dr Soe Min Aung, professional executive at Colgate-Palmolive said Friday.

The “Bright Smile, Bright Future” campaign includes proper brushing techniques and healthy oral care habits taught by teachers who have received training from the company.

“The education programme targets grade 5 children aged 9 from government schools across the country,” Dr Soe Min Aung said.

According to Dr Thein Win, owner of Hnin Sanda Dental Clinic, grade 5 is “the perfect age to strongly promote proper oral health care knowledge.”

“We should take care of our oral health as early as possible,” Dr Thein Win said.

Colgate is planning to train more than 1,000 teachers in Ayeyawady Re-



gion next month. More than 2,000 teachers in Mandalay Region received training in May.

The programme has been initiated in Myanmar since September 2013 to promote awareness of oral health among children in government schools across the country in cooperation with the Education Ministry, Health Ministry and Myanmar Dental Association (MDA).

The company has also included private primary schools in Thanlyan Township in the programme, which has a target of teaching 900,000 children by

2020, Dr Soe Min Aung said.

The campaign has reached more than half a billion children and their families across 80 countries with free screenings and oral health education, according to Colgate.

According to a small-scale survey conducted by the MDA, more than 80 per cent of 5-year-olds in Myanmar have tooth decay.

The FDI World Dental Federation's research found 90 per cent of the world's population will suffer from oral diseases in their lifetime.

GNLM

Gunmen kill 22 bus passengers in Pakistan attack

QUETTA, (Pakistan), 30 May — Gunmen disguised as members of the Pakistani security forces killed at least 22 passengers on Friday night after forcing them off buses traveling from the western city of Quetta to Karachi on the southern coast, officials said.

The assault in the province of Baluchistan occurred in the town of Mastung, around 40 km (25 miles) south of Quetta.

“Fifteen to 20 armed men in three pickup trucks and wearing security uniforms kidnapped around 35 passengers,” Sarfaraz Bugti, Baluchistan’s home minister, told *Reuters*.

He said the bodies of 22 passengers were later found around two km away from the main Quetta-Karachi highway in foothills. Seven of the assailants

have been killed in an operation involving hundreds of soldiers and police, he added.

The circumstances of the passengers’ deaths could not immediately be established and the motives of the assailants were unclear.

The attack will be a concern for the government of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif because it raises further questions about the feasibility of a new economic corridor Pakistan wants to build with billions of dollars of Chinese investment.

The much-vaunted project, announced when Chinese President Xi Jinping visited Pakistan in April, envisages an eastern and western route, with the latter passing from Gwadar port in the south through Quetta and beyond.

Reuters



Relatives carry a boy who survived an attack on buses, into a hospital in Quetta, Pakistan, late on 29 May, 2015.—REUTERS

Libyan IS affiliates take over Sirte’s airport

TRIPOLI, 30 May — The Islamic State (IS) affiliated militants took over Gardabiya civil air base in the northern coastal city Sirte after local militias retreated from the site, a militia spokesperson said on Friday.

“Gardabiya Air Base in Sirte city has fallen to the hands of IS,” Mohamed Al-Shami, spokesperson for the Sirte’s 166 Battalion, said.

Al-Shami added the militias had to retreat late on Thursday in order to relocate to other areas near the city. “After that IS militants entered the base which was evacuated completely. The airport has nothing but an nonfunctioning and unre-

pairable warplane.” Gardabiya is the first airport controlled by IS militants since they took over most of Sirte in February.

Some army sources said the extremist group also took over a canal near the city, part of a mega water project under Muammar Gaddafi era.

Libya has been suffering an increasing violence ever since the fall of Gaddafi regime in 2011.

The North African country is plagued with continuous fighting and clashes between rival armed factions. Some extremist groups like IS and Ansar al-Sharia has been taking the chance to expand filling the security vacuum.—*Xinhua*

Fighters battle Houthis in Yemen’s southern city of Aden

ADEN, 30 May — Heavy fighting erupted in southern Yemen near Aden airport on Friday when local militia attacked Shi’ite Houthi rebels in a push to drive them from the district, residents and fighters said.

Saudi-led forces also made four air strikes on a military base near the airport, a source in the southern militia told *Reuters*.

A Saudi-led coalition began air strikes in Yemen on 26 March in a campaign to restore Yemeni President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi to power. He fled in March, after Iranian-backed Houthi rebels seized the capital Sanaa in September and then thrust into central and south Yemen.

Aden is Yemen’s commercial hub. Its airport has been closed since fighting began but its port provides sporadic access for desperately needed humanitarian aid to enter the country.

Houthis and forces loyal to former president Ali Abdullah Saleh are concentrated around Aden’s districts of Khor Maksar, Crater and Moalla.

The fighting in Khor Maksar has killed four southern militia fighters and 15 Houthis so far, the militia source said.

Later on Friday Houthis fired shells at Saudi Arabia’s southwestern province of Jizan, according to their official Twitter account. There was no immediate information about casualties.

Saudi forces and the Houthis have been trading fire across the border since the Arab alliance began its military operations.

On Thursday, two Saudi border guards were killed and five wounded by shells fired from Yemen.

Intense air raids by the Arab alliance were also reported overnight by residents of Saada, a province



Anti-Houthi fighters of the Southern Popular Resistance ride a military vehicle in Yemen’s southern port city of Aden on 28 May, 2015.—REUTERS

in northwest Yemen which borders Saudi Arabia. Raids also targeted a weapons storage site in Sanaa, said residents.

On Monday, Houthi fighters suffered their first significant setback in the south in two months of civil war when local militia ejected them from much of the southern city of Dalea, about 170 km (105 miles)

north of Aden.

The militias, who call themselves the Southern Resistance, are a loosely allied group of fighters who took up arms against the Houthis.

UN-sponsored peace talks set to be held in Geneva this week have been postponed because of the heavy fighting.

Reuters

Rocket attack in Libya’s Benghazi leaves eight dead, eight wounded — official

BENGHAZI, (Libya), 30 May — Eight people were killed and eight wounded when a rocket hit a residential district in the eastern Libyan city of Benghazi on Friday, officials said.

An army commander blamed Islamist fighters for the rocket strike. Fighting for control of the country’s second-largest city has been going on for a year, part of a conflict between former rebel groups who helped topple Muammar Gaddafi in 2011 but now back two rival governments.

“The army has made

much progress and they suffered big losses,” said army commander Fadh al-Hasasi, referring to the Majlis al-Shura, an umbrella group of mostly Islamist factions. “We had been worried they would take revenge for that and indeed now they fired rockets.”

Army forces backing the official government, based in the east since losing Tripoli to a rival faction, have expelled the Islamists from several districts but do not control the entire city.

To the east of Benghazi, Islamic State militants

attacked a security checkpoint near Derna, an Islamist hotspot, a security official said. Two soldiers were killed and five wounded, he said.

Islamic State has exploited the security vacuum as the two governments fight each other, with neither side dominating the other. The militants have killed dozens of foreign Christians and attacked oil fields and a luxury hotel in Tripoli.

In Sirte, a central city seized by Islamic State, the militants expanded their

presence by taking over an air base to the south of the city after forces loyal to the Tripoli government pulled out.

“Forces of the 166th brigade ... relocated so that so-called Daesh fighters captured Qurdabiya air base,” said Mohamed El-Shami, a military spokesman in Tripoli, using a derogatory term for Islamic State.

He said the brigade had previously requested reinforcements from a Tripoli-based rival parliament which had not arrived.

Reuters

Italy navy recovers corpses of 17 migrants from boat off Libya

ROME, 30 May — Seventeen migrants died on a boat off the coast of Libya, the Italian navy said on Friday, in the latest episode in the Mediterranean migrant crisis.

The navy said it had rescued 217 migrants in an operation carried out by its ship Fenice. No further details were immediately available.

Refugees escaping war and political persecution and economic migrants desperate for a better life have

been pouring into Italy this year, with approximately 35,500 arriving there up to the first week of May, the UN refugee agency estimates. About 1,800 are either dead or missing.

A navy spokesman said it was too early to say either how the migrants died or where those that had been saved would be taken.

Hundreds or thousands of migrants are now setting sail almost every day, mainly from lawless Libya. Earlier on Friday, the Italian

coastguard said more than 3,300 had been rescued off the coast of Libya in 17 separate operations.

It said its own ships as well as those of the Italian navy, Italian finance police and the navies of Ireland and Germany had been used.

Italy is bearing the brunt of Mediterranean rescue operations while European Union authorities press other member states to share the burden more fairly through a resettlement quota system for refugees.

However, an EU plan to disperse 40,000 migrants from Italy and Greece to other member countries met with resistance this week. Britain said it would not participate and some eastern states called for a voluntary scheme.

Under plans put forward by the executive European Commission, the bloc would also accept 20,000 refugees from outside the 28-nation grouping and share them around EU states.—*Reuters*

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Box Jellyfish anti-venom closer: Australian scientists



SYDNEY, 30 May — Australian scientists say they are closer to developing anti-venom for one of the world's deadliest toxins, the Australian Broadcasting Corporation reported on Friday.

QIMR Berghofer Medical Research Institute spokesman Jason Mulvenna said scientists discovered box jellyfish venom is similar to snakes and spiders, but also found proteins that were unique to box jellyfish. "This is the easy bit now we've got to work out what each of these proteins are doing, how it interacts with the body, and how we can abate that effect and help people who've been stung," Mulvenna said.

Due to the venom's

toxicity, a senior lifeguard said any anti-venom would need to be accessed in less than two minutes.

James Cook University Associate Professor Jamie Seymour said global warming has extended the box jellyfish habitat.

"Thirty to 40 years ago the length of the season was about a month to a month-and-a-half," Seymour said. "The length of the season now is about five-and-a-half to six months. It's increasing as water temperatures go up."

In Queensland, swimmers are confined to specially designated netted areas as box jellyfish stings cause severe pain. The box jellyfish has killed 60 Australians so far.—Xinhua

Airbus Group starts \$150 million venture fund, Silicon Valley base

PARIS, 30 May — Airbus Group announced the creation of a \$150 million venture capital fund and said it had hired a Google executive to run a new centre in Silicon Valley as it seeks to wave a digital wand over its heavy-manufacturing culture.

The planemaker said on Friday that Airbus Group Ventures would invest in "disruptive and innovative" technologies worldwide. It will be headed by Tim Dombrowski, 54, formerly a partner at venture capital firm Andreessen Horowitz.

The European group also said it had recruited Google executive and former US aeronautics researcher Paul Eremenko, 35, to run an innovation centre in Silicon Valley.

Airbus Group Chief Executive Tom Enders announced the centre's creation on Wednesday, saying it would provide promising avenues for technology it might otherwise miss.

It is the latest evidence of efforts by planemakers to woo technologists as potential partners and comes weeks after Enders took



People are silhouetted past a logo of the Airbus Group during the Airbus annual news conference in Colomiers, near Toulouse on 13 Jan, 2015. REUTERS

the company's top management team to California to see what lessons could be learned from the digital revolution.

Enders was quoted as saying after a previous visit to Silicon Valley last year that the aerospace industry must work more closely with high-tech companies — some of which, like Google, are encroaching on its turf through drone projects.

Boeing's Chief Executive Jim McNerney said last year it wanted it to be more like Apple in the way it innovates, rather than doing a "moonshot" development every 25 years.

Both planemakers have talked of the need to introduce improvements more quickly, without waiting for all-new plane developments that take years and cost around \$15 billion.

Though the highly safety-regulated and capital-intensive aerospace industry will always be conservative about the major bets that drive plane developments, Enders wants Airbus to learn to act "more quickly and with more courage", an aide said. Aerospace companies say they are increasingly thinking about software rather than hardware throughout

their businesses.

Although next month will still see hundreds of jet orders at the Paris Airshow, the focus of competition between Airbus and Boeing is shifting quickly towards the way they build planes now that each has almost a decade's worth of orders to fulfil.

On Thursday, Airbus presented to journalists its plans for a futuristic factory in which humans, robots and cobots — or collaborative robots — interact to make planes more smoothly and cheaply, but acknowledged it would not happen overnight.

Reuters

Mobile apps turn bedroom traders into star professionals

LONDON, 30 May — When Noa Strijbos picks a financial asset to trade on her smartphone while taking her dog for a walk, almost 26,000 people pay close attention.

The 30-year-old Dutchwoman is among the top-ranked traders on eToro.com, one of several mobile apps and websites that allow budding investors to copy the most successful trades out there rather than come up with their own.

About 25,900 people follow her profile on eToro, which has 4.5 million members overall, while nearly 5,000 have signed up to become her "copiers" — essentially creating a giant investment club — routing funds directly in the hope of profiting automatically from her trades.

Like any investment, this phenomenon has its risks and the stars of the apps can also lead people into losses, however good their records may appear.



A woman uses her mobile phone as she waits for a train during a rainy day at a train station in Jakarta, Indonesia on 4 May, 2015.—REUTERS

Regulators are cracking down on the murkier parts of tech-driven trading, and recently a trader from the London suburbs has been accused of helping to trigger the 2010 "flash crash" on the US stock market. The trader says he did nothing wrong.

Still, the story of Stri-

jbos shows how the spread of smartphones has revolutionised trading for those who believe more in the wisdom of their peers than of fund managers who charge heavy fees. This trend should also open up investment decisions to the public, rather than keeping them hidden.

eToro members can see each investment decision that Strijbos makes using the site.

"Every bit of trading I do is online," said Strijbos, who pocketed nearly 600 percent profits last year. "The Internet has helped me in transforming myself into becoming a pro-

fessional trader from an amateur observer in a few years."

Online copy trading is growing fast but remains a niche in the overall retail trading market which, according to research and advisory firm Aite, is worth \$2.8 trillion in the United States — with close to a quarter of US adults who have Internet access trading online. Some industry estimates put the volume of retail trading in Britain at about \$700 million a day.

Online trading and information providers including Zulu Trade, Ayon-do, Tradency and FxPro's Super Trader have popularized concepts such as "copy trading", all having a basic idea that investors can profit from the apparent wisdom and talent of others.

Sites typically highlight their most successful members whose strategies others would want to copy. Less prominent are the members who have failed

badly, possibly leading others astray.

On the eToro network, investors can search and select other traders by assets, countries or performance etc, while another website gurusfocus.com offers people the option to choose trading strategies of famous and successful fund managers.

Even the professional asset-management industry is starting to take copycat trading strategies seriously, at a time when active fund managers face competition from passive exchange-traded funds that track market indexes for lower fees.

One top European wealth management firm recently back-tested the investment strategies of star investors such as Warren Buffett, with a view to possibly incorporating them into their investments.

"The (copycat) strategy often works," said a source familiar with the study.—Reuters

Nearly 60% of South Koreans see Japan as military threat

TOKYO, 30 May — A total of 58.1 percent of South Koreans polled in a recent survey said they see



Yasushi Kudo, head of Japanese civic group Genron NPO, announces the outcome of a survey on 29 May, 2015, in Tokyo. It showed nearly 60 percent of polled South Koreans said they see Japan as a military threat, up from 46.3 percent a year earlier, as Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe aims to make changes to the country's postwar security policy.
KYODO NEWS

Japan as a military threat, up from 46.3 percent a year earlier, as Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe aims to make changes to the country's postwar security policy, organizers of the survey said on Friday.

The poll, conducted by Japanese civic group Genron NPO and South Korean think tank East Asia Institute from April to May, drew responses from around 1,000 people in each of the two countries and showed that only 11.2 percent of Japanese respondents see South Korea as a military threat.

Asked in a multiple-choice question, 83.4 percent of South Koreans and 71.6 percent of Japanese said they regard North Korea as a military threat, while 36.8 percent of South Koreans and 64.3 percent of Japanese cited China.

"It is shocking that in South Korea, Japan is seen as a military threat more so than China," Yasushi Kudo, head of Genron

NPO said at a Press conference.

Abe's government is seeking to pass bills to expand the scope of operations by the Self-Defence Forces and enable Japan to exercise the right to collective self-defence — coming to the aid of allies under armed attack even when Japan itself is not attacked, and engage in more peace-keeping operations abroad.

Around 40 percent of South Koreans polled also said they believe a military clash with Japan could occur within several years or in the future, while less than 10 percent of Japanese said likewise.

Ties between Japan and South Korea have deteriorated in recent years over history-related issues, including the so-called "comfort women" recruited to work in wartime brothels for the Japanese military. The Korean Peninsula was under Japan's rule from 1910 to 1945.

The two countries are

also in a territorial spat over a pair of islands in the Sea of Japan known as Dokdo in South Korea and Takeshima in Japan.

"South Korean people have an image of Japan as being a militaristic country based on their historic memories of the war and Japan's colonial rule. Prime Minister Abe's recent foreign policy is enlarging that image of Japan," Jeong Han Wool, executive director and senior researcher of the East Asia Institute, said at the Press conference.

On a more optimistic note, around 70 percent of Japanese and South Koreans in the poll — the third of its kind — were concerned about deteriorating public sentiment against each other and more than 80 percent thought a summit between Japanese and South Korean leaders, which has not been held since May 2012, is necessary to improve bilateral relationship.

Kyodo News

S Korean traveller in China confirmed with MERS, total 12 infected

BEIJING / SEOUL, 30 May — The Chinese health ministry said on Friday that a South Korean traveller to China has been diagnosed with the deadly Middle East Respiratory Syndrome, the first confirmation that the recent outbreak of the disease has spread to China.

Together with the 11 confirmed MERS cases in South Korea, the total number of those infected stands at 12.

In China, the 44-year-old South Korean man is being held in isolation at a hospital in Huizhou in the southern province of Guangdong, according to an announcement on the ministry's website.

The ministry said it has put an additional 38 people who came into close contact with the man under observation, although none of them have displayed unusual symptoms.

Guangdong health authorities said the provincial disease control centre and

the national disease control centre confirmed the man's infection on Thursday and Friday, respectively, while the 38 close contacts have all tested negative for the infection.

In Hong Kong, health authorities said 12 of the people who were in close contact with the man on his flight to Hong Kong on Tuesday will be quarantined as a precautionary measure.

Leung Ting-hung, controller of the Centre for Health Protection, said the 12 — three South Koreans and nine Chinese — will be sent to a quarantine camp on Friday night and their quarantine period will be 14 days starting retroactively from Tuesday.

Leung said none of the 12 people has shown symptoms of infection, but two passengers who were not deemed close contacts have developed mild upper respiratory infection symptoms and were being treated.—Kyodo News

Explosions rock Burundi capital as deadly protests continue



Policemen prepare to throw tear gas canisters during a protest against President Pierre Nkurunziza's decision to run for a third term in Bujumbura, Burundi, on 29 May, 2015.—REUTERS

BUJUMBURA, 30 May — Two explosions shook Burundi's capital on Friday but no one was hurt, police and a witness said, as deadly unrest against President Pierre Nkurunziza's bid for a third term in office rumbled on.

Pictures circulated on social media showed three charred vehicles in front of a KCB bank branch in downtown Bujumbura, until Friday an area largely free from the demonstrations that erupted on 26 April.

"We don't know the cause of the explosion

yet," said a police officer who had visited the scene of the first blast. There were no casualties reported.

In late afternoon, a second explosion rocked the same area, close to the post office, a witness said, adding there were no casualties.

But a demonstrator was killed in Butere suburb, where police clashed with protesters who say Nkurunziza's bid to contest the 26 June presidential poll violates the constitution.

A Reuters photogra-

pher in the area saw police fire at demonstrators who were hurling rocks at them. In the flashpoint suburb of Cibitoke, police shot at rock-throwing protesters and then used a bulldozer to clear street barricades.

The demonstrations, which began a day after Nkurunziza announced plans for a third term, have kindled the biggest political crisis in Burundi since an ethnically-charged civil war ended in 2005.

The government has called the protests an "insurrection" and linked them to a failed coup by elements of the army in mid-May. Nkurunziza's backers point out that Burundi's constitutional court has cleared the president to seek another term.

Many fear the violence, if left unchecked, could reopen ethnic rifts and lead to another round of bloodletting between the Tutsi and Hutu communities.

Tensions have put the region on the edge. In neighbouring Rwanda some 800,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus were

slaughtered in the space of few months during the 1994 genocide.

On Thursday the European Union and Burundi's influential Roman Catholic Church pulled out from observing elections, saying that next month's vote could not be fair because of daily unrest and a crackdown on media. The presidency said local and parliamentary elections would go ahead on 5 June.

Said Djinnit, the UN Special Envoy for the Great Lakes region, said the government and opposition on Thursday afternoon resumed peace talks which the opposition had boycotted since last weekend, when one of their leaders was murdered.

However, with both sides some way apart in their demands, the talks were put on hold until after east African leaders meet in Tanzania on Sunday in a special summit on the Burundi crisis.

"The summit (will be) good to provide important guidance to pursue talks," Djinnit said.

Reuters

President of Milan Expo investigated for tax evasion, embezzlement

MILAN, 30 May — The president of the company organizing the Milan Expo has come under investigation for tax evasion and embezzlement, Milan prosecutors said on Friday, the latest embarrassment for the showcase of global culture and technology.

Prosecutors said they have completed an investigation into Diana Bracco, the president of Expo 2015 Spa, for issuing invoices for non-existent work connected with healthcare group Bracco, of which she is president and chief executive.

Formal announcement by prosecutors that they have completed an investigation normally precedes a request for indictment.

The allegations refer to

the period 2008-2013 and are not connected with the six-month Expo, which Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi hopes can eventually help boost Italy's image and reinforce a fragile economic recovery.

But the event's opening on 1 May was marred by rioting on the streets of Milan, and it has already faced a corruption investigation that saw several top officials in the organizing body arrested, cost overruns and construction hold-ups.

Bracco's lawyer, Giuseppe Bana, said his client was not guilty of any criminal activity and had already settled the matter with Italy's tax agency. He pointed out that prosecutors had not yet asked for her to stand trial.—Reuters



People visit the France pavilion at the Expo 2015 in Milan, northern Italy, on 6 May, 2015.—REUTERS

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**18 injured in twin
explosions in S Philippines**

ZAMBOANGA, (Philippines), 30 May — At least 18 people were injured on Friday night in twin explosions that hit a compound near a police headquarters in the southern Philippine city of Jolo, security officials said on Saturday.

Security officials blamed the Abu Sayyaf group for the attacks, who were supposed to retaliate the death of their member last week during a police operation. The police said the first blast occurred about 7:30 pm just outside a mosque in Camp Kasim in Jolo, capital of Sulu province, when an unidentified man threw a grenade. The explosion left at least 5 civilians, including 3 minors, injured. The second explosion occurred 10 minutes later in the same area when an improvised explosive device (IED) exploded hitting the responding police forces,

es, according to Sulu Police Provincial director Abraham Orbita.

At least 11 police personnel were injured while another 2 civilians were hit and wounded from the bomb explosion.

The victims were rushed to the Sulu Provincial Hospital and military trauma hospital for treatment.

The police believed the grenade explosion was a booby trap for responding police forces.

"It seems the explosion was set up to draw responders as the target," Orbita said. No group has claimed responsibility for the attack, but Alan Arrojado, commander of military's Joint Task Group Sulu (JTGS), said the police forces killed a member of the Abu Sayyaf in downtown Jolo last week.

"It could be a retaliatory attack of the Abu Sayyaf group," he said.—Xinhua

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**Tighter border controls block African
migrants in Italian Alps**

BOLZANO, (Italy), 30 May — Some 200 mostly Eritrean migrants heading northwards from Italy were turned back by police in the Italian Alps on Friday and left sleeping in train stations as European countries tightened frontier checks before a global summit in Germany.

EU countries are struggling to stem the flow of migrants from North Africa and the Middle East and to share the burden more evenly across the continent, after more than 35,000 people reached Italy so far this year and hundreds more died at sea. Migrants often head north after landing in boats on Italy's southern shores, hoping to make it to Germany or Scandinavian countries with stronger economies and generous welfare benefits. Some have relatives already there. But the latest group were blocked by Italian and Austrian police as they got on trains that cross the Bren-

nero pass to Austria, according to the migrants, Italian police and Reuters reporters who witnessed the incident.

Travellers can normally cross borders without checks in most of the European Union, but Germany has imposed controls to prevent any violent protests at a Group of Seven leaders' summit south of Munich on 7 and 8 June. That has prompted Austria to tighten controls, especially on migrants who, if turned back by Germany, might lodge asylum claims there instead of in Italy.

"We tried to get on the trains for Germany, but the police stopped us," said Josef Michael Berhan, a 40-year-old Eritrean, who slept in the Bolzano station. Berhan, who is seeking asylum in Germany or Sweden, said he is running out of money after having paid about \$5,000 to smugglers to reach Italy. EU rules state asylum-seekers must seek



Migrants from Eritrea sit near tents as they live in a make-shift camp under a metro bridge in Paris, France, on 28 May, 2015.—REUTERS

refuge in the nation where they enter the bloc, a policy aimed at preventing abuses or multi-country applications. But Italy and other border states increasingly say it is not fair or practical. In a bid to help Italy and Greece, which have borne the brunt of migration from Africa, the European Commission has drafted a plan to disperse 40,000 Eritrean and Syrians to other member countries. That has met resistance from some EU governments. Britain has said it will not participate and some eastern states are calling for a voluntary scheme. The German border restrictions were imposed this week and are expected to last until 16

June. Austrian and Italian police also called in dozens of reinforcements.

On Thursday night, 100 of the migrants slept at the Brennero station, where temperatures dropped to about 4 Celsius (39 Fahrenheit). Dozens of others curled up on the marble floors of Bolzano station, further down the valley.

"Before the migrants got through, now they don't," Fulvio Coslovi, the local secretary for the Coisp police union, told Reuters. "If they can't find a way to continue their journey, then we are going to see the numbers of stranded migrants climb quickly this weekend."—Reuters



School girls from the Beijing Raiders football team take part in a training match at Mathare slums in Nairobi, Kenya, on 28 May, 2015. Located at the heart of the populous Mathare slums, Mcedo-Beijing School accommodates more than 600 students with disadvantaged background. Despite the hardships, many students here still enjoy the pleasure brought by football. Founded in 2007, the Beijing Raiders football team of the school has been a source of joy for the girls growing up inside the Mathare slums and collected dozens of trophies from local to national level.—XINHUA

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 31st May, 2015:** Rain or thundershowers will be fairly widespread in Yangon, Ayeyawady and Taninthayi Regions, Kachin and Mon States, scattered in Upper Sagaing and Bago Regions, Shan 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: Monsoon is weak to moderate.

Michael Jackson's Neverland ranch on sale for USD 100 million



King of Pop Michael Jackson's former Neverland ranch estate in California has been put on the market for USD 100 million.—PTI

LOS ANGELES, 30 May — King of Pop Michael Jackson's former Neverland ranch estate in California has been put on the market for USD 100 million.

Jackson refused to return to his sprawling home in Santa Barbara County following a police raid in 2004 during an investigation into child molestation charges against him — and the place that once boasted an amusement park rides and housed the pop star's many exotic animals has been empty ever since, reported *People* magazine.

Jackson bought the 2,700-acre property in 1987 for USD 19.5 million and staged his marriage ceremony to Lisa Marie

Presley there in 1995.

The late superstar defaulted on a USD 24.5 million loan backed by the ranch and investment firm Colony Capital took over Neverland in 2008, with a view to selling it.

The estate now features over 20 structures including the main house, guest houses, 50-seat movie theatre and a station that served as a stop-off point for Jackson's miniature railway.

Keen to keep fans away from the estate, the realtors hoping to sell the ranch are planning an "extensive pre-qualification" of all potential buyers before showing the property.

Sotheby's International Realty's Suzanne Perkins says, "We're not going to be giving tours."—PTI

Actor Jim Parsons takes on heavenly role in 'An Act of God'

NEW YORK, 30 May — With two winged angels at his side, actor Jim Parsons assumes a divine role as he reveals another storey of the six days of creation and issues a revised version of the Ten Commandments in the new Broadway comedy "An Act of God."

Parsons, a multiple Emmy winner for his role as the nerdy scientist Sheldon Cooper in the hit TV comedy "The Big Bang Theory," is God in the play that opened on Thursday night for a limited run at Studio 54.

God inhabits Parsons' body for the 90-minute minute, one-act comedy based on the book, "The Last Testament: A Memoir by God" by David Javerbaum, the 13-time Emmy-winner and former executive producer and head writer of "The Daily Show with Jon Stewart," and his Twitter account.

Dressed in a white robe, jeans and sneakers, Parsons sips from a chalice whilst seated on a white sofa on the celestial set as he explains the mysteries of faith and answers questions about evolution, homosexuality and the Bible.

"Where were you during the Holocaust? Or when they green-



Actor Jim Parsons poses at the 23rd annual "A Night at Sardi's" benefit for the Alzheimer's Association in Beverly Hills, California on 18 March, 2015. — REUTERS

lit the last five Adam Sandler movies?" asks Archangel Michael (Christopher Fitzgerald).

A sneering Parsons replies, "I made mankind in my image, and I am an asshole."

The trade journal *Variety* said the play was tailor-made for Parsons with his "deadpan stare and droll comic delivery," whilst *The New York Times* credits the 42-year-old actor for carrying the

comedy.

"With his sly smile and sparkly eyes, he delivers the zingers with an easy grace, giving a nice silky consistency to shtick that, in more aggressive hands, might grow oppressive," it added.

The New York Post said Parsons, who is making his third appearance on Broadway, is the reason the play made it onto the Great White Way.

"Parsons is charming as a supreme being who's relaxed, cocky and at times a little testy," it said.

Archangel Michael roams the audience taking staged questions from the audience. His co-wingman, Archangel Gabriel (Tim Kazurinsky), reads from the Bible as Parsons reminisces about creating the universe; takes digs at singers Kanye West, Justin Bieber and the Kardashians; and reveals how he first made Adam and Steve, not Eve, who came later.

"Being a comedy sketch stretched out to feature length, 'An Act of God' inevitably has its longueurs," said the *Hollywood Reporter*. "But there's no denying that this wickedly clever evening is both thought-provoking and anarchic fun."—Reuters

'Jaws' returning to big screen for 40th Anniv

LOS ANGELES, 30 May — Steven Spielberg's 1975 hit thriller "Jaws" will make its way back to US theatres for its 40th anniversary.

Fathom Events and Turner Classic Movies are teaming up to bring back "Jaws" to 500 theatres across the country, reported Ace Showbiz.

"Jaws" will be screened on Sunday, 21 June and on 24 June. The screenings will feature a spe-

cially produced, context-setting introduction to the killer shark classic from TCM Weekend Daytime host Ben Mankiewicz.

"Jaws" is credited with inventing the summer blockbuster and set the record for the highest grossing of all time until "Star Wars" debuted in 1977.

Back in 2014, a group of industry voters ranked the film Hollywood's No 24 favourite movie.—PTI



**Lil Wayne
tour bus
shooting
leads
to gang
charges**

ATLANTA, 30 May — An Atlanta man faces charges including aggravated assault and gang activity for shooting at Grammy-winning rap music star Lil Wayne's tour buses, police said on Friday.

Jimmy Carlton Winfrey, 25, fired at the two tour buses last month in order to gain street credibility, according to local media reports, which identified Winfrey as a member of the Bloods gang.

About a dozen people, including

music executives, were riding the buses after the rapper's 26 April performance at an Atlanta nightclub. Winfrey fired

from a moving vehicle on a metropolitan Atlanta highway, police said. No one was injured.

Cobb County Police charged Winfrey with felony counts of aggravated assault, terroristic acts, gang activity, felony possession of a firearm, and criminal damage to property.

Officer Alicia Chilton, a spokeswoman for Cobb police, said the arrest warrant was sealed and will not be made public. The charges against Winfrey were released on Thursday.

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution, citing the warrant, reported that the Winfrey's motive was "to gain status in his criminal organization by committing a high profile shooting of a rival rap artist" and that he has "associated himself with known blood gang members in the Atlanta area."

Wayne won Grammy awards in 2008 for best rap album, best rap song, and best rap solo performance and was part of the award-winning best rap group performance.

The New Orleans native has seen run-ins with the law on weapons and drug charges and went to prison in New York in a gun case. In March, a report of a shooting at a Miami Beach home belonging to Wayne, born Dwayne Michael Carter Jr, was declared a hoax by police.

It was not clear whether Winfrey was taken into custody. A representative for Wayne could not immediately be reached for comment.—Reuters

Brad Peyton wants to make a 'Superman' movie

LONDON, 30 May — "San Andreas" director Brad Peyton says he wants to make a "Superman" movie.

The filmmaker spoke about his love of DC comics characters in an interview, saying that while Batman is "super cool", he'd love to direct a movie about Superman, reported *Digital Spy*.

Carla Gugino also revealed that she's looking to land a role in the DC universe, but didn't specify which character she'd like to portray.

Peyton was previously linked to a Warner Brothers project focusing on DC character Lobo.—PTI

GENERAL

Presidential disaster declaration signed after Texas storms kill 21



Amy Gilmour, a volunteer from San Antonio, Texas, walks past a pile of debris, which included parts of destroyed homes, that amassed when the Blanco River flooded during the Memorial Day weekend rains in Wimberley, Texas on 26 May, 2015. —REUTERS

DALLAS, 30 May — US President Barack Obama signed a disaster declaration late on Friday for areas in Texas hammered by severe weather that killed at least 21 people, caused massive flooding and prompted evacuations this week.

Storms that battered North Texas on Thursday and Friday added more runoff to swollen rivers and prompted hundreds of calls for help in Dallas, where some areas saw up to seven inches (17.8 cm) of rain.

“Communities across the State of Texas have

experienced devastating destruction, injury and — most tragically — loss of life due to the major and unceasing severe weather system that has been impacting our state for weeks,” said Governor Greg Abbott, who has declared 70 counties disaster areas.

The presidential declaration frees up federal funds to help rebuild. No estimate has been given for the damage in Texas, which has a \$1.4 trillion-a-year economy and is the biggest domestic energy provider.

Near Dallas on Friday, thousands of cars

were trapped for about six hours on a suburban freeway blocked by floodwaters. The Red Cross distributed Girl Scout cookies and water to stranded motorists.

“I feel like I am on an island and nobody cares,” Vanessa Paterson, who was on the highway with her 6-month-old son, told TV station WFAA.

The National Weather Service issued a flash flood watch from Central Texas into Missouri, with the additional rain tipping off a new round of flooding.

Dallas officials advised

people to go home early and stay off streets that have seen more water than they can handle.

“This would be a great night to stay home, watch a movie and cook some popcorn,” Dallas Police Deputy Chief Scott Walton told a news conference.

The mayor of Wharton, about 60 miles (100 km) southwest of Houston, issued a mandatory evacuation order for about 900 people living near the Colorado River, which began flooding into the city on Thursday and has been rising steadily since.

The nearby city of Rosenberg also ordered about 150 residents living near the Brazos River to evacuate by Friday night.

Hundreds of Texans are set to spend the night in shelters after this week’s floods turned streets into rivers, ripped homes off their foundations and swept over thousands of vehicles.

The rushing water trapped people in cars and houses. One Dallas-area police officer had to be plucked to safety by a helicopter.

The rainfall for May across the state has already set a new record and more storms were forecast for Texas over the weekend.

Reuters

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Rooney targets silverware as Man United captain



Manchester United’s Wayne Rooney

LONDON, 30 May — Manchester United captain Wayne Rooney believes finishing in the Premier League’s top four last season was essential for the record 20-times English champions.

United came fourth in Louis van Gaal’s first campaign in charge, improving on their seventh-place finish under David Moyes 12 months ago. “Top four was a must, really,” Rooney told the United website on Friday. “We had to get ourselves back into the Champions League and we’ve managed to do that. Hopefully that will provide a springboard for us to go and fight for silverware next year.” Rooney said he enjoyed working under former Barcelona, Bayern Munich and Netherlands coach Van Gaal. “It was exciting really, to have the chance to work under him,” he added. “The

record he has got shows that he is a top manager and since he’s come in he’s been fantastic. “He had faith in me and made me captain. Seeing the way he works and his different style of management, it’s clear why he’s been successful.”

England striker Rooney accepted that United started the season slowly as they adjusted to Van Gaal.

“The manager came in with new ideas, a new way to play, new training methods and we did find that difficult at first,” the 29-year-old said.

“The manager told us before we started that we were going to find it difficult and there were also a lot of new players who came in during the summer and it can be difficult for them to bed into a new league and a new team.” Rooney was happy with his performances last season. —Reuters

US to work with China to fight wildlife trafficking

WASHINGTON, 30 May — The United States remains deeply committed to working together with China and other countries to strengthen the global commitment to combat and end wildlife trafficking, a State Department spokesman said on Friday.

State Department spokesperson Jeff Rathke made the remark as he lauded China for destroying over 600 kilograms of ivory in

Beijing and for its commitment to eventually halt the commercial processing and sale of ivory.

“Destroying illegal wildlife products demonstrates China’s ongoing strong commitment to ending wildlife trafficking, a global challenge with conservation, economic, health and security dimensions that affects all nations,” Rathke said in a statement.

China’s action, build-

ing on its crush in Guangdong Province in 2014, as well as similar events held in the United States, Britain, France, Chad, Belgium, Kenya, Ethiopia, the United Arab Emirates and the Republic of Congo, “sends a powerful message to wildlife poachers and traffickers and to the consumers of illegal wildlife products,” he said.

Friday’s event is a concrete action that reinforces

commitments made at the US-China Strategic and Economic Dialogues in 2013 and 2014, Rathke said.

“Securing a ban on the commercial sale of ivory is a critical element in our efforts to stop the poaching and end wildlife trafficking. We look forward to continuing our mutual efforts when we meet during the next Strategic and Economic Dialogue in June,” the spokesperson said.—Xinhua

Artisans make silver works at the Guilin International Conference & Exhibition Centre in Guilin, south China’s Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, on 29 May, 2015. The 2015 China-ASEAN Expo Tourism Exhibition opened here on Friday. —XINHUA



Blatter re-elected as FIFA chief for 5th term despite scandal



FIFA President Sepp Blatter delivers an opening speech at the 65th FIFA Congress in Zurich, Switzerland on 29 May, 2015.—REUTERS

ZURICH, 30 May — Sepp Blatter won re-election as FIFA president for a fifth term on Friday, despite the latest wave of corruption allegations engulfing soccer's world governing body that had led to growing lack of confidence in the sport's kingpin.

The 79-year-old Swiss' victory was ensured after his only rival Prince Ali bin Al Hussein, 39, of Jordan, withdrew from the race after the first round of voting by the electoral body comprised of 209 member federations at the FIFA Congress in Zurich.

"I take the responsibility to bring back FIFA with you. I am convinced we can do it," Blatter said to the congress in his victory speech.

He also hinted that this term in office, could be his last. "I promise you, at the end of my term I will give FIFA to my successor in a very, very strong position. A robust FIFA and a good FIFA," he said.

The first round of voting went 133-73 in favor of the incumbent, but left him seven votes shy of the two-thirds majority needed for outright election. The prince pulled out just as the election was moving to the second round. "It's been a wonderful journey in terms of knowing you (and) working with you," Prince Ali said in a brief concession speech. "I want to thank in particular those of you who were brave enough to support me. I am the president now, the president of everybody."

Blatter's victory came amid growing calls for his resignation after the US Justice Department on Wednesday indicted nine FIFA officials and five corporate executives on 47 counts in a corruption scheme that spanned more than two decades. Meanwhile, Swiss authorities have opened criminal proceedings into the bidding process of the 2018 and 2022 World Cup.

Kyodo News

USA avoid Myanmar mishap

WELLINGTON, 30 May — USA picked up their first win in four FIFA U-20 World Cup matches to secure the perfect start to New Zealand 2015 with a 2-1 win over Myanmar.

It looked like there could be an upset on the cards after Yan Naing Oo scored the tournament's opening goal, but strikes from Maki Tall and captain Emerson Hyndman meant the Stars and Stripes would top Group A after the first round of games.

USA were slow out of the blocks and the Asian underdogs were quick to take advantage, roared on by a supportive crowd at the Northland Events Centre. Htike Htike Aug tested Zack Steffen inside six minutes with a long-range effort.

The Freiburg goalkeeper was picking the ball out of his net soon after though. A whipped corner caused chaos at the near post and, after some shin-pinball in the six-yard box, Yan Naing Oo stabbed home — celebrated by the tournament debutants with a sideline line dance.

The jovial mood soon subsided as USA regained their footing. A steady increase in pressure saw Kellyn Perry-Acosta's cross scrambled behind for a corner, but captain Emerson Hyndman's dead-ball was clinical. Cameron Carter-Vickers' flick-on made its way to the back post, where Maki Tall was on hand to volley into the roof of the net.



Myanmar's Yan Naing Oo celebrates with team mates after scoring the tournament's opening goal during the Group A FIFA U-20 World Cup New Zealand 2015 match at Northlands Events Centre in Whangarei, New Zealand on 30 May, 2015.—FIFA

Rubio Rubin squandered a fine chance to double the Star and Stripes' lead, miscuing from eight yards out, before he caused Myo Min Latt in the Myanmar goal a lot more trouble with an impressive overhead kick. After ending on a high, USA returned from the break full of vigour, with Rubin heading over before then feeding Acosta, only to see the latter's sliding effort trickle inches wide of an open goal. The pressure told after ten minutes, however. A slick Myanmar attack was hit by an even slicker counter, led by Rubin, before the ball was laid on for Hyndman to slot home.

What followed was a composed performance from Tab Ramos' side, controlling the play in a fashion that had largely deserted them in the first half. With the clock ticking down Myanmar pushed for an equaliser, with captain Nanda Kyaw's long-range effort

lifting the crowd.

While Gerd Ziese's side had the USA worried, with Mg Mg Lwin setting a few pulses racing, it was not enough to earn them a point.

USA will look to secure passage to the Round of 16 against hosts New Zealand, while Myanmar will hope to bounce back against Ukraine.—FIFA

Coaches remarks

Gerd Zeise, Myanmar coach

We can leave this arena with our heads raise. We were a little bit unlucky, especially in the first half. I didn't see a better performance from the Americans, they only had more experience. I told [the American bench] that they were too clever for us and we must learn.

Tab Ramos, USA coach

We didn't play how we wanted to play, that's for sure. We found in front of us a very inspired team, a newcomer coming into the World Cup and they fought hard. They made us play ugly and it was difficult for us. I'm happy with the win but we're going to have to improve if we're going to go anywhere in this tournament. [Laughs] I can't really tell you what I said at half-time.

FIFA U-20 World Cup result 30 May, 2015

New Zealand	0 - 0	Ukraine
USA	2 - 1	Myanmar
Argentina	2 - 2	Panama
Ghana	1 - 1	Austria

Federer sets up last 16 showdown against local favourite at Roland Garros



Maria Sharapova of Russia celebrates after beating Samantha Stosur of Australia during their women's singles match at the French Open tennis tournament at the Roland Garros stadium in Paris, France, on 29 May, 2015.—REUTERS

PARIS, 30 May — No 2 seed Roger Federer has set up a last 16 face-off with local favourite Gael Monfils while leading a charge through Friday's third round matches for the standout names at Roland Garros.

Joining Federer in the winners' column are Maria Sharapova, Tomas Berdych, Ana Ivanovic and Stan Wawrinka.

The 17-times grand slam champion Federer claimed a routine victory over Damir Dzumhur of Bosnia and

Herzegovina, 6-4, 6-3, 6-2 under the watching of his four-year-old twin girls Myla Rose and Charlene Riva.

"They are happy when I'm back from the matches," the world No 2 Swiss said, laughing. "I'm happy it's that way and not the other way — they can't wait for me to go play tennis."

He will meet 13th-seeded Frenchman Monfils after the top-rated Frenchman danced a jig of delight in celebrating his full stretch win over No 21 seed Pablo Cuevas of Uruguay, 4-6, 7-6(1), 3-6, 6-4, 6-3.

Just a few weeks ago, Monfils beat Federer on clay in Monte Carlo. Sharapova enjoyed an emotional moment after dispatching former major winner Sam Stosur of Australia in straight sets.

The defending champion burst into tears after having dominated the match and breezed past the former French Open runner-up who's the 26th seed this year, 6-3, 6-4.

"I knew it was going to be a tough one going into the match, considering the start of the week was really tough," said the second seeded Russian who hit her way through a nagging cough.

Berdych dropped a set to Benoit Paire of France, but there was no overt worry for any of the seeds.

Ivanovic, who's a winner here in 2008 but since then hasn't been past the fourth round, returns to the fourth round after crashing out in the third round last year.

The highlight of day six competitions at Roland Garros has been on France as Jo-Wilfried Tsonga, Gilles Simon and Richard Gasquet all advanced alongside with Monfils, while Alize Cornet made the last 16 in the women's draw.

Elsewhere, China's Xu Yifan crashed out of the women's doubles second round as she and her Kazak partner Zarina Diyas were beaten 6-7(5), 6-3, 7-6(3) by the sisters pair-up, Anastasia and Arina Rodinova of Australia.—Xinhua



Roger Federer of Switzerland plays a shot to Damir Dzumhur of Bosnia and Herzegovina during their men's singles match at the French Open tennis tournament at the Roland Garros stadium in Paris, France on 29 May, 2015.—REUTERS