

# 'I want to run for president'

AFP, Naypyidaw

Myanmar opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi yesterday declared her intention to run for president, calling for all of the country's people to share the fruits of its dramatic reforms. Addressing the World Economic Forum (WEF) on East Asia in the capital Naypyidaw, the Nobel Peace laureate appealed for the amendment of the military-drafted constitution which prevents her from leading the country. "I want to run for president and I'm quite frank about it," the veteran democracy activist told delegates, as she sets her sights on elections due to be held in 2015.



"If I pretended that I didn't want to be president I wouldn't be honest," she added. The current constitution blocks anyone whose spouses or children are overseas citizens from being appointed by parliament for the top job. Suu Kyi's two sons with her late husband Michael Aris are British and the clause is widely believed to be targeted at the Nobel laureate. Changing certain

parts of the text requires the support of more than 75 percent of the members of the fledgling parliament, one quarter of whom are unelected military officials, she noted. "This constitution is said by experts to be the most difficult constitution in the world to amend. So we must start by amending the requirements for amendments," Suu Kyi said.

President Thein Sein's quasi-civilian government has surprised the world since coming to power two years ago with dramatic political and economic changes that have led to the lifting of most Western sanctions.

## Aung San Suu Kyi

- Led the National League for Democracy to victory in 1990 elections, but the junta refused to recognise the result
- Awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1991 for her struggle for democracy and human rights
- Spent most of the past two decades locked up by the junta
- Released from house arrest on November 13, 2010
- Won a seat in parliament in by-elections April 2012
- Travelled to Thailand in May 2012 on her first overseas trip in more than two decades. She also travelled to Europe, US, India, South Korea and Japan

Myanmar's opposition leader and democracy icon

June 6, 2013

- Declared intention to run for president of Myanmar
  - Called for amendment of the constitution which prevents anyone whose spouses or children are overseas citizens to run
- Suu Kyi's two sons are British, as was her late husband Michael Aris



Protesters, predominantly youths, demonstrate in Kizilay square, Ankara yesterday calling for Premier Recep Tayyip Erdogan to quit. Inset, protesters sleep near tents at Gezi Park near Taksim Square in Istanbul.

PHOTO: AFP



# Syrian army retakes Golan crossing from rebels

AFP, Quneitra Crossing

Syrian rebels yesterday briefly seized the only crossing along the Israel-Syria ceasefire line on the Golan, before regime forces recaptured it using tanks, an AFP correspondent and Israeli sources said. The fighting took place at the Quneitra crossing and the nearby village of the same in the demilitarised zone between the Syrian part of the strategic plateau and the Israeli-occupied sector. The clashes were very close to the headquarters of a UN peacekeeping force, prompting Austria to announce it was withdrawing its troops from the mission. "The Syrian army has recovered control of the crossing," an Israeli security source told AFP, speaking on condition of anonymity. An AFP correspondent near the crossing also confirmed that forces loyal to President Bashar

al-Assad had retaken Quneitra, saying he could see regime tanks moving inside the area. Quneitra is the only crossing point between Syria and the Israeli side of the Golan Heights which the Jewish state seized during the 1967 Six-Day War. The Israeli military earlier confirmed that the crossing and the nearby town of the same name had fallen into rebel hands. Following the clashes, in which two UN peacekeepers were slightly injured, Austria announced it was withdrawing its 380 troops from the UN Disengagement Observer Force which has been monitoring the ceasefire line since 1974. The pullout will have a significant impact on the size of the UN peacekeeping force, whose numbers dropped to around 900 in March after Croatia became the latest country to withdraw its soldiers, following similar moves by Canada and Japan.

# Microsoft, FBI targets global cybercrime ring

AFP, San Francisco

Microsoft on Wednesday said it teamed with the FBI to disrupt armies of hacked computers used to commit more than a half-billion dollars in financial fraud around the world. A strike coordinated with police and financial institutions disabled more than a thousand "botnets" used by a global cybercrime operation to steal people's banking information and identities, according to the software colossus. Botnets are networks of computers infected with viruses that let them be controlled by hackers. An investigation launched early last year led Microsoft and its allies to malicious software called Citadel, which monitors keystrokes on infected machines and sends information such as account names and passwords to hackers. Cybercriminals used stolen passwords to take money from online bank accounts, according to Microsoft. Citadel 'malware' has infected millions of computers in more than 90 countries, with the highest numbers of infections found in Europe, Hong Kong, India, Singapore, Australia, and the United States, Microsoft said.

## ODDLY enough



### Reminder ring!

STAR DESK

If you're tired of setting up notifications on your gadget in the hope that you'll finally be reminded about your wedding anniversary on time, rejoice, because things are about to get a lot easier. The Remember Ring is a concept wedding ring that heats up 24 hours before the big day, letting you know it's time to prepare a nice surprise for the wife. The useful accessory looks like an ordinary wedding ring but is fitted with Hot Spot technology that makes it heat up to 120 degrees Fahrenheit on the day before the

### 84-yr-old US woman wins \$590m jackpot

PTI, Washington

An 84-year old woman from Florida has won the USD 590.5 million Powerball lottery, the second largest US jackpot, officials have announced. The jackpot had been touted by lottery officials as "the largest in the 21-year history of the game." The two-dollar tickets are sold in supermarkets, convenience stores and service stations across 42 US states, the capital Washington and the



An aerial view shows houses flooded by water from the River Danube near the Bavarian village Deggendorf, southern Germany yesterday. Germany pushed on with frantic efforts to secure saturated river dykes with sandbags yesterday, bracing for a surge of the worst floods in over a decade that have claimed 12 lives and forced mass evacuations across central Europe.

PHOTO: AFP

# US, Venezuela seeking to mend ties

AFP, Antigua

After more than two years of testy relations that began under former Venezuelan leader Hugo Chavez, the United States and Venezuela on Wednesday agreed to try to mend their bitter ties. US Secretary of State John Kerry said both countries agreed "we would like our countries to find a new way forward, establish a more positive relationship." He was speaking after talks with his Venezuelan counterpart Elias Jaua on the sidelines of an Organization of American States meeting in Guatemala. "We agreed today that there will be an ongoing, continuing dialogue at the high level, between the State Department and the foreign ministry, to try to set up an agenda, beginning to exchange dialogue between our two countries to ultimately" lead to the nomination of new ambassadors, Kerry told reporters. Caracas and Washington have been operating embassies in each other's country without an ambassador since a diplomatic spat in 2010. Washington has repeatedly sought to extend an olive branch to Caracas, even before Chavez's death from cancer in early March. And it has long hoped that a post-Chavez era could herald a new era in ties, although initial signs from new President Nicolas Maduro -- Chavez's anointed heir -- were not good.

## MAU MAU UPRISING UK to compensate for colonial-era abuse

AFP, London

Britain has agreed to compensate Kenyans tortured during the Mau Mau uprising against colonial rule in the 1950s, Foreign Secretary William Hague said yesterday. Hague expressed "sincere regret" that the abuses had taken place and told parliament the government would pay a total of £19.9 million (23.5 million euros, \$30.8 million) to 5,228 clients represented by a British law firm. Lawyers for Britain's Foreign Office had unsuccessfully argued that legal responsibility for what happened under the colonial government had been inherited by the Kenyan government when the country was granted independence in 1963. But the Foreign Office confirmed last month it was negotiating settlements for elderly Kenyans who accuse British imperial forces of severe mistreatment, including torture and sexual abuse. Hague told parliament on Thursday: "The British government recognises that Kenyans were subject to torture and other forms of ill-treatment at the hands of the colonial administration. "The British government sincerely regrets that these abuses took place and that they marred Kenya's progress towards independence. Torture and ill-treatment are abhorrent violations of human dignity that we unreservedly condemn." Hague said Britain would also support the construction in Nairobi of a memorial to the victims of ill-treatment during the colonial era.

# US 'collects millions of phone record in secret'

BBC ONLINE

The US National Security Agency (NSA) is collecting the telephone records of tens of millions of Americans, according to the Guardian newspaper. The British paper published what it said was a secret court order directing the Verizon company to hand over electronic data on all its customers on an "ongoing daily basis". Civil liberties groups said the details of the report were "stunning". The US government, security agencies and Verizon have not commented. The US Center for Constitutional Rights said it appeared to be "the broadest surveillance order to ever have been issued". The document published by the Guardian was signed by Judge Roger Vinson of the secret Intelligence Surveillance Court on 25 April and lasts until 19 July. It falls under a section of the Bush-era Patriot Act which allows access to business records for "foreign intelligence and international terrorism investigations" - it was unclear whether it was a one-off order or a renewal of an existing request. The order requires Verizon - one of the largest phone companies in the US - to disclose to the NSA the metadata of all calls it processes, both domestic and international. Such metadata includes telephone numbers, calling card numbers, the serial numbers

of phones used and the time and duration of calls. It does not include the content of a call or the callers' addresses or financial information. The order also contains a gagging order, requiring that "no person shall disclose to any other person that the FBI or NSA has sought or obtained tangible things under this Order". The document "shows for the first time that under the Obama administration the



communication records of millions of US citizens are being collected indiscriminately and in bulk - regardless of whether they are suspected of any wrongdoing," said the Guardian report's writer, Glenn Greenwald. The paper said the NSA, the White House and the Department of Justice had all declined to comment. A spokesman for Verizon, Ed McFadden, said the company had no comment.

# Zero Dark Thirty received Panetta tips

Reports say the ex-CIA chief spilled secrets

AFP, Washington

A Pentagon investigation has found ex-CIA director Leon Panetta spilled some secret details to a Hollywood screenwriter behind the film "Zero Dark Thirty," a watchdog group reported Wednesday. The findings of the Pentagon's inspector general are contained in a draft report that has not been publicly released but was obtained by the independent watchdog group, the Project on Government Oversight (POGO). The probe throws a potentially embarrassing light on President Barack Obama's administration, suggesting the White House was keen to help filmmakers tell a flattering story even as it aggressively investigated government officials and journalists over possible leaks of sensitive information. The Pentagon inspector general's report appears to have been completed months ago but the release has been repeatedly delayed, raising concerns the timing has been subject to political considerations, POGO said, quoting an unnamed official inside the inspector general's office.

