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Successful People Read *The Post*

4000 RIEL

The latest from the Moek Dara trial

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'There she is, Miss Cambodia'

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Sweeping measures

Sor Leash, 20, sweeps up at the Al-Azhar mosque in Phnom Penh yesterday. The Thai government is allegedly trying to keep tabs on Cambodian Muslims travelling to Thailand. HONG MENEHA

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A profession's sobering statistics

Shane Worrell and Mom Kunthear

MALIS, not her real name, appears forlorn as she describes what her daughters go through to secure tips from their customers.

The young women, promoters for a major beer company, reluctantly spend their nights getting drunk on their own product – it's what customers demand and can be the difference between the promoters earning tips and leaving

Beer promoters compelled to drink – a lot

their restaurants empty-handed. Malis would know – she sells for the same beer company.

"I very much pity my daughters for following me into this work, but what can I do?" the 42-year-old says.

Getting drunk may be only a weekly or monthly pleasure for the customers, but for the women who serve them in restaurants, beer gardens and karaoke

venues, it can be a full-time job – 27 nights a month.

"Every night, I have to talk to clients and persuade them to drink my beer," Malis says. "I have to force myself to drink with the clients because it's the only way they will buy it – I can't avoid it."

According to Ian Lubek, adjunct professor of psychology at the University

of Guelph in Canada, about 85 per cent of 1,660 Cambodian beer promoters he has surveyed between 2004 and 2012 regularly drink at work.

"Our research shows that beer promoters are consuming on average 1.5 litres of beer per night – that's six glasses of beer, 27 nights per month," Lubek says.

Research Lubek conducted in

2002 showed that the average beer promoter made US\$55 per month, but had monthly living expenses of about \$110.

Women were drinking with customers and offering sexual services as a way of making up the difference – ensuring they could provide for their children or send money to their provincial families.

According to Lubek's most recent

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National

A profession's sobering statistics

Continued from page 1

study, conducted this year, the promoters' average monthly wage has climbed to \$75, but expenses have grown even faster, to about \$180 per month.

"[Now] they're averaging a BAC or blood-alcohol content of .05. They're basically drunk every night," Lubek says.

"Overuse of alcohol at such a high rate leads to liver disease. Also, women aren't told not to drink when they're pregnant."

Major companies involved in Cambodia's beer industry including Carlsberg (an owner of Angkor Beer) and Heineken (an owner of Anchor, ABC and Tiger) established Beer Selling Industry Cambodia (BSIC) in 2006.

Included in a code of conduct it released were commitments to increase education for beer promoters, scrap demeaning uniforms, provide contracts and crack down on sexual harassment.

To address drinking, the COC specifies that beer promoters "should not" drink with customers.

According to the *BSIC Monitoring Report 2011*, authored by Indochina Research, there is a marked difference between the conditions of beer promoters employed by BSIC companies and those working for non-BSIC companies.

The report, based on monthly interviews of beer promoters last year, says 61 per cent from BSIC companies never drank with customers, while 38 per cent sometimes did.

Only 31 per cent of beer promoters from companies not part of BSIC never drank with customers, while 56 per cent sometimes did, the report claims.

Vo Thi Mai Trang, public relations and communications manager for Carlsberg Indochina, says the number of beer promoters drinking in Cambodian workplaces has decreased dramatically since BSIC was formed.

"And this is thanks to [the] BSIC Code of Conduct as well as the intensive training that we provided to our [beer promoters]," she says, adding that Carlsberg's beer promoters are the highest paid after two pay increases last year.



An Anchor beer promoter serves a customer at a beer garden in Phnom Penh on Monday night. PHA LINA

John-Paul Schuirink, a spokesman for Heineken International, says promoters who sell his company's beer are also well paid.

"The current average base salary . . . is \$92 per month for a 30-hour working week. A 10 per cent increase was implemented this year. [It] compares favourably to the average income in Cambodia," he says.

Schuirink says his company recognises the risks associated with beer promotion, which is why it founded BSIC and banned workers from drinking.

"Research shows that the beer promoters working for Attwood [a distributor for the company in Cambodia] have the highest rate of awareness and compliance with this rule," he says.

Heineken's priority was preventing alcohol use during working hours by giving training and information about its consequences, Schuirink adds.

"Besides that there is medical assistance available in case of problems," Lubek, however, believes the COC has been largely ineffective.

"Statistics don't show any improvement in the amount of beer drunk in the workplace . . . our research shows that company health education, if any, may come six to 12

months after they begin working . . . That's too late to prevent HIV/AIDS and alcohol dependence."

One company not affiliated with BSIC, the Phnom Penh Beer Company, says its workers are "not encouraged" to drink.

"We don't want them to drink because we want them to maintain their dignity . . . It also looks bad for the company if they drink," a spokesman says.

When asked if the company provides health services for workers battling alcohol addiction, he says, "No, we don't have any problems like that."

Kingdom Breweries, also not affiliated with BSIC, says it no longer has beer promoters, but would not elaborate.

Dave Welsh, country director of the American Center for International Labor Solidarity, says beer companies need to do much more to ensure their promoters' rights are protected.

"There's a real health issue with unregulated drinking," Welsh says. "It's an unhealthy environment to work in, frankly."

Offering beer promoters a wage that covered their monthly expenses is something beer companies should consider, he says.

"The amount of profits that are flow-

ing back, not just to Angkor or Anchor, but to world-famous breweries like Carlsberg gives them a lot of leverage."

Carlsberg is, however, taking positive steps toward establishing a memorandum of understanding that could improve conditions for its workers, Welsh adds.

Phol Sophea, deputy director of the Cambodian Food and Service Workers' Federation (CFSWF), in Siem Reap province, believes some progress is being made to improve conditions for beer promoters, but problems such as drinking remain.

"Many workers have problems with physical health," Sophea says.

"I ask them to visit the health centre, a service the companies provide free of charge. "But there is no support from the companies if a beer promoter becomes dependent on alcohol."

CFSWF advises its members to tell customers that drinking on the job will make them sick.

"But some clients just don't listen," Sophea says. "So if the women don't sit and drink beer with clients, they won't sell their products and they won't have any tips."

"The clients are kings to them, because they have money." ■

Preah Vihear land primed for plantation concessions

May Tithara

THE GOVERNMENT has reclassified 23,182 hectares of state land in Preah Vihear province for private development by three agro-industry firms, paving the way for them to secure economic land concessions.

Reclassification of state public land to state private land is a key step toward establishing ELCs, concessions that Prime Minister Hun Sen declared a temporary moratorium on in May amidst mounting criticism that the country was being rapidly carved up among businessmen.

But a loophole in that moratorium, criticised by rights groups as self-defeating and deliberately vague, allows the government to grant ELCs that had previously been under negotiation.

On August 3, the prime minister signed off on the reclassification of land in Borie, Kulen and Roveang districts to Green Choice (Cambodia) Co, Ltd (7,863 hectares), Aminent Elite (Cambodia) Co, Ltd (7,359) hectares and Distinct Harvest (Cambodia) Co, Ltd (7,960 hectares) respectively, according to the latest Royal Book.

The land reclassification process is managed by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries according to a statement announcing the reclassification from Preah Vihear Provincial Hall.

When asked yesterday whether the government should still be negotiating ELCs in spite of the moratorium, Chan Sarun, minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, declined to comment, saying he was busy with a guest.

It Nody, a secretary of state at the Ministry of Agriculture Forestry and Fisheries could not be reached for comment.

Numerous ELCs have been granted since the premier announced the moratorium, and Am Sam Ath, a senior investigator at the rights group Licadho, said this was yet another example of the insincerity of the premier's actions.

"We don't know how many companies will continue the procedure, so it makes the people confused with the government and the directive 01 [ELC moratorium] ineffective," he said. ■

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Deaths, injuries, illness? Blame it on the python

Mom Kunthea

VILLAGERS in Kampong Speu province are claiming that the vengeful ghost of a butchered python has caused freak accidents and the grisly deaths of two people.

Un Thun, a Prey Krasaing commune councillor, said yesterday that a woman's death earlier this year was blamed on the snake, as was the recent demise of a man in the past two weeks. Their exact ages are unknown, though they are not elderly.

According to Thun, the bodies of both snake-ghost victims contorted and writhed right before dying, and their skin grew scales resembling a python's leathery exterior.

The saga of the haunting reptile began like many sagas: with wine and a murder.

Thun said that last year, seven Prey Krasaing villagers caught a large python near the pagoda. They killed, cooked and ate it, washing the apparently tainted meal down with wine.

Sicknesses and accidents were not long in arriving. Someone fell from a palm tree, another slipped while walking, and a third became mentally ill. Everything was blamed on the angry spirit of the python.

When the second man became ill, villagers took him to a doctor. "But he could not cure him, and then they went to see the fortune-teller, who said that he had done a bad deed," Thun recalled.

And the appetite of the murderous, grudge-bearing reptile is far from sated.

According to Thun, "As the fortune teller said, the spirit

of the python will avenge those who killed and ate it. All the people who killed and ate the python cannot escape from dying. Even now, some of them do not die, but they will next time."

At the funeral for the man last Sunday, villagers reportedly saw a small snake slither up to the man's coffin. Villagers did not dare harm the creature, for the lesson of the snake had been learned. They removed it from the ceremony and placed it peacefully back into the grass.

But even after recounting the mysterious tale, Thun remains a sceptic, preferring to stick with more boring, if likelier, explanations.

"I don't think they died and got sick because of the python's spirit, but maybe they had a disease which could not be treated," Thun said. ■

Pedophile charged French national given one-year sentence, fine

A FRENCH national accused of sexually molesting five minors was sentenced yesterday in Siem Reap to one year in prison and ordered to pay 800,000 riel, or US\$200, to each of the victims, in addition to a 2 million riel or US\$500 fine.

Morin Marcel, 58, was found guilty of indecent acts against five minors under the age of 15, Judge Chhay Kong said.

Siem Reap provincial anti-human trafficking and juvenile protection official Doung Thavary said police had arrested Marcel on February 18 at a guest house in the Svay Dangkom Commune, based on evidence collected by the child-protection NGO Action Pour Les Enfants.

"He approached nine under-age boys during the night by buying them food, kissing and caressing their private parts, fondling their genitals and inviting them into his guest house," Thavary said. **THIK KALIANN**

Monitoring questions mount

Vong Sokheng
and Joseph Freeman

OFFICIALS from Cambodian immigration, law enforcement and diplomatic circles were either unaware of, or unwilling to talk yesterday about, an alleged request from the Thai government to help monitor Cambodian Muslims crossing into the country.

"That is a Thai problem," said Pin Piseth, head of immigration at the Ministry of Interior, declining to elaborate.

He would not confirm or deny that the government was aiding its neighbour in keeping an eye on Muslims travelling in the days following the end of the holy month of Ramadan.

News of the alleged monitoring surfaced on Monday when Thai Deputy Prime Minister Yutthasak Sasiprapa told the *Bangkok Post* that thousands of Cambodian Muslims were entering Thailand as "tourists" every day, and that the Immigration Bureau was given instructions to keep tabs on their movements.

He also said that Cambodian authorities would be asked to co-operate. But the Cambodian ambassador to Thailand, You Ay, said she had not received any such requests.

"I don't know anything, it was



Haji Yusef, an imam at the Al-Azhar mosque in Phnom Penh's Russey Keo district, speaks to the *Post* yesterday. HONG MENE

a publication in Thai media," she said.

It's unclear how the Thais would be able to accurately identify Cambodian Muslims apart from their dress. They account for just a fraction of a predominantly Buddhist population, religious affiliation is not listed on Cambodian passports, and hundreds of thousands of Cambodians travel to Thailand throughout the year.

Khieu Kanharith, the Cambodian Minister of Informa-

tion, said it's a matter of religious profiling.

"The Thai government is always speculating about Khmer Muslims who cross into Thailand when there is problem in the south – it is usual," he said.

Over the past eight years, the south has been a hotspot of brutal violence as insurgents waged a deadly campaign against the government to seek an independent Muslim state.

But Koy Kuong, a spokesman for the Ministry of Foreign Af-

fairs, said Cambodian Muslims who cross into Thailand are seeking work, not warfare.

"They don't have any ill-will purpose. It is speculation on pleasant people," he said. "When they enter, it is [the Thai] authorities' duty in checking with them while they stay in Thailand."

Numerous attempts to reach the Thai Ministry of Foreign Affairs were unsuccessful.

Members of Muslim communities in Phnom Penh yesterday voiced concern about the perceived targeting of Cambodians who share the Islamic faith.

Chi Ya, 58, in the Chroy Changva village of Russey Keo district, said he was worried about neighbours who go through Thailand to visit family members in Malaysia. If they get arrested based on stereotypes, "that would be bad".

Haji Yusef, imam of the Al-Azhar mosque in Russey Keo, read about the alleged Thai policy online, but rejected the idea that a fundamentalist strain of Islam existed in Cambodia.

"We have a good network of Khmer Muslims in Cambodia, and if a member of us is suspected to have connections with bad Muslims from outside, we would detain them immediately and hand them over to the government." ADDITIONAL REPORT-
ING BY CHEANG SOKHA

Ratha has fighting words for Hun Sen

May Titthara

WANTED so-called secessionist plot ringleader Bun Ratha blasted Prime Minister Hun Sen during a radio interview yesterday, dismissing as "fake" allegations the premier has levelled against him, Beehive Radio Station director Mam Sonando and rights worker Chan Soveth.

Ratha, who fled into hiding just before he was targeted during a brutal security forces crackdown on a village in Kratie province that left a 14-year-old girl dead in April, is wanted along with several others for his alleged role in trying to form an autonomous mini-state.

During an interview with Radio Free Asia yesterday, Ratha said anyone who dared to question the government's real motivation for the crackdown, which he maintains was to forcibly end a land dispute, was being targeted with the same fictitious allegations.

"I would like to deny that I am involved with Chan Soveth. And I think Mr Hun Sen is creating more fake evidence to shut up any official or people who dare to talk about the issue of Pro Ma village, Kampong Damrei commune in Kratie," he told Radio Free Asia.

Chan Soveth, a senior investigator with the rights group Licadho, has been summonsed to court on the vague charge of "assisting specific perpetrators" that an anonymous court official has told the *Post* is in relation to his alleged connection to secessionist allegations.

Mam Sonando, who regularly used his radio station to air outspoken criticisms of the government, was arrested and charged in July, also in connection with the plot, which the government claims was led by a group called the Association of Democrats.

Ratha said he had nothing to do with the Association of Democrats and that the prime minister was inventing information to conceal the real reason for the government crackdown on Pro Ma village – corrupt local government officials trying to steal land.

Ministry of Interior spokesman Khieu Sopheap said Bun Ratha's allegations were unlikely given the government never acted like that toward its own people.

"What he is saying is only for the purpose of seeking political asylum," he said.

The *Post* was unable to contact Bun Ratha for comment yesterday.

'Harassed' workers stick to their guns

Claire Knox and Mom Kunthea

OCEAN Garment yesterday refused to meet the sole demand of thousands of striking workers to have their manager, accused of sexual harassment, sacked.

An inter-governmental ministerial committee met with union and employer representatives, but Bangladeshi-owned Ocean Garment – which supplies retail titan Gap – refused to terminate the manager accused by workers of misconduct.

More than 2,500 of the Phnom Penh factory's 4,000-strong work force have been on strike since August 11, and yesterday, the allegedly abused women announced they would be pressing criminal charges.

Worker representative Keo Kim Heang said workers were left feeling thwarted, having expected a positive outcome.

"He asked the workers to go out with and then have sex with him, especially the beautiful workers. He was so angry when

the workers rejected his advances and they are very worried for their security," she said.

Four women claimed to have endured repeated sexual harassment from the manager for almost a month now.

Executive director for Gender and Development for Cambodia Ros Sopheap said the fact the women had reported the alleged abuse was a breakthrough.

"I think in almost more than 10 years, I have not seen a claim of sexual harassment [in the gar-

ment industry], yet we know it is common in this industry," she said, lauding the courage and solidarity of the women.

But Ken Loo, secretary-general of the Garment Manufacturers' Association of Cambodia, said sexual harassment was not endemic in the industry, and that it was rather a case of "friendly behaviour being misconstrued as sexual advances".

Choun Vicheka, Ocean Garment's administrative manager, could not be reached.



Police confront striking workers employed by Ocean Garment Co Ltd during a protest in Phnom Penh on Monday. VIREAK MAI



Local Consultancy Opportunity

The Cambodian Center for Human Rights (CCHR) is looking for a local consultant for duration of 2.5 months. The successful candidate will be required to conduct research on the barriers to women participation in Politics in Cambodia and to provide technical support to the project team on the project's activities, under *The Project to Promote Women's Political Representation in Cambodia*.

Expected deliverables:

- Work plan, including methodologies and tools of the gender analysis, and timeframe
- Documentation of the field work: focus group discussions, key informants interviews (case profile of women in politics and others).
- Analysis of Focus Group Discussions and Case profiles of successful women in politics at the national level in English.
- Recommendations and strategies suggested to the involved stakeholders (RGC, Political Parties, Civil Society and International Donors).
- The final report analysis of the barriers to women participation in Politics in Cambodia including executive summary, introduction, methodology, key findings and recommendations, in English (hard and soft copy), in between 10-15 pages.
- Concept note for Round Table Discussions with four different topics for the upcoming national election 2013.

Application Process:

- Interested candidates are requested to submit applications to vacancy@cchrcambodia.org or to our Phnom Penh Office by **05 Sept 2012 at 5.00 pm** deadline. A detailed Terms of Reference is available on our website, <http://www.cchrcambodia.org>
- Applications should consist of:
 1. CVs (maximum 3 pages)
 2. Cover letter (maximum 1 page) - applications should emphasize demonstrable success against the competencies required
 3. One page summary outlining the proposed method for undertaking the research and project's support within the allocated time.

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National

Moek Dara trial continues

Buth Reaksmeay Kongkea

CHARGES relating to corrupt anti-drug operations dominated the second day of appeal hearings for former anti-drug czar Moek Dara and anti-drug chief Chea Leng yesterday.

One of the many convictions Leng is appealing is for using an undercover agent to sell heroin confiscated from a Naga casino boat raid to drug dealers and pocket the proceeds of the sale himself in 2007.

"Chea Leng had asked his subordinate [...] to take two packages of heroin hidden in the drawer of his office table and sell it to drug dealers at Phnom Penh's Sydney Hotel," presiding judge Chay Chandaravann summarised from trial hearing documents.

"But the deal was raided, and when the drug dealers were arrested by another unit of the anti-drug police department in Ministry of Interior, [Leng] ordered [the undercover agent] to go into hiding," he said.

The three arrested drug dealers confessed that Leng via an undercover agent had sold them the heroin but that Dara, allegedly to protect the identity of the undercover agent, doctored the dealers' confessions.

"He corrected the dealers' phrases to say the drugs were



Chea Leng (right), an accomplice of former anti-drug czar Moek Dara, leaves the Appeal Court in Phnom Penh yesterday. HENG CHIVAN

bought from a Tela gas station near the National Police Commissioner," the judge said.

Both Leng and Dara have pleaded innocent.

"I recommended my police officers correct the drug dealers' answers because I wanted to maintain the reputation of my anti-drug department... I was afraid this was a trick of drug criminals to put blame on us in order to dishonour us," Dara told the court.

Chandaravann announced yesterday that the appeal, originally slated to take all week, would likely take longer.

"This will be the longest case

in the history of Cambodian courts," he said, adding the case would be dwarfed only perhaps by Case 002 at the Khmer Rouge tribunal.

"I want the suspects to say as much as they can to plead their case so the court can find justice for them," the judge said.

Unexplained Anti-Corruption Unit cameras again filmed the day's proceedings. ACU officials did not respond to questions about the cameras.

The court began questioning Dara on the fourth case against him involving accepting a US\$20,000 bribe. That questioning continues today. ■

Lawyer says witness was 'fed' memories

Stuart White

AN OTHERWISE routine cross-examination at the Khmer Rouge tribunal yesterday began with the defence teams for both Nuon Chea and Ieng Sary questioning the methods of the co-investigators responsible for collecting witnesses' official pre-trial statements.

First, Jasper Pauw, defence counsel for Nuon Chea, sought to demonstrate that over the course of her interviews with

of the imperative to "conserve our forces to the maximum" and that each "one of us had to kill 30 Vietnamese; if we did that, we would surely win."

Yesterday, however, the witness said that her testimony over the previous days had jump-started her memory. "And I did remember such an educational broadcast to the soldiers back then," Siek maintained that she had truthfully told investigators in 2009 she



Michael Karnavas, defence counsel for Ieng Sary, also took a jab at co-investigators, citing a subtle discrepancy between a signed summary

of Siek's statement to the court and her testimony.

Yesterday, Siek acknowledged the "irregularity," which concerned whether she had seen Ieng Sary at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the day of the fall of Phnom Penh – a sighting that would have been impossible, Siek said yesterday, given that on that date "there was no ministry".

"Now we have a witness – and we are grateful – that has recognised the irregularity and corrected it," said Karnavas, calling the documents' presumed accuracy into question.

Siek explained that she had missed the mistake because she had been "fatigued" when she reviewed her statement.

At the end of her testimony, the court called ex-Ministry of Propaganda employee Kim Vun to the stand. His testimony continues today. ■

We believe we will show that certain information was fed to the witness

co-investigators, witness Sa Siek was made aware of matters that she would have otherwise been unable to testify about.

Pauw quoted passages from the former Ministry of Propaganda employee's 2009 official statement to the court in which she denied remembering "anything like" Democratic Kampuchea-era radio broadcasts

had forgotten the broadcasts.

Pauw responded by announcing that his team would be filing a request to transcribe "relevant parts" of the interview.

"We believe we will show that certain information was fed to the witness, so that she can now testify to matters that she was not aware of in 2009," he said.



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The main tasks and responsibilities would be receiving and maintaining the mail for the office, preparing the outgoing correspondence, arranging appointments for the senior managers, liaising with Government, UN partners and other programme partners, maintaining the staff movement calendars and translate government correspondence. A more detailed job description is available from Mr Vinita Ros.

Interested candidates should be highly motivated, have an excellent working knowledge of English with proven writing skills, and be fully proficient with the current Microsoft Office applications including managing electronic calendars. The successful candidate will receive an initial induction of one week in the job. This is a short time service agreement and will not lead to a longer term appointment with UNFPA.

Only shorted listed candidates shall be contacted. UNFPA retains the rights to contact referees directly. There is no application, processing or other fee at any stage of the application process. UNFPA does not solicit or screen for information in respect of HIV or AIDS and does not discriminate on the basis of HIV status.

Cheating rampant: report

Southern China now on your television set

Chhay Channyda

NATIONAL High School Exam candidates each spent an average of 120,000 riel – about US\$30 – on bribes over this year's two-day testing period to secure exam answers, according to independent research released yesterday.

Social researcher Kem Ley's report *Turning a Blind Eye* purported that 92 per cent of students were involved in bribery or cheating during the exam, which is conducted under the supervision of high-school proctors, teachers and police officials.

"We also see that 55 per cent of answers were copied from their hand phone after the answer was made and sent around by email," Ley said, noting social media site Facebook had emerged as a popular means to cheat during this year's exams, which took place on August 6 and 7.

"However, while this is a self-formed habit to bribe the [exam supervisors], this year there was a bit of improvement compared to last year," he said, pointing to more diligent monitoring of exam rooms by police officials as stemming the amount of exam answer cheat sheets physically used by students.

The 40-page research findings from interviews with 157 students will be sent to the



A recent study showed that about 55 per cent of students used their mobile phones to cheat in high-school exams. WILL BAXTER

Ministry of Education and government development partners UNESCO and UNICEF next week, Ley told the *Post*, in a bid to put pressure on the government to reform the education system.

For Ley, the solution lies in improving the quality and ethics of teachers and exam invigilators through appropriate remuneration or up to \$150 per day during the exam period.

Rong Chhun, president of the Cambodian Independent Teacher Association, agreed that exam irregularities greatly diminished the quality of the education system in Cambodia.

"It isn't a new thing. Although it was quieter around exam rooms this year, that is because they are copying via email and Facebook," Chhun said.

He added that if the government did not deal with the

quality of education in Cambodia, it could not produce a competitive labour force for the 2015 ASEAN integration.

Sam Sereyath, general director at the Ministry of Education, said the research was a somewhat "small sample", so it was incapable of evaluating the whole high-school exam.

"The result would have been much more positive if he had interviewed more," he said. ■

Khouth Sophak Chakya

UNDER the supervision of Cambodia's Ministry for Information, the state-run Cambodia's National Television (TVK) and China's state-run Guangxi Television Station launched a new joint initiative to disseminate information about the southern Chinese province.

The joint *Showcase Week* will include the screening of six documentaries about life in Guangxi and Cambodia-Guangxi relations, Zhou Wenli, the general director of Guangxi TV said at the launch.

The TV program series will focus on the development of economics, society, culture and tourism in the Chinese province that borders Vietnam, Zhou said.

"Through this programming, we expect that the solidarity of both countries' government and people will be stronger and closer," he said.

The two state-run television stations have a long-standing relationship and co-operated in 2004 to advertise the China-ASEAN exhibition in Guangxi.

Shen Beihai, the minister of propaganda in Guangxi, said that during that period of co-operation, there had been an exchange of programs between the two broadcasters and that the Cambodian program *Sovan Bopha* (Golden Girl) had been a hit with Chinese viewers.

"Many pretty female artists, like Sovan Bopha, were invited to perform in China to perform shows to show off Cambodia's arts," Beihai said. ■

More maids head home

Sen David

IN the space of only about two months, the Cambodian embassy in Malaysia had helped eight Cambodian maids whose employers abused them, the government said yesterday.

"The maids have been mistreated by their employers and some have finished their contracts and want to come back home," Ministry of Foreign

Affairs spokesman Koy Kuong said in a statement.

Among those waiting for a flight home was Ggol Pich, who has reached the end of her two-year contract.

She would arrive home tomorrow, Kuong said, adding that others had already been repatriated. In October, Cambodia put a ban on sending maids to Malaysia after a spate of incidents involving abuse. ■

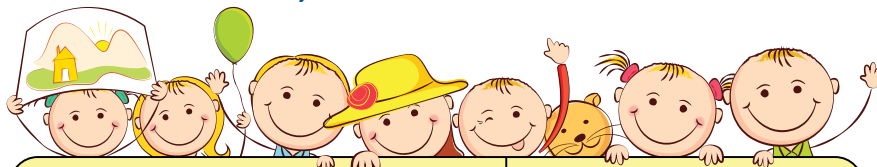


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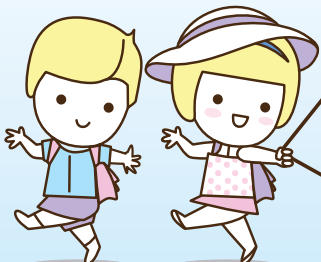
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National

In brief

Kratie vendors protest pricey relocation site

IN AN effort to improve Kratie town's aesthetics, authorities have ordered about 300 shop owners on central roads and along the river bank to relocate their operations or face physical removal. Vendors were given until today to move to a location about a kilometre away, but are protesting the new site's fees of 150,000 to 300,000 riel (\$37.50 to \$75) for 1.2 square metres, according to vendor representative Norn Phalla. "We filed a complaint to commune officials for help, but we did not hear anything," Phalla said. Shop owners said authorities were attempting to beautify the city in order to bolster tourism. Vendor Sam Saveoun claimed deputy provincial governor Cheak Meng Heang had told her: "I reminded you to move. Otherwise, you would be surprised when military police come to take your stuff." MOM KUNTHEAR

Chinese nationals tried for drug trafficking

TWO Chinese nationals accused of trafficking illegal drugs totalling 1.5 kilograms are being tried by the Phnom Penh Municipal Court in a hearing that began yesterday. Tu Wei Jun, 27, and Lin Zhi Long, 26, were arrested last year in possession of meth, heroin and marijuana in Prampi Makara after another trafficker tipped off police. When arrested, Wei Jun was staying in a room rented from Zhi Long, who claims he had no knowledge of the drugs. Defence lawyer Ouk Vandet asked the court to reduce Wei Jun's punishment and drop the charges against Zhi Long. Judge Kor Vandy said the verdict would be announced on September 12. LIENG SARITH



Current affairs

Touch Roth, 17, charges batteries at a shop in Prek Takov commune, in Kandal province's Khsach Kandal district. Many of Cambodia's rural and urban poor use car batteries to power lights and electric appliances in their homes. HENG CHIVOAN

Skills race on for 2015 union

Sen David

THE MINISTRY of Labour is launching a new training program to prepare Cambodians to compete in the integrated ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) slated to come into being in 2015, ministry officials said yesterday.

The "Skills Bridging Program" will offer training in standard professional skills to youth in

grade levels seven through nine across the country.

"Many youths across the country are dropping out of school and taking jobs without finishing their education, so they do not have skills comparable with workers in other countries," Pich Sophan, secretary of state at the Labour Ministry, said yesterday.

"This worries us, because our country will face job competition with other ASEAN countries

starting in 2015. We hope that this new program will make us competitive in the ASEAN job market. We have enough human resources and do not want to see other ASEAN labourers overwhelm our country."

Sopha said that of Cambodia's seven million current workers, a full 50 per cent dropped out of school at the primary level. Rural areas, where standards of living are generally lower, have especially high dropout rates.

Ouk Davany, director of the Technical Standard Institute, said the Skills Bridging Program should prepare these students to work in the fields of electronics, car repair and construction.

He noted that currently "most students want to study subjects that involve office work, but do not seem to focus on professional technical training, which means that other countries have an edge". ■

Police Blotter

Truants learn it's not all fun and games

SIX school-skippers in Kampong Cham town were dragged from their computer-gaming shop chairs by police on Monday after a group of peeved parents complained their children were continuously skipping school. Police later discovered the gaming shop was masquerading as a café and operating illegally. The shop owner bolted, while police destroyed the computers and games. The rueful students apologised and promised to stop cutting classes. DEUM AMPIL

Attentive neighbour foils attempt at inside job

POLICE in Phnom Penh's Meanchey district arrested a Vietnamese man yesterday following a sneaky subterfuge that involved the suspect claiming ownership of a house that wasn't his. The man allegedly locked himself in the house and began to pilfer property. However, a neighbour saved the day by calling out for help. Police embarked on a wild chase of the crook through the city's streets. They eventually caught him and sent him to court.

KOH SANTEPHEAP

Moto hi-jinks land two alleged dealers in jail

TWO alleged young drug dealers in Phnom Penh's Tuol Kork district were arrested by police on Monday for drug trafficking. Police said they found two swollen packages of drugs on the two, one aged 15 and the other 21, while they were hooning about on their motorcycle. When police tried to pull them over, the two sped on, but were eventually caught. The men subsequently admitted they were en route to distribute the dope and have been sent to court.

RASMEY KAMPUCHEA

Drunken trio injure foreigner in accident

A BARANG was seriously injured in Phnom Penh's Meanchey district after a drunk driver slammed his motorcycle into him. Allegedly, the victim was aboard his own motorcycle when the vehicle, with three inebriated men aboard, lost control and crashed into him. The suspects have been sent to court. DEUM APIL

Neighbours silent in face of domestic violence

AN ALLEGED wife-beater was arrested in Kampong Speu's Phnom Sroch district on Monday. Police said neighbours witnessed him thump and thrash his wife about until she was seriously injured, but they were too afraid to restrain him. The suspect was arrested and sent to court while his wife remains in hospital. KAMPUCHEA THMEY

Translated by Sen David



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ANZ Royal

CEDAC plus honey makes for a sweet deal

Meas Chansatya

HONEY collectors from four provinces in Cambodia signed an agreement with the Cambodian Center for Study and Development in Agriculture (CEDAC) in order to bring more honey to the capital.

CEDAC has encouraged farmers from four provinces – Preah Vihear, Kratie, Koh Kong and Monduliri – to collect honey from their communities to sell in CEDAC stores in Phnom Penh.

The initiative comes as customers are relatively uncertain about the country's honey products, but CEDAC is attempting to take the honey to be examined and standardised, which customers tend to be more interested in, according to CEDAC President Yang Saing Koma.

Under the agreement, bee-hunting communities would supply 4,000 litres of pure forest honey each year for sale in 10 shops across Phnom Penh, Yang said.

"We hope that, through this agreement, CEDAC and forest honey hunter communities will benefit by both increasing their incomes and preserving natural resources for each community," said Yang.

Pich Phony, president of the Cambodian Honey Hunter Community, which represents about 300 members in Monduliri, Koh Kong, Kratie and Preah Vihear provinces, said the honey would be sold to CEDAC for US\$9.70 per litre.

He added that the honey hunter communities in the four provinces are able to collect from 5,000 to 8,000 litres of honey in total per year at present.

According to official figures, only 10 per cent of the 500,000 litres of honey demanded domestically each year is currently supplied by Cambodia's collectors.

It is hoped that the deal will also help strengthen community conservation of hives and natural forest resources, said Pich Phony.



Fishermen set out at daybreak on the Tonle Sap river in Phnom Penh. MENG KIMLONG

Wild lobster stocks replenished

Rann Reuy

SEVEN million young lobsters had been released into Cambodia's rivers and Tonle Sap Lake this year in an effort to build the nation's fish and shellfish stocks, officials said yesterday.

Nao Thouk, general director of the Fisheries Administration at the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries said, about a half million baby lobsters were released into the rivers and waterways of Cambodia in an effort to increase the amount of wild lobsters after sharp decreases in their population in recent years.

"We released young lobsters, numbering nearly a

million so far this year. We released about 200,000 young lobsters in Ang Trapaing Thma in Banteay Meanchey province and other places."

The Fisheries Administration previously released 120,000 young lobsters in 2010, with the number increasing to one million last year, while this year, they planned to release seven million more, according to Nao Thouk, who spoke with the *Post* late last year.

Cambodia harvests about 100 tonnes of wild lobsters a year, though the market demands about 1,000 tonnes.

From the seven million lobsters released, only about five per cent of them are expected to live long enough to reach a weight of one kilogram.

However, hatching lobsters is a problem due to their tendency to fall ill and die, he said, adding: "We are collecting the females via fishing. But, after we release those hatched in captivity there are a lot of deaths."

Each day, there are between five to 20 illegal fishing operations that are stopped by Fisheries officials, Nao said.

"Illegal fishing activities will not end because there are people who live on or near the water and are in need of food or money. I compare it to the possibility of eliminating crime in Phnom Penh. If we manage to do that then illegal fishing would end as well," he said.

As prices continue to climb

for freshwater lobster, farming of the crustacean in Cambodia has increased.

A kilogram of top-quality lobster sells for about US\$30, up from \$10 in 2005, according to lobster farmers. The government is seeking to foster growth in Cambodia's wild lobster population after overfishing diminished the population significantly in recent years.

Prom Vath, who runs a lobster hatchery in Angkor Borei district in Takeo province said that he increased the number of lobsters hatched to meet demand from customers who have sought nearly one million lobsters this year alone, up from around 600,000 lobsters last year.

"My clients in Siem Reap and other provinces have order more because they were successful in feeding the lobsters they received from me once they hatched, and were able to grow them to a size that fit their needs," he said.

Khieu Sam, a lobster hatchery from Tramkok district in Takeo province, who previously hatched about 20,000 to 30,000 young lobsters a year, quit the business this year because of a lack of orders from lobster farmers who were incapable of feeding their stock properly.

"The raising of hatchlings that have been reserved requires a lot of capital. If there are no orders, it leads to a loss," he said.

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Business

Jain Irrigation bets on lending unit

Pratik Parija

JAIN Irrigation Systems, Asia's biggest irrigation-equipment maker, is banking on its new lending unit to attract cash-strapped farmers to its products and revive sales growth that has slowed for the past seven years.

The non-banking financial company, scheduled to begin operations in October, would help cut its parent's interest burden, managing director Anil Jain said in a phone interview from Mumbai.

Government subsidies used to fund the purchase of pipes and sprinklers might take as long as 18 months to collect, forcing Jain to resort to short-term loans at about 14 per cent, he said.

The unit will be able to borrow at a lower rate.

"We found that this way, it won't be sustainable for us to continue," Jain said.

"It is difficult for me and my balance sheet to finance for more than six months.

"With an NBFC, funds are cheaper, I get all the money up front and I don't have to pay for working capital."

Reviving sales growth will help boost cash flows and cut finance costs, says Ronald Siyoni, an analyst at KR Choksey Shares and Securities.

Rising interest payments have eroded profit, causing the company to report its first



Boys play in an irrigation tube leading to a water reservoir. Asia's leader in irrigation equipment has turned to lending. REUTERS

quarterly loss since 2004 in the three months through June.

Shares in the Janus Investments LLC-backed company have declined 15 per cent this year, whereas the benchmark Sensitive Index has gained 15 per cent.

"One can see sales growth starting next quarter," said Siyoni at KR Choksey, a Mumbai-based brokerage that rates the stock a buy.

"With receivables coming down, more of the cash flow will be used to repay debt."

The Jalgaon, Maharashtra-based company is also close to raising US\$200 million from a combination of private equity investment, debt and convertible bonds to revamp its debt and lower finance costs, Jain

told analysts in a conference call on August 16.

Jain Irrigation fell 2.1 per cent to 73.95 rupees (US\$1.33) as of yesterday morning in Mumbai trading, after gaining as much as 2.3 per cent. The shares last week fell 9.5 per cent after the company reported a loss of 169 million rupees (US\$3 million) for last quarter because of a 32 per cent reduction in its micro-irrigation business and held-up subsidy payments.

Sales fell 9.5 per cent to 8.43 billion rupees.

Thirteen of the 18 analysts who cover the stock recommend buying it, while four favour selling. Janus owns 6.9 per cent of the company, according to data compiled by Bloomberg. BLOOMBERG

AirAsia calls for upgrade to Don Mueang Terminal 2

Boonsong Kositchotethana

NO-FRILLS airline group Air Asia is urging Airports of Thailand (AoT) to renovate Terminal 2 at Don Mueang airport in parallel with work being done at Terminal 1 to deal with traffic that will quickly build up.

Tassapon Bijleveld, the chief executive of Thai Air Asia, a sister airline of Asia's largest low-cost carrier, advocates such a move, saying he expects Terminal 1's traffic to reach capacity 12 to 18 months after it becomes fully operational on October 1.

"Don't wait. It's better to have the capacity available ahead of time rather than trying to catch up with traffic demand later on," he said.

Tassapon was commenting on the state-controlled airport authority's plan to revive Terminal 2 only after Terminal 1 reaches capacity, to avoid what AoT now perceives as a premature investment.

After renovation, Terminal 2 will be able to handle 22.5 million passengers a year – the capacity that was available when Bangkok's old airport was closed upon the opening of Suvarnabhumi in September, 2006.

Tassapon said the Air-Asia group would shift its base from Suvarnabhumi to Don Mueang on October 1, generating traffic of as many as 10 million passengers in the first year at its new home.

AirAsia expects traffic through Don Mueang to soar to 14 million passengers a year over the next four years, pointing to a need for additional terminal capacity.

Meanwhile, Tassapon expressed his improved confidence that Don Mueang will be ready as a fully functional airport by October 1.

"Key infrastructure is there, and the fact that two airlines have already been operating out of it indicates it is quite ready to a certain extent," he said.

Tassapon said the issue of most concern is the effectiveness of flood prevention at Don Mueang, which was ravaged by last year's floods.

The personal involvement of Transport Minister Jarupong Ruangsuan and Deputy Minister Chatchart Sithipan in the first phase of renovation should provide additional assurance of the airport's readiness.

Meanwhile, Tassapon renewed AirAsia founder Tony Fernandes's recent call for AoT to slash the passenger service charge or airport tax for international flights at Don Mueang, now at 700 baht (US\$22.23) per person, for the sake of stimulating passenger traffic.

Suvarnabhumi is likely to receive well over the 45 million passengers it is capable of handling this year.

THE BANGKOK POST

In brief

Somali PM plans to focus on economy

SOMALIA'S new government will focus on the economy as it seeks to rebuild a nation shattered by two decades of war, Prime Minister Abdiweli Mohamed Ali says. The east African country was in the final stages of selecting a two-tier parliament, Ali, who is a candidate to become president, said in an interview in the capital, Mogadishu, last week. Lawmakers were scheduled to vote in a new president yesterday, although the process might be delayed because the vetting of parliamentarians had taken longer than expected, Ali said. BLOOMBERG

Indonesia shuts most tin smelters to thin supply

INDONESIA has idled about 70 per cent of the tin-smelting capacity in its biggest producing region amid a three-month bear market, curbing the world's biggest tin exports and setting the stage for a global shortage. Producers in Bangka-Belitung province have closed 24 of the 28 smelters, the Indonesian Tin Mining Association estimates. Demand will exceed supply by 7,000 metric tonnes next year, equal to about 60 per cent of global stockpiles tracked by the London Metal Exchange, Barclays Plc estimates. BLOOMBERG

Apple's market value exceeds Microsoft's

APPLE'S market value climbed past US\$623 billion on Monday, surpassing the record set by Microsoft during the heyday of technology stocks in 1999. Apple shares rose 2.6 per cent, bringing its gains this month to almost nine per cent as Wall St bets on the September 12 roll-out of the latest version of the iPhone, the device that revolutionised the mobile industry. Microsoft, however, retains the title of history's most valuable company if its 1999 peak value of about \$621 billion were to be adjusted for inflation. REUTERS

Cnooc profit drops after output losses

CNOOC, China's biggest offshore oil and gas explorer, posted a 19 per cent decline in first-half profit that was worse than analysts estimated after a spill closed its largest local field. The shares slumped. Net income had dropped to 31.87 billion yuan (US\$5 billion), or 0.71 yuan a share, from 39.34 billion yuan, or 0.88 yuan, a year earlier, CNOOC said yesterday. That compared with the 35.07 billion yuan median estimate of seven analysts in a Bloomberg survey. CNOOC shares fell as much as 5.5 per cent, the most since October, 2011, after the company cut its dividend, citing the need to conserve capital for the \$15 billion takeover of Canada's Nexen Inc. BLOOMBERG

Thailand lacks long-term energy security

Soonya Vanichkorn

NO one would dispute that energy and electricity are the essential backbones of a modern economy. However, questions about what kind of fuel should be used to generate this power have long been debated and are causing uncertainty in Thailand's long-term energy security.

Without clarity in national policy as to the types of fuel the country would depend on in the long term, Thailand has been trapped at an energy impasse, said the Electricity Generating Authority of Thailand (Egat).

Thailand predominantly depends on natural gas as its main source of fuel to generate electricity, accounting for 72 per cent of all fuel used for power generation.

About 60 per cent of gas is produced locally with the rest imported from Myanmar.

Other fuels include coal (20 per cent) and hydropower (5 per cent) both domestically and from Laos.

Gas production in Thailand is expected to peak in 2015 before declining if no new field is discovered, to the extent that existing supplies are expected to run out in 18 years.

The cost of imported gas is also expected to increase, adding pressure on national expenditures.

In addition to the rising cost that would be passed on to the population, if gas pipelines are disrupted, we would face severe power cuts in the country if we only rely on one fuel, said Pongdith Potchana, Egat's assistant governor for corporate social responsibility.

Although the Power Development Plan 2010 calls for reduction of gas dependence to less than half the energy resources by 2030, it does not exactly say which type of fuel is to replace gas. Japan's national energy portfolio

is an exemplar of well diversified fuel sources.

The Japanese government made a firm commitment to diversify fuel sources after the spike in oil prices following the oil crisis in the 1970s. Before that, Japan predominantly depended on petrol for power generation.

In 2008, coal accounted for 27 per cent of power generation there, gas 26 per cent, nuclear 24 per cent, petrol 13 per cent, and hydropower eight per cent.

Egat has pushed for a more diversified energy portfolio to ensure long-term power security as demand has been on the rise. THE BANGKOK POST

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NEIGHBOURHOOD Watch

7-Eleven earnings to break the 10bn baht mark

CP All, which operates the 7-Eleven convenience-store chain in Thailand, projects this year's net profit will break the 10 billion baht (US\$317 million) mark for the first time, up by 25 per cent from eight billion baht last year, the *Bangkok Post* reports.

Sernsuk blazes own path, beginning in November

LISTED beverage firm Sernsuk is developing a road map for strategic growth after 59 years of serving outsiders, including Pepsi. Its bottling and distribution agreement with US beverage giant PepsiCo will end on November 1 this year, and its new business direction is to become a producer and distributor of both beverages and foods, the *Bangkok Post* reports.

Vehicle tax revenue moves up a gear

May Kunmakara

THE Kingdom's revenue from taxes collected on vehicles rose 36 per cent year-on-year in 2012, officials said yesterday.

Taxes collected on vehicles, of all makes and models, account for approximately 10 per cent of the total tax revenue of the state and totalled more than US\$25 million for 2012.

Officials said increasing public awareness of the importance of paying taxes was the main engine for this growth.

Sim Eang, royal delegate in charge of the General Department of Taxation, said during the press conference at a signing ceremony with Acleda Bank Plc in Phnom Penh yesterday that the awareness and willingness of people to pay their taxes has resulted in revenue from vehicle tax stamps increasing significantly this year.

The department has been trying to promote information about the taxes to the public in order to build awareness as well as to improve the tax payment procedure by making



A 2012 tax stamp displayed on the front of a motorbike in Phnom Penh yesterday. PHA LINA

it even simpler, he said. "We have noticed that tax payers now understand more about their duty to pay tax."

Critics have laid claims of corruption against the department. However, Kong Vibol, secretary of state for the Ministry of Economy and Finance, said that the memorandum of understanding between the department and Acleda to make the bank a partner in col-

lecting taxes was a step forward to complete transparency.

"Although we only have this agreement with the bank for the payment of taxes on vehicles, it is a very significant improvement in accountability and transparency for the department, which it is normally criticized for. We will consider having other taxes collected by the bank if it will help to increase tax revenue further." ■

Polly Peck tycoon found guilty of theft

Peter Griffiths

TURKISH-CYPRIOT tycoon Asil Nadir, who built one of the most successful businesses in Britain during the 1980s before fleeing the country after his firm's collapse, was found guilty of theft on Monday.

Nadir, who spent 17 years as a fugitive, was accused of stealing from the Polly Peck empire he transformed from a small textiles firm into the darling of the City of London.

A jury at London's Old Bailey court found the 71-year-old guilty of three theft charges, cleared him of one other, and was still considering nine more counts, the Press Association said.

Polly Peck's demise, one of Britain's biggest corporate failures, was a huge embarrassment to the Conservative Party since it had received donations from Nadir.

The verdict is a serious setback for Nadir, who returned to Britain in 2010, promising he clear his name.

The seven men and three women jurors were sent out for the night and were to return



Turkish-Cypriot businessman Asil Nadir leaves the Old Bailey court in London earlier this year. REUTERS

yesterday to consider the remaining charges. The maximum sentence for theft is seven years in prison.

Nadir, wearing a dark suit, a green tie and a matching handkerchief in his top pocket, appeared shocked when the jury returned the guilty verdicts. His wife Nur left the court in tears and was taken away in a chauffeur-driven Jaguar.

During the seven-month trial, prosecutors presented evidence

that Nadir had stolen £34 million (US\$53.4 million) from Polly Peck to enrich himself and his friends and associates.

Philip Shears, prosecuting, said Nadir had transferred millions of pounds abroad through a complex network of companies and banks.

He had used some of the money to buy antiques, pay off debts and prop up the price of Polly Peck shares, Shears said. REUTERS ■



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Business

Part of the daily grind in Korea

Hyunjo Jin

THESE days, a stroll on the streets of southern Seoul is just as likely to bring the fragrance of fresh-brewed coffee as that of kimchi or more traditional Korean foods.

Nearly one in every two buildings boasts a coffee shop, from Starbucks to local brands such as Caffé Bene and Angel-in-us Coffee. Despite the existence of shops a mere 70 metres apart, it can still be hard to find a seat on some evenings, even though a cup can cost more than a meal.

In short, South Korea, home to the world's third-largest number of Starbucks stores after the United States and Japan, has become a battleground for coffee chains.

"There are few places where I can meet my friends comfortably, so I go to coffee shops," Ko Sun-bee, a high-school teacher in Seoul, says.

Although coffee was once a luxury drink, the market in South Korea has grown at a dizzying rate. The number of coffee shops jumped nearly ten-fold to 12,381 between 2006 and 2011.

South Korean adults consumed an average 338 cups of coffee last year, and coffee imports jumped 44 per cent to 130,000 tonnes over the past four years, the Korea Customs service says.



A woman drinks a mug of coffee at a Caffé Bene outlet in Seoul. Almost every second building in southern Seoul has a coffee shop. BLOOMBERG

The value of the market overall has risen 17-fold to 2.48 trillion Korean won (US\$2.19 billion) in the same period, according to a think tank affiliated with the KB Financial Group.

The spark was lit by Starbucks, which entered the market in 1999, analysts say. "Without Starbucks, there would be no coffee boom here," says Lee Taek-gwang, a culture commentator and professor at Kyung-hee University in Seoul.

"Starbucks is the symbol of US culture and it has gained widespread popularity among young Koreans who admire it."

The number of Starbucks stores has more than doubled to 367 over the past five years. The company said last year it planned to raise that number to 700 by 2016. REUTERS

Hotel price-fixing scheme goes to court

Nick Brown

EXPEDIA, Hilton Worldwide and other big hotel retailers and operators have been accused in a federal lawsuit in California of conspiring to fix hotel room prices as they battle small online retailers who sell rooms more cheaply.

Two consumers are seeking class-action status for the suit filed on Monday in a California federal court, which alleges the hotels teamed with online room sellers to set minimum rates on rooms and is seeking unspecified money damages.

Plaintiffs Nikita Turik and Eric Balk say the companies broke federal and California state anti-trust laws with agreements whereby hotel operators ceased doing business with online retailers that sold rooms below certain prices.

The agreements, drawn up in meetings and during industry conferences, were designed to combat mounting competition from smaller online retailers that sold rooms more cheaply, according to the complaint.

The hotel operators played along because they could not afford to lose access to business from the big online retail-

ers, with the online market now accounting for about half of all US hotel room sales, the lawsuit contends. If not for the scheme, consumers would have paid less for rooms, the plaintiffs say.

In Britain, regulators announced provisional findings of a breach of UK competition laws following an investigation of price-fixing for hotel rooms involving online travel companies, British media reported in July.

Among the roughly 15 defendants of the California lawsuit are online retailers Orbitz Worldwide, Travelocity.com and its parent, Sabre Holdings.

Also included are big-name hotel operators Marriott International and Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide, which runs the Sheraton, W and Westin hotel chains.

Travel sites "created the illusion" that consumers could seek out the best deals, Steve Berman, an attorney for the plaintiffs, said in a statement on Monday.

"The reality is that these illegal price-parity agreements mean consumers see nothing but cosmetic differences and the same prices on every site," Berman said. REUTERS



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- Cambodian travel to Malaysia for work, training, business and leisure
- The many Malaysian people and companies doing business here in Cambodia
 - How the multi-ethnic, multi-cultural Malaysia benefits Cambodia

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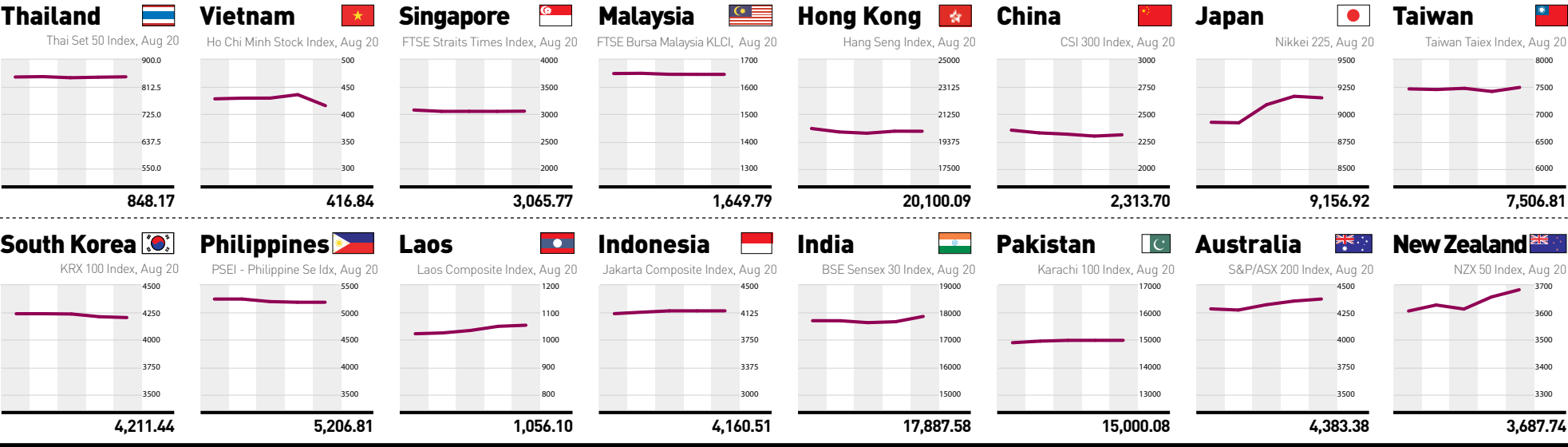
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Stock futures : Americas

INDEX	VALUE	CHANGE	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	TIME
DJIA INDEX	13,252.00	23	13,232.00	13,266.00	13,228.00	5:55:52
S&P 500	1,417.00	2.3	1,414.80	1,419.20	1,414.20	6:00:12
NASDAQ 100	2,785.25	5.25	2,781.50	2,789.00	2,780.00	5:55:26
S&P/TSX 60 IX	689.9	0.3	691.7	691.7	686.7	8/20/2012
MEX BOLSA IDX	40,508.00	-220	40,370.00	40,770.00	40,370.00	8/20/2012
BOVESPA INDEX	59,982.00	163	59,920.00	60,150.00	59,200.00	8/20/2012

Stock futures : Europe

EURO STOXX 50	2,477.00	12	2,473.00	2,488.00	2,471.00	5:55:07
FTSE 100 IDX	5,832.50	15	5,827.00	5,855.00	5,827.00	5:55:13
CAC40 10 EURO	3,496.00	20.5	3,482.50	3,506.00	3,482.50	5:55:12
DAX INDEX	7,056.00	21	7,049.00	7,091.00	7,042.00	5:55:14
IBEX 35 INDX	7,492.00	28.9	7,469.00	7,561.00	7,466.00	5:55:11
FTSE/MIB IDX	15,160.00	181	15,040.00	15,265.00	15,040.00	5:54:49
AMSTERDAM IDX	335.4	1.6	334.3	336.35	334.1	5:55:08
OMXS30 IND	1,086.00	0	1,085.50	1,089.25	1,085.50	5:55:14
SWISS MKT IX	6,512.00	9	6,512.00	6,531.00	6,509.00	5:55:13

Stock futures : Asia

NIKKEI 225 (OSE)	9,190.00	40	9,180.00	9,210.00	9,180.00	5:46:11
HANG SENG IDX	20,135.00	50	20,137.00	20,170.00	19,950.00	4:15:00
SPI 200	4,381.00	5	4,376.00	4,391.00	4,374.00	5:55:26

Key Rates

	Current	1 Month	3 Months	6 Months	1 YR
Fed Funds Rate	0.15	0.14	0.15	0.11	0.12
Fed Reserve Target Rate	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25
Prime Rate	3.25	3.25	3.25	3.25	3.25
US Unemployment Rate	8.30	8.20	8.10	8.30	9.10
1-Month Libor	0.24	0.25	0.24	0.25	0.22
3-Month Libor	0.43	0.45	0.47	0.49	0.30

Government Bonds

	Current	1 Month	3 Months	6 Months	1 YR
US 10-Year	1.625	08/15/2022	98-08+ / 1.81	-0-02+ / 0.009	06:08
UK 10-Year	4.000	03/07/2022	120.51 / 1.67	-0.050 / 0.005	06:16
Germany 10-Year	1.750	07/04/2022	101.89 / 1.54	-0.295 / 0.032	06:14
Japan 10-Year	0.800	06/20/2022	99.80 / 0.83	0.154 / -0.017	04:30
Australia 10-Year	5.500	04/21/2023	118.15 / 3.45	0.001 / -0.001	02:40
Brazil 9-Year	10.000	01/01/2021	1,025.48 / 9.82	0.072 / 0.006	05:10

International commodities

Energy

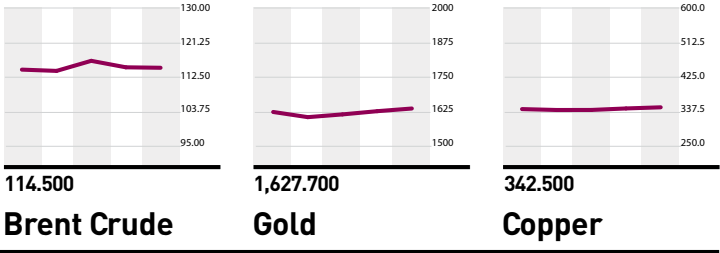
Item	PRICE*	CHANGE	% CHANGE	TIME
BRENT CRUDE FUTR (USD/bbl.)	114.44	0.74	0.65%	5:56
GAS OIL FUT (ICE) (USD/MT)	983.25	4.25	0.43%	5:57
HEATING OIL FUTR (USd/gal.)	310.95	1.64	0.53%	5:54
NATURAL GAS FUTR (USD/MMBtu)	2.795	0.019	0.68%	5:56
GASOLINE RBOB FUT (USd/gal.)	304.52	1.44	0.48%	5:46
WTI CRUDE FUTURE (USD/bbl.)	96.54	0.57	0.59%	5:48

Agriculture

Item	PRICE*	CHANGE	% CHANGE	TIME
LUMBER FUTURE (USD/1000 board feet)	295.8	-3	-1.00%	1:11
ROUGH RICE (CBOT) (USD/cwt)	15.85	-0.025	-0.16%	4:25

Metals

Item	PRICE*	CHANGE	% CHANGE	TIME
GOLD 100 OZ FUTR (USD/t oz.)	1,626.60	3.6	0.22%	5:55
COPPER FUTURE (USd/lb.)	342.25	4.35	1.29%	5:56
SILVER FUTURE (USD/t oz.)	28.96	0.282	0.98%	5:37



Market watch

KGI Securities (Thailand) has cut its price target on industrial-estate developer Amata Corporation to 19 baht (US\$0.60) from 20 baht, reflecting the company’s weaker-than-expected earnings for the first half of 2012 and an earnings downgrade.

The broker has maintained its “outperform” rating on the stock. Amata Corporation shares were up 1.8 per cent at 17 baht.

The shares have risen 34.9 per cent this year, outperforming the 19.8 per cent gain of the broader SET index. REUTERS

Cambodian commodities

(Base rate taken on January 1, 2011)

Food -Cereals -Vegetables - Fruits

Item	Unit	Base	Average	[%]
Rice 1	R/Kg	2800	2760	-1.43 %
Rice 2	R/Kg	2200	2200	-11.29 %
Paddy	R/Kg	1800	1760	0.00 %
Mung Bean	R/Kg	4500	4100	-22.64 %
Peanuts	R/Kg	8000	7900	0.00 %
Maize 2	R/Kg	2000	2140	7.00 %
White Sesame	R/Kg	6000	5800	-9.38 %
Black Sesame	R/Kg	7000	7100	-5.33 %
Garlic	R/Kg	8000	7600	156.76 %
Cashew nut	R/Kg	3600	3780	-38.03 %
Pepper	R/Kg	35000	36600	0.00 %
Beef	R/Kg	30000	30400	11.76 %
Pork	R/Kg	18000	18000	0.00 %
Mud Fish	R/Kg	12000	11600	1.75 %
Chicken	R/Kg	18000	19800	-5.71 %
Duck	R/Kg	13000	13200	1.54 %
Smoked Fish	R/Kg	150000	160000	-5.88 %
Dried Fish	R/Kg	38000	38200	0.00 %
Chicken Eggs	10Eggs	4200	4140	-5.91 %
Duck Eggs	10Eggs	4500	4500	-9.64 %
MSG	R/Pare	5500	5300	0.00 %
Thai Sugar	R/Kg	3300	3420	-6.56 %
Palm Sugar	R/Kg	4000	3800	20.25 %
Granulated Salt	R/Kg	1200	1200	-1.64 %
Thai Milk	R/Can	2900	2900	1.40 %
Cambodian Milk	R/Can	2700	2700	3.05 %
Morning Glory	R/Kg	1800	1780	-27.64 %
Tomato	R/Kg	2500	2600	0.00 %
Cabbage	R/Kg	2500	2300	-2.54 %
Banana	R/hand	2500	2600	13.04 %
Pineapple	R/Unit	2000	1920	10.34 %

Water supply, electricity, consumer goods

Item	Unit	Base	Average	[%]
Sarong	R/Unit	12000	11800	-1.67 %
Scarf	R/Unit	5500	5700	-5.00 %
Thai detergent	R/5Kg	23000	23200	0.87 %
Water Supply	R/M3	550	550	0.00 %
Electricity	R/Kwh	1200	1200	0.00 %

Construction equipment

Item	Unit	Base	Average	[%]
Steel 12	R/Kg	3000	3000	-5.96 %
Cement	R/Sac	19000	19000	-0.94 %

Energy

Item	Unit	Base	Average	[%]
Gasoline	R	5100	4800	-5.88 %
Diesel	R	4900	4600	-6.12 %
Petroleum	R	5000	5000	0.00 %
Gas	Chi	77000	66000	-14.29 %
Charcoal	Bath	1300	1200	-7.69 %



World



In sight

A soldier participates in an anti-terror drill at a subway station in Seoul yesterday. On Monday, South Korean and US forces began on Monday the Ulchi Freedom Guardian (UFG) drill, an annual joint exercise to test their defence ability against North Korea. **REUTERS**

Assange cramped but wired to world

Karolin Schaps and Estelle Shirkbont

LIVING on take-away meals in a small room with a treadmill to burn off frustrated energy and a vitamin D lamp to make up for a lack of sunlight, Julian Assange has the one material thing he values most: a computer with an internet connection.

The WikiLeaks founder took refuge nine weeks ago at the Ecuadorian embassy in London to avoid being extradited to Sweden, where he is wanted for questioning over alleged rape. Having feared jail, he now finds himself living like a prisoner.

Yet his British friend and supporter Vaughan Smith, who hosted Assange at his country mansion for a year during his failed legal battle against extradition, said the Australian was in good spirits and enjoying the virtual freedom of his computer.

"He seemed to be bearing up fine. The key to understanding Assange is that if he's got a computer, he's normally happy," Smith said after he visited the embassy, housed on one floor of a red-brick apartment block in affluent Knightsbridge.

"The thing that concerns him most is the possibility he won't be able to work properly – and that's why he seems less keen on prison cells than embassies."

On Sunday, the world had its first glimpse of Assange since June 19, when he slipped into the embassy. Last week, Ecuador, led by leftist president Rafael Correa, granted Assange asylum – but Britain still plans to arrest him if he tries to leave.

Appearing on a narrow balcony to berate the US over what he called its "witch hunt" against his anti-secrecy website, the 41-year-old former computer hacker was in the full glare of the world's media for 10 minutes.

His distinctive white-blond hair now trimmed short, he wore a neatly pressed shirt and tie and appeared in good health, if rather tired.

His speech delivered, he paused to survey cheering supporters, busy journalists and stern London police on the street below, before retreating to his private world within.

Smith said Assange was sleeping and working in a single room that looked like someone's office hastily converted into living quarters. He had started out with an air mattress but that had been replaced by a real bed.

"It's a small room. It has a window, but I wouldn't describe it as airy. I didn't see any kitchen facilities, though I understand he has access to a microwave. He has access to a shower. A supporter gave him a running machine," Smith said. **REUTERS**

Russia warns West on Syria

Dominic Evans

RUSSIA warned the West yesterday against unilateral action on Syria, a day after US President Barack Obama threatened "enormous consequences" if his Syrian counterpart used chemical or biological arms or even moved them in a menacing way.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, speaking after meeting China's top diplomat, said Moscow and Beijing were committed to "the need to strictly adhere to the norms of international law . . . and not to allow their violation".

Russia and China have opposed military intervention in Syria throughout a 17-month-old revolt against President Bashar al-Assad. They have vetoed three UN Security Council resolutions backed by Western and Arab states that would have put more pressure on Damascus to end violence that has cost 18,000 lives.

The United States and its allies have shown little appetite for military action in Syria, in contrast to last year's NATO campaign that helped topple Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi.



US President Barack Obama speaks on Monday from the briefing room of the White House in Washington, where he threatened Syria over its use of chemical weapons. **REUTERS**

But Obama used some of his strongest language yet on Monday to warn Assad not to cross a "red line" of even shifting unconventional weapons in a threatening manner.

Seeking re-election in November, Obama noted that he had refrained "at this point" from ordering US military engagement in Syria. But when he was asked at a White House news conference whether he might deploy forces, for exam-

ple to secure Syrian chemical and biological weapons, he said his view could change.

"We have been very clear to the Assad regime, but also to other players on the ground, that a red line for us is [if] we start seeing a whole bunch of chemical weapons moving around or being utilised," Obama said. "That would change my calculus."

Syria last month acknowledged for the first time that

it had chemical or biological weapons and said it could use them if foreign countries intervened. The threat drew strong warnings from Washington and its allies, although it is not clear how the Syrian armed forces might use such weapons in urban warfare.

"We cannot have a situation where chemical or biological weapons are falling into the hands of the wrong people," Obama said, adding that he

was not certain the stockpile was secure.

Obama has been reluctant to embroil the US in another war in the Middle East and refuses to arm Syrian rebels, partly for fear that some of those fighting the Iranian-backed president are Islamist radicals equally hostile to the West.

Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu was quoted as saying the UN may need to create a "safe zone" in Syria to accommodate those fleeing the fighting, saying his country would not be able to take in more than 100,000 refugees.

But creating a safe haven would require imposing a no-fly zone, an idea which US Defence Secretary Leon Panetta said last week was not a "front-burner" issue for Washington.

When Obama was asked whether he envisaged the possibility of using US forces at least to safeguard Syria's chemical arsenal, he said: "We're monitoring that situation very carefully. We have put together a range of contingency plans."

The Global Security website says there are four suspected chemical weapons sites in Syria producing the nerve agents VX, sarin and tabun. It does not cite its sources. **REUTERS**

Ecuador warns UK on embassy bid

Lizzy Davies

THE Ecuadorean president has warned Britain not to attempt to enter his country's embassy in London to seize Julian Assange, claiming that to do so would be an act of political suicide that would leave Britain's diplomatic premises vulnerable to the world over.

Speaking on state television days after his government announced it had decided to grant the WikiLeaks founder political asylum, Rafael Correa showed little sign of seeking to ease tensions with Britain, which threatened last week to use an obscure piece of legislation to enter the Ecuadorean embassy and arrest the Australian.

"I think it would be suicidal for the United Kingdom," he said, according to the Spanish news agency Efe.

"After that, the diplomatic premises of [the UK] in other

territories could be violated all over the world." Such a move, he added, would be disastrous, especially for Britain, he said.

Downing St has said Britain is committed to seeking a diplomatic solution with Ecuador in the stand-off over Assange, who it insists it is obliged to extradite to Sweden to face questioning over allegations of sexual misconduct, which he denies.

But last week, as Ecuador prepared to announce its decision to grant Assange asylum, Foreign Office officials in Quito delivered a letter to the Ecuadorean government in which they claimed a legal right under the Diplomatic and Consular Premises Act 1987 to revoke an embassy's diplomatic status.

Asked on Monday night whether he thought there was any chance the British authorities would carry out its threat, the BBC reported that the president said: "While the UK hasn't retracted or apologised, the danger still exists." REUTERS



Dance with a message

An entertainer, surrounded by statues of Chuchok, a greedy Brahmin who, in a story from the Buddhist Vessantara Jataka, died from gluttony as a result of his new-found wealth, dances at Baan Chuchok in Bangkok yesterday. REUTERS

Russia searches for more Pussy Riot members

RUSSIAN police were searching for more members of Pussy Riot, a spokeswoman said, signalling further pressure on the punk-rock band despite an international outcry over jail terms for three women who protested against Vladimir Putin.

The Russian president's critics have condemned the court proceedings that yielded

the two-year prison sentences last Friday as part of a clampdown on a protest movement and reminiscent of the show trials of dissidents during the Soviet era.

Police said on Monday they were searching for other members of the group in connection with the protest at Moscow's Christ the Saviour cathedral in February, but had

not yet identified the suspects. Police did not say how many people they were looking for, or whether they faced arrest and charges or were wanted merely for questioning.

"The necessary search operations are being conducted," a representative of the Moscow police told the Interfax news agency. THE GUARDIAN

Iran shows off its upgraded weapons, but doubts linger

Yeganeh Torbati

IRAN unveiled upgrades to six weapons yesterday, including a more accurate short-range missile and a more powerful naval engine, Iranian media reported, in what seemed to be its latest response to international pressure over its nuclear program.

The hardware was presented at a ceremony marking Defence Industry Day and attended by President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and Defence Minister Ahmad Vahidi.

Israel has said it is considering air strikes on Iran's nuclear sites if the Islamic Republic does not resolve Western fears it is developing the means to produce atomic weapons, something the Islamic Republic denies.

Iran says it could hit Israel and US bases in the region if it comes under attack.

It has also threatened to block the Strait of Hormuz, the neck of the Gulf through which 40 per cent of the world's seaborne oil exports pass. Such a move would probably invite a military response from the United States.

Ahmadinejad said yesterday that Iran's military advances are purely for defensive purposes and should not be taken as a threat, but said they would dissuade world powers from imposing their will on Iran.

"Defensive advances are meant to defend human integrity, and are not meant to be offensive moves toward others," Ahmadinejad said, according to Mehr news agency.



Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad at an Islamic summit this month. REUTERS

"I have no doubt that our defensive capabilities can stand up to bullying and put a halt to their plans."

The United States has also not ruled out military action against Iran but says the priority of world powers remains the use of diplomacy and sanctions to rein in its nuclear activity.

Among the upgrades was a fourth generation of the Fateh-110 missile, which boasts a range of about 300 kilometres.

Iran said earlier this month that it had successfully test-fired the new model and that it was equipped with a more accurate guidance system.

"This missile is one of the most precise and advanced land-to-land ballistic missiles using solid fuel," Vahidi was quoted as saying by Fars news agency. "In the last decade it has had a significant role in promoting the Islamic Republic of Iran's defence capabilities."

In July, Iran said it had successfully test-fired medium-

range missiles capable of hitting Israel, and tested dozens of missiles aimed at simulated air bases.

It also presented a more powerful, 5,000-horsepower sea-borne engine, the Bonyan-4, Fars quoted Vahidi as saying. A previous version had 1,000 horsepower, the Iranian Students' News Agency (ISNA) said.

Military experts have cast doubts on Iranian claims of weapons advances, especially its assertions about its missile program, saying Tehran often exaggerates its capabilities.

"The Fateh-110 has a crude guidance and control system that operates during the missile's ascent rather than during final descent," Michael Elleman, senior fellow for missile defence at the International Institute for Strategic Studies, said.

"The Fateh-110 appears to lack the sub-systems needed to effect terminal steering," he said in an email.

Iran also presented Armita, an "airborne laboratory" to help test aircraft launch systems and oxygen generation and train fighter pilots, Fars reported.

Vahidi said it was named after the daughter of Darius Rezaeinejad, an Iranian scientist who was shot dead last year.

Iran believes agents working with foreign intelligence services including the American CIA and Israel's Mossad are behind the assassinations of several of its nuclear scientists. REUTERS

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World

In brief

Sectarian clashes wound 22 in Lebanon

AT LEAST 22 people were wounded in overnight clashes between Sunni Muslim and Alawite neighbourhoods in Lebanon's northern city of Tripoli, local security and medical sources said yesterday. Gunmen in the two districts exchanged gunfire and launched rocket-propelled grenades, residents said, in fighting that continued sporadically through the night. REUTERS

Divers recover body of Philippine minister

DIVERS had recovered the body of the Philippines' interior minister from the wreckage of a light aircraft that crashed into the sea near the central island of Masbate three days ago, a senior official said yesterday. The body of Interior Secretary Jesse Robredo was pulled from the six-seat Piper Seneca plane that had been carrying him, Transportation and Communication Secretary Mar Roxas told reporters. REUTERS

Kyrgyz forces shoot fugitive border guard

KYRGYZ security forces on yesterday killed a fugitive border guard suspected of shooting dead five people at a remote frontier post, the border guard service of the former Soviet republic said. Border guards and police found the lone gunman, named as Balbai Kulbarak Uulu, in a gorge near the Kyrgyz border with Kazakhstan a day after he fled the scene of the attack. REUTERS

New Zealander killed by Swede in bar brawl

A NEW Zealand man was stabbed to death by a Swedish man in a bar in Pattaya, Thailand during a quarrel about the suspect's girlfriend and pet dog, reports said yesterday. Police said they received a report about 2am yesterday that a foreigner had been killed in a bar. THE BANGKOK POST

Japan may widen response

Kaori Kaneko

JAPAN said yesterday it was considering taking measures beyond diplomatic action in its feud with South Korea over a group of disputed islands, suggesting Tokyo may take the unusual step of extending the stand-off into the economic arena.

Finance Minister Jun Azumi suggested last Friday that Japan could roll back an emergency currency-swap arrangement that was agreed last year and expires in October.

Japanese media have also speculated that Tokyo could abort a plan to buy South Korean government bonds, a step agreed as part of financial and economic co-operation between the two countries.

Japan's cabinet yesterday held a meeting to discuss a response to what Japan considered a provocative visit of South Korea's president to disputed islands earlier this month.

Chief Cabinet Secretary Osamu Fujimura said Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda told his cabinet to consider additional measures to deal with the conflict, beyond usual diplomatic channels.

"Prime Minister Noda instructed ministers to prepare peaceful solution in accordance with an international law, strengthen information policy ... and consider possible additional measures," Fujimura said.



A Japanese Ground Self-Defence Force CH-47 helicopter carries an armoured vehicle with ropes past Mount Fuji during a training exercise west of Tokyo yesterday. REUTERS

Azumi would not comment on the swap deal yesterday and other ministers said the issue was not even discussed.

The islands, known as Dokdo in Korea and Takeshima in Japan, lie equidistant from the two mainlands and are believed to contain frozen natural gas deposits potentially worth billions of dollars.

Japan recalled its ambassador to South Korea after Lee Myung-bak became the first South Korean leader to set foot on the islands.

Azumi last week called off

his trip to Seoul, scheduled for this week, and the government postponed two other ministerial-level meetings between the two countries that were planned for late this month.

Tokyo has said it will take the long-running islands territorial dispute to the International Court of Justice.

But it would be unusual for Japan to play the economic card in disputes with its neighbours.

"They are talking about it, but I am not sure they will carry through the threats. Talk is cheap," Koichi Nakano, a So-

phia University professor and political commentator, said.

Japan's ruling Democrats, under voter pressure and likely to lose the next election, seemed to have overreacted to media criticism that they were too soft in disputes with Japan's neighbours, said Nakano.

The spat with South Korea coincides with a stand-off between Japan and China over another island chain, which sparked major anti-Japanese protests across China last week. REUTERS

US general's aircraft hit by rebel rocket fire

INSURGENTS fired two rockets at the main NATO air base in Afghanistan, damaging an aircraft used by US Joint Chiefs of Staff chairman Martin Dempsey, a NATO spokesman said yesterday. The general was not on board at the time.

Dempsey arrived in the country on Monday in a C-17 transport aircraft that was parked at Bagram air base, north of Kabul. Two rockets landed near the apron late on Monday night, slightly wounding two ground staff.

"He was nowhere near the aircraft. We think it was a lucky shot," NATO spokesman Colonel Thomas Collins said.

The aircraft was being used temporarily by Dempsey and his staff. The rockets also damaged a nearby helicopter.

Dempsey, who had been in the country for talks with NATO and Afghan commanders on a string of recent rogue shootings, left the country on another aircraft.

Bagram is occasionally the target of rockets and mortar shells fired by insur-

gents from surrounding hills and fields.

Sporadic attacks also occur at NATO's other main air base in Afghanistan, Kandahar Airfield, in the volatile south, although they rarely cause deaths or major damage.

Before leaving Afghanistan, Dempsey met his Afghan counterpart, General Sher Mohammad Karimi, who raised the issue of insider attacks by rogue forces that have killed 10 American troops in the past two weeks. REUTERS

Historic parliament opens in Somalia

Nastasya Tay and David Smith

A DUSTY seaside car park with black folding chairs was the makeshift setting on Monday for the first parliament to sit in Somalia for more than two decades.

About 250 MPs wearing new ID tags and, in some cases, the scent of cologne were sworn in by the chief justice on worn copies of the Quran in front of Somalia's national flag of a white star on sky blue background.

It was a day that many hope will mark a new chapter after the civil war and bloodshed that followed the collapse of central government in 1991. But sceptics warn that the process is already tainted and likely to unravel.

The inauguration was held at the main airport, one of the most heavily secured areas of the capital, Mogadishu, watched over by African Union peacekeepers in armoured personnel carriers.

Just over a year after the militant Islamist group al-Shabaab was driven out of the city, suicide bombings and assassinations remain a constant threat.

Although ordinary citizens could not vote, there was campaigning in Mogadishu, with election posters hanging on buildings and from cars, a scene scarcely imaginable when it was a war zone.

By the end of the day, Somalia had achieved a parliament, still some way short of the final target of 275 members.

There should also have been a new president and speaker but, in a transition process that has taken a year longer than the original deadline, the international community has had to lower its expectations. THE GUARDIAN

Ethiopian strongman dies abroad

Aaron Maasho

ETHIOPIAN Prime Minister Meles Zenawi, who led the Horn of Africa country for more than two decades, died of an infection while being treated abroad for an undisclosed illness, state-run television said yesterday.

Speculation that Meles, 57, was seriously ill grew after he failed to attend an African Union summit in the Ethiopian capital of Addis Ababa last month.

"Prime Minister Meles suddenly passed away last night. He was recovering in a hospital overseas for the past two months, but died of a sudden infection at 11:40 [on Monday night]," state television said.

Meles seized power in 1991 from Mengistu Haile Mariam's military junta. As president and then prime minister, he turned Ethiopia into a key player in regional security affairs.

His forces, widely regarded as among the strongest on the continent, have entered Somalia twice to battle Islamist militants, winning him accolades from the West for supporting its fight against groups linked to al-Qaeda.

State media said Deputy Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn would be the acting prime minister. Television broadcast footage of Meles against a backdrop of solemn instrumental music.

Ethiopia's government said last month Meles was taking a break to recover from an unspecified condition.

Diplomats in Addis Ababa had said Meles was being treated in Brussels for an undisclosed illness. Others said he was in Germany.

During his time in office, Meles was credited with steering Ethiopia towards economic growth and also helped mediate in several



Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi in an April, 2009 file photograph. REUTERS

regional disputes, including rifts between Sudan and South Sudan.

"I believe that any successor to Meles will focus first on domestic issues and, for the most part, leave the regional and international engage-

ment to other countries, at least until the new leader is firmly established in office," David Shinn, a former US ambassador to Ethiopia, said recently.

"For internal security reasons, there will be a continuing focus on Somalia, and I do not foresee any significant change towards Eritrea," he said, referring to Ethiopia's arch-foe, with whom it fought a decade-long border war.

But Ethiopia would be less willing to devote a lot of time and resources to problems further afield, Shinn said.

However, international rights groups say Meles was intolerant of dissent. Several opposition figures and journalists have been arrested under a 2009 anti-terrorism law.

State television said details of his funeral, the Horn of Africa country's first state burial in modern times, would be announced soon. REUTERS

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Focusing on a good user experience

Gregory Pellechi

COMPANIES and individuals need to do more than just create technology. They need to optimise the services and goods they provide, especially when introducing new concepts to developing markets such as Cambodia.

That was the message from one presenter at last weekend's T3CON12-ASIA conference in Phnom Penh.

The conference focused on bringing professionals and enthusiasts from the Web and mobile development fields together to exchange ideas about usability, publishing to different devices, website optimisation, quality assurance, IT infrastructure management and business best practices.

It also offered three days of training in using TYPO3, an open source content management system, as well as Web development for those interested.

Sam Ng, co-founder and director of Optimal Usability, a user experience consultancy group, spoke on Saturday about the concept of "user experience as your core competence", which he described as "a nice way to say how we make things easy for people to use and how we make people feel good when they're interacting with technology".

The essence of Ng's presentation: think of the users first, then think of the systems.

"[Good design is] one of the new competitive advantages in a sluggish economy. And even in a thriving one, if we look at things that people can copy very easily, technology is certainly one that is increasing commoditised."

He went on: "There are lots of products that are effectively 'me too' versions of each other, but experience in terms of how we can deliver really good customer service or how we can get word-of-mouth, good word-of-mouth, more systemically is something that is incredibly hard to replicate and also is something that is incredibly hard to do well, consistently."

Dominik Stankowski, the executive director of Web Essentials and organiser of the conference, offered this thought on good design: "Whilst we do not see so many good user interfaces in local websites, I am convinced that user interfaces will also make a big difference in the useability

and adoption of Web technology in Cambodia."

But being user-friendly isn't enough, he added. "It is not only the user interface itself, it is the validity of the information and the service that comes together with the product that will complement the user experience. For instance, an e-shop needs to go hand-in-hand with good logistics and a call centre that can handle requests efficiently."

Ng and Stankowski agree that a good user experience is the key to Cambodian companies moving into the global market.

"To be competitive in ASEAN and in international markets, Cambodia should absolutely focus on developing design capabilities. Doing what everyone else does gives you what everyone else gets," Ng said.

"Businesses are coming to Cambodia because labour in places like India, China and the Philippines are getting more expensive. Without a sustainable competitive advantage, this will last a few years until businesses find another country that is even cheaper. But imagine if Cambodia could offer great price and well-designed solutions – over time businesses will stay even if Cambodia is not the cheapest."

Ng suggested Cambodia work toward developing a strength not often found in Southeast Asia.

"Good design is how well something works. That applies not just to the products and services but to the interactions themselves – how enjoyable is it to interact with Cambodian businesses and government departments? It's possible for Cambodia to be an economic leader in ASEAN if it focuses on making design one of its core strengths. It's something none of the other ASEAN countries are particularly accomplished at."

Stankowski concurred: "Usability is also a topic that is not yet enough taught at universities. It is hard for us to find good front-end developers and designers, because IT curriculums generally focus on programming and not usability."

Stankowski said keeping tabs on global technology trends is essential, and the government must move with the times as well.

"To go internationally, designers and developers need to understand what is



Sam Ng, co-founder and director of Optimal Usability, a user experience consultancy group, at the T3CON12-ASIA conference in Phnom Penh. GREGORY PELLECHI

going on internationally on an e-commerce level. Additionally, Cambodia needs an e-payment system that can handle credit card sales efficiently and legislative efforts need to be made for an e-commerce law," he said.

On the home front, Ng sees the already crowded mobile-phone market

as one sector where user experience is likely to be the trump card for any savvy company to win customers and maintain their loyalty.

"You have 10 mobile phone providers to choose from, and customers are choosing based on the difference in price. It's a race to the bottom," he said.

However, appealing to the growing middle class will be in large part based on customer experience.

"At the low end of the market, you tend to compete on price, but there's a rich middle class and it will only grow – how do you encourage brand loyalty and reduce churn for those segments? Customer experience," Ng said.

Smart Mobile CEO Thomas Hundt, who did not attend the conference, acknowledged Ng's point: "At the present moment, price sensitivity is largely dominant over user experience and product quality. This is absolutely not limited to telecommunications services, but is a general phenomenon."

"The very limited purchasing power among the vast majority of the population is the reason for it. However, with an increasing level of wealth, quality will become a significantly more important factor."

Hundt agreed that user experience would become more important.

"Price-wise, the bottom has been practically reached. Yes, user experience will be factors to focus on even more," he said, adding that Smart Mobile was excellently positioned to take advantage of this shift.

Hundt listed the numerous additional services on offer, such as clear voice calls and text messaging, mobile internet and "value added services" as the key differentiators that made his business viable for the future.

Ng's advice for the future is to look at areas, such as mobile phones, where Cambodia doesn't have a legacy to contend with, and develop from there.

"There are opportunities to leapfrog and bypass some of the things done in developed countries. For instance, mobile technology is one of those things that is a massive enabling technology. When we have more affordable accessible data on mobile devices and a high penetration rate, you can do a lot of things differently."

"Developed countries have a lot of legacy to deal with. They've invested heavily in old infrastructure and the cost of change is significant. Developing countries can skip some of these stages. Good design can inform how we use technology effectively to leapfrog developed countries," he said.

For more information got to: <http://t3con12-asia.typo3.org/>

India blocks hundreds of websites US satellite to begin tracking space debris

INDIA blocked about 250 websites and social networking sites on Monday, accusing them of spreading inflammatory content that triggered panic among thousands of workers and students from the country's eight northeastern states last week.

The government's blame list ranged from Facebook to fundamentalist Pakistani sites, Twitter to text messages, and Google to YouTube videos. Authorities also barred the sending of text messages to more than five people at a time for two weeks.

Thousands of people from northeastern India fled several cities in the south and west of the country last week after text messages circulated warning that they faced reprisal attacks from Muslims over recent ethnic clashes in the northeastern state of Assam.

The government said a number of websites had delib-



Activists from Assam Public Work, an Indian NGO, burn Pakistan's national flag during a protest on Sunday. REUTERS

erately tried to inflame passions, hosting morphed videos of violence against Muslims in Burma and asserting that they were filmed in Assam. The images went viral and provoked riots by Muslim residents of Mumbai just over a week ago.

"We have blocked a number

of sites. We have also identified a number of sites which were uploaded from Pakistan," Home Secretary RK Singh told reporters in New Delhi on Monday.

Pakistani Interior Minister Rehman Malik has asked India for evidence about the alleged

Pakistani websites, which Singh said he would share.

Although some analysts said the curbs were justified because the sites posed a threat to public order, others said the actions were a knee-jerk response from a weak government unable to effectively assuage the concerns of its frightened citizens.

"This is a government that is trying to hide its incompetence by blaming everybody but unwilling to look at itself for failure to protect its citizens," said a government official who spoke on the condition of anonymity.

Others said that by cracking down on websites and social media, the government was dodging the deeper issue of the racism and alienation felt by many people from the northeastern states, who are denigrated by their fellow Indians for supposedly being more Chinese or Southeast Asian in appearance. REUTERS

US satellite to begin tracking space debris

THE US Air Force yesterday said yesterday it would begin operational use of a new Boeing surveillance satellite built to monitor debris and other satellites in space – nearly two years after the satellite was launched.

Air Force Space Command said the Space Based Surveillance Satellite system had achieved its initial level of capability and was ready to support US military requirements after a delay linked to a piece of electronics on board the satellite.

The system is the only space-based sensor capable of detecting and monitoring debris, satellites and other space objects without disruptions from weather, atmospheric factors or the time of day that can limit ground-based systems.

"This improved access to observe orbiting objects sig-

nificantly enhances the ability to provide timely, critical information so desperately needed to support warfighter decision-making," the air force said.

When the satellite was launched in September, 2010, Boeing predicted it would be ready to perform its mission within 60 days, but its "initial operational capability" was delayed by problems with some on-board electronics.

The problem occurred when the satellite travelled through the South Atlantic Anomaly, an area where the Earth's magnetic field is weakest and orbiting satellites are exposed to higher than usual levels of radiation.

The Air Force began implementing a fix for the issue in May, followed by successful software testing that allowed it to begin using the satellite.

REUTERS

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POST MEDIA

HEAD OFFICE

Post Media Co, Ltd.
888, Building F, 8th floor,
Phnom Penh Center,
Cnr Sothearos & Sihanouk Blvd,
Chamkarmon, Phnom Penh, Cambodia
Tel: 023 214 311, 0214 311-017
Fax: 023 214 318

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Assange stand-off turns into a diplomatic headache

Comment

Mohammed Abbas

BRITAIN'S options in dealing with WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange are limited, and British lawyers and diplomats reckon its best course of action is simply to sit tight and wait.

Two months ago, Assange took refuge at Ecuador's London embassy to avoid being extradited to Sweden, where he faces questioning over rape allegations.

This triggered a diplomatic stand-off that turned heated last week, when Britain threatened to raid the diplomatic mission and Ecuador granted Assange political asylum.

However frustrating it finds Ecuador's position, by prompting Latin American accusations of colonial arrogance and suggesting a move that may well be illegal and would certainly set a dangerous precedent for its own diplomats, Britain was unwise to make the threat, legal and diplomatic experts say.

But Ecuador's leftist, ardently anti-Washington president Rafael Correa, and Assange himself, who made his first appearance in two months from an embassy balcony on Sunday, also have few options, they argue. So Britain has little to gain from haste.

"I don't think the possibility of spending months, or even years, at the Ecuadorean embassy is very attractive for Assange," says Francisco Panizza, who studies Latin American affairs at the London School of Economics.

"And, in a way, Britain has everything to gain by playing the waiting game."

Although the 41-year-old Australian anti-secrecy campaigner has won a right to live in Ecuador, he has no obvious way of getting there without being arrested by British police, who say they are legally obliged to send him to Stockholm.

Britain and Sweden do not accept Assange's view that he is a victim of a US "witch hunt", and Washington has said it has no interest in the matter.

Last week, Britain said it had a legal right to remove the embassy's diplomatic status, then enter to arrest Assange.

But many lawyers question that view, and diplomatic sources have said it would put British envoys at



WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange speaks to the media from a balcony at the Ecuadorean embassy in London this week. REUTERS

the risk of repercussions abroad.

"There's no obvious direct action they can take. I exclude the possibility of their simply barging into the embassy," Oliver Miles, a former British ambassador to Libya, says.

Miles says breaking off diplomatic relations with Ecuador would be a more "realistic", but not very attractive, way to resolve an impasse to which the British government says it is seeking a "diplomatic solution" and still "exploring all the options".

One such option could be for Britain to offer a guarantee that Assange will not be extradited from Sweden to the US. Under international law, Britain must give its consent for someone it has extradited to be sent on to a third country.

But giving Assange some form of guarantee in advance that Britain would block further extradition may be problematic.

"I don't think that's realistic," Dapo

Akande, a lecturer in public international law at Britain's Oxford University, says.

"That would mean Britain would have to give this guarantee in the abstract, without knowing precisely what re-extradition might entail, what evidence might be available and what the precise charges against him would be.

"More likely, I think, is the option of just waiting it out, because it's very difficult to see what Britain's other options are."

A strategy of waiting may be encouraged by Assange's record of falling out with his allies.

Some journalists, celebrity sympathisers and fellow advocates for freedom of speech have distanced themselves from him after acrimonious disputes.

Assange, a former computer hacker, is also an unlikely bedfellow for Ecuador's government, which stands

accused of trying to muzzle its critics in the media.

The New York-based Committee to Protect Journalists describes Correa's press-freedom record as "among the very worst in the Americas".

Craig Barker, a law professor at Sussex University, says Assange and the Ecuadoreans may tire of each other in time.

"My thinking is that the best way for the Brits to go forward from this is simply to allow Assange to remain in the Ecuadorean embassy until he gets tired of it, the media gets tired of it and the Ecuadoreans get tired of it," Barker says.

"Depending on Assange's ongoing activities, there may be something that would embarrass them.

"He isn't the type to stay quiet. He's going to have to keep bringing his case to the media, and the Ecuadoreans will begin to wonder what the benefit is to them." REUTERS

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Lifestyle

Khmer Rouge refugee a rare 'Miss Cambodia'

Seth Kimsoeurn

A CAMBODIAN-AMERICAN singer who was nearly killed as a child by the Khmer Rouge will be the first Miss Cambodia to compete in an international beauty pageant since 2006.

Phanith Sovann has been selected as an entrant in next year's Queen of the Universe 2013, an annual beauty contest in California.

Sovann, born in a refugee camp in Kao-I-Dang, Thailand in 1989 to young parents who, orphaned by the Khmer Rouge, escaped to the border, said her family was lucky to have survived.

They were forced to run and hide from Thai soldiers who raided the camps periodically, forcing refugees who did not have permits back to the killing fields of Cambodia.

"My mother always said that my family almost died many times," she said.

At the age of two, Sovann and her family moved to the US with nothing but a few bags of clothes. They lived in a small garage in California, where Sovann's parents encouraged her to learn her native tongue, Khmer.

By the time she was six, after performing her first solo in church, her parents enrolled her in piano classes, where she learned how to read notes.

By the age of eight, she had taught herself to play music by ear and tabulate it, and wrote her first song.

In 2004, Sovann won the international John Lennon Songwriting contest, and recorded an original song titled *My American Dream*.

Sovann is humble about her chances of success at next year's contest, but believes that taking part is a first step in rep-



Phanith Sovann, the Cambodian-American who will compete in an international beauty contest next year. PHOTO SUPPLIED.

resenting Cambodian beauty.

She said: "I want the world to see that Cambodia is marvelous in so many ways. I have not seen Cambodia represented in an international pageant for a while, so even if I'm not perfect, I want to take that first step."

The last Miss Cambodia to compete in an international beauty contest was Sun Srey Mom, who competed in Miss World in 2006. She was the first in more than 50 years to vie for the coveted title.

Plans for beauty pageants inside Cambodia have run into trouble in recent years. In 2006, Prime Minister Hun Sen

cancelled a Miss Cambodia contest, saying he would not allow the event to go ahead until poverty had been more than halved.

Three years later, a beauty pageant for victims of Cambodia's millions of landmines was cancelled after the government denounced the event as an insult to disabled people.

Entrants to the competition, which will be held in California have to raise a minimum of \$3,000 sponsorship.

Phanin has been given a letter of support from the Cambodian ambassador in the US, at home to back her campaign.

In a letter of support, back-

ing her application, Hem Heng, ambassador of the Kingdom of Cambodia in the US, said: "Your efforts to represent as Miss Cambodia is a brave commitment and a big gesture in your life, which I am sure is appreciated by all Cambodians back home as well as Cambodian-Americans here who have always thought of their native country Cambodia no matter how far away they were compelled to live due to the necessity in one's life."

Sovann said she hoped to set an example to young women.

"My hope in doing all of this is to inspire young women and

girls all over the world to pursue their dreams. I want everyone to know that you don't have to have a title to become an ambassador of love, hope, and peace to the world.

"I want people to know that you don't have to be the tallest, or the most beautiful to represent your country. You just have to have a good heart, compassion, vision, and determination."

On the day of the event there will be an evening-wear round, a swimsuit competition and each delegate will be questioned. Judges will pick a top 10 to go through to the next round. ■

In brief

Clues sought in director's suicide

INVESTIGATORS sought clues on Monday to what had prompted British-born filmmaker Tony Scott to take his own life in Los Angeles, while much of Hollywood focused on an unconfirmed news report that he was suffering from brain cancer. Scott, the director of such blockbusters as *Top Gun* and *Beverly Hills Cop II*, jumped to his death on Sunday from a suspension bridge over Los Angeles Harbour, leaving behind a suicide note in his office and a list in his car of people to contact. REUTERS

Comedian on mend after heart attack

NBC'S Rosie O'Donnell recently had a heart attack, but is now on the mend, thanks to Bayer aspirin and the internet. As *People* magazine noted, O'Donnell, 50, published a blog post on Monday titled *My heart attack*, in which she explained that after helping an "enormous woman" (O'Donnell's words) get out of her car last week, the former talk show host felt an ache in her chest and soreness in her arms.

THE WASHINGTON POST

Stand-up Phyllis Diller dies at 95

COMEDIAN Phyllis Diller, the former housewife whose raucous cackle and jokes about her own looks made her one of America's first female stand-up comedy stars, died in her sleep on Monday at the age of 95, her long-time manager said. Diller was found in bed at her home in the affluent Brentwood section of Los Angeles by her son, Perry, who had come to visit her, manager Milt Suchin said. "She had a smile on her face, as you'd expect," Suchin told Reuters. Diller's publicist, Fred Wostbrock, called her "a true pioneer" and "the first lady of stand-up comedy." Joan Rivers, a friend and fellow comic, said on Monday Diller had cleared a path for a younger generation of female stand-up artists to trade on their jokes alone. REUTERS

International comedy show back in town



Canadian comic Allyson Smith will join Britain's Imran Yusuf performing stand-up at Pontoon tonight. PHOTO SUPPLIED

Post staff

A STAR-STUDDERED comic line-up will grace the stage in Phnom Penh tonight as the city's biggest international comedy night returns.

Canadian comic Allyson Smith and Britain's Imran Yusuf will perform at Pontoon as Comedy Club Cambodia, which hosts comics from around the world, comes back from a summer hiatus.

Yusuf is renowned in the UK for his fast-paced wisecracking, often about being a Muslim in Britain.

Smith, who counts Sarah Millican and Joan Rivers among her influences, said she was excited to bring her brand of personal, observational comedy to Asia for the first time.

"I love Cambodia. It's wonderful," she said, adding that the crowds in Asia were more welcoming to a female comic than some of the male-dominated comedy clubs in Britain.

"It is way more 50-50 here. In Asia people are just learning about comedy clubs, so there aren't those associations.

"Sometimes it can be intimidating at certain clubs in Eng-

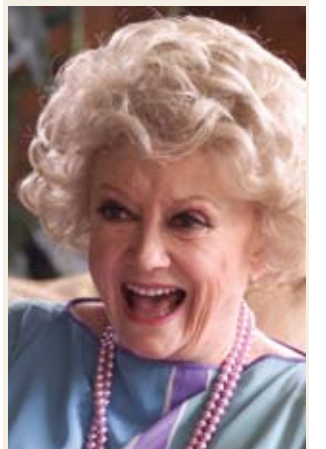
land. They just look at you like, 'What are you doing here? We want to see a bloke.'

But Smith says she has had to adapt her material in light of cultural differences.

"I told a joke about Brownie Guides in Singapore, which fell flat as they were all asking: 'What is that?'"

"The jokes that work everywhere are the ones about family and relationship problems."

Smith and Yusuf will perform at Pontoon Club, St 172. Tickets can be bought from Pontoon bistrotro beforehand or on the door. The show begins at 8pm. ■



A laughing Phyllis Diller at her Los Angeles home. REUTERS

The pros and cons of sleeping pills

Laura Barton

LAST year in Britain, 15 million prescriptions were made for sleep medication. Patients in England alone received 5.4 million prescriptions for zopiclone and 2.8 million for temazepam, the most popular sleeping pills.

According to the Economic and Social Research Council, one in 10 Brits regularly takes some form of sleeping tablet and their use has soared since the recession.

But last week, a leading sleep specialist – Kevin Morgan, professor of gerontology at the University of Loughborough – argued that the NHS should be looking beyond sleeping pills and training its staff to provide psychological therapies such as cognitive behavioural therapy to help those with insomnia.

Morgan argues that CBT offers a better long-term solution, and that sleeping pills hold further dangers: addiction or dependency; medication-related accidents; and spiralling costs for the health service.

So how easily can we be weaned off them? Sleep is perhaps only rivalled by sex in terms of our concern about how much we get, how much we want and how we go about doing it. Earlier this year, when Nuffield Health reported that UK adults “miss out” on 378 million hours of sleep a week, their respondents averaging 7.1 hours a night, they stressed that this figure was “much less than the recommended eight hours”.

In light of this, are sleeping tablets really so terrible? “They do have a place in treatment,” says Dr Andrew Hall, a consultant in sleep-disorder medicine and a member of the British Sleep Society, “especially for an acute problem such as a grief reaction.”

Yet for all our increasing reliance on medicated sleep, there lingers a residual social suspicion of sleeping tablets – fired, perhaps, by the memory of barbiturates and of the zombified “mother’s little helper” image of Valium.

Valium, which became the biggest-selling drug in America



Two of the biggest-selling insomnia drugs in the US. Sales fell in 2006 after reports that the pills may cause binge eating and driving while sleepwalking. BLOOMBERG

between 1969 and 1980, with 2.3 billion sold in 1978 alone. “It’s quite a good drug,” a doctor told *The New Yorker* at a 40th-anniversary party thrown in Valium’s honour. “It has pleasant side-effects. My wife doesn’t let me take it,” he added tellingly.

Ian Singleton is 65, and a senior project worker at Bristol Tranquilliser Project. Singleton himself became dependent on benzodiazepines in the 1980s, having visited his GP about recurrent stomach upsets and work-related stress. “My doctor diagnosed stress,” he recalls. “But he didn’t ask why I was stressed, he just said he would give me drugs to help me get back to work.”

“I got pains in my body, terribly tight stomach muscles, and I was panicky. I knew after a year that I was hooked.” The effect was devastating. “It completely wrecked everything,” he says. “I couldn’t sleep, I had anxiety, I had no interest in life.”

Singleton went cold turkey, experienced an epileptic fit and was hospitalised for several months. “I would never advise anyone to take sleeping pills,” he says. “Unless they have been through a traumatic event.”

In February, BMJ Open published perhaps the most alarming argument against the use of sleeping tablets. An American study overseen by Dr Daniel

Kripke compared 10,500 patients taking prescribed sleeping pills with 23,000 patients not on sleep medication. The risk of death was four times higher in those taking sleeping tablets.

Kripke is keen to stress that much of this was seen in patients who had other co-morbidities such as obesity, suggesting that such conditions might interact with the dangerous effects of hypnotic sleeping tablets. He is adamant about the implications of his research, though: “I conclude that none of the drugs we were able to study are safe enough to use.”

Professor David Nutt is sceptical of this research. “There’s

been very little evidence over the last 60 years that these sleeping pills do any harm,” he insists wearily. “Do I think sleeping tablets are a good thing? I sure do. People who criticise them don’t treat people with insomnia – people who haven’t slept for weeks and it has destroyed their life.”

“The best approach to sleep problems is good sleep hygiene,” says Hall, “which means how you organise your sleep: no over-stimulating activities too late at night, no computers or television.”

The shift in thinking towards treatments such as CBT aims to empower patients, enabling

them to take control of their own sleep problems.

CBT works on the basis of understanding and manipulating the two processes that affect an individual’s sleep: first, the learned behaviour of spending too long awake in bed trying to get to sleep; and second, the thinking that accompanies that time, which can become panicked and obsessive. Morgan argues that a mere five hours of CBT can deliver benefits in more than 70 per cent of cases.

“It gives a better quality of sleep up to a year later. Thirty years of sleeping tablets have created passivity, the idea it is out of your control.” THE GUARDIAN

Avid tooth-brushers less likely to develop dementia



Research has linked good oral hygiene with a lower risk of developing dementia in later life. BLOOMBERG

Natasja Sheriff

PEOPLE who keep their teeth and gums healthy with regular brushing may have a lower risk of developing dementia later in life, according to a new study.

Researchers who followed close to 5,500 elderly people over an 18-year period, found those who reported brushing their teeth less than once a day were up to 65 per cent more likely to develop dementia than those who brushed daily.

“Not only does the state of your mind predict what kind of oral health habits you practise, it may be that your oral health habits influence whether or not you get dementia,” said Annalia Paganini-Hill, who led the study at the University of California.

Inflammation stoked by gum disease-related bacteria is implicated in a host of conditions including heart disease and stroke.

And some studies have found that people with Alzheimer’s disease, the most common form of dementia, have more

gum disease-related bacteria in their brains than a person without Alzheimer’s, said Paganini-Hill.

It’s thought that gum disease bacteria might get into the brain causing inflammation and brain damage, she said.

So she and her team wanted to look at whether good dental health practices over the long term would predict better cognitive function in later life.

The researchers followed 5,468 residents of a Californian retirement community from 1992 to 2010. Most people in the study were white, well-educated, and relatively affluent. When the study began, participants ranged in age from 52 to 105, with an average age of 81.

All were free of dementia at the outset, when they answered questions about their dental health habits, the condition of their teeth and whether they wore dentures.

When the researchers followed-up 18 years later, they used interviews, medi-

cal records and in some cases death certificates to determine that 1,145 of the original group had been diagnosed with dementia.

There was a significant difference seen between men who had all, or at least most, of their teeth, or who wore dentures, and those who didn’t – the latter group were almost twice as likely to develop dementia.

That effect was not seen in women, though. Paganini-Hill could only speculate on the reasons for the different outcomes. Perhaps women wear their dentures more often than men, and they visit the dentist more frequently, she suggested.

The new findings, published in the *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society*, cannot prove that poor dental health can cause dementia.

This report “is really the first to look at the effect of actions like brushing and flossing your teeth,” said Dr Amber Watts, who studies the causes of dementia at the University of Kansas. REUTERS

India ban could end tiger-park tourism



A tiger relaxes at the Pench Pench reserve in Madhya Pradesh, one of many reserves affected by the ban. BLOOMBERG

Helen Pidd

IT'S NOT difficult to guess which animal the town of Sawai Madhopur has tethered its fortunes to. Fancy a drink? Pop into the Tiger bar at the Taj hotel. Want to rest your head? Try the Tiger Moon Resort. Little in this Rajasthan town has not succumbed to tiger mania.

Sitting cross-legged on a stage by the main road, Yad-vendra Singh hands over his business card, decorated with orange and black stripes.

Since 1992, he has run Tiger Eye Adventure Tours, taking visitors from around the world on safari inside the nearby Ranthambore national park.

But for the past three weeks, Singh has not been allowed in the park to check on the 27 adult tigers and 25 cubs that call it home. No one has, after India's Supreme Court issued an order banning tourism in all core tiger habitats.

The decree was temporary: only until tomorrow, when the court meets again to assess whether tigers and tourists can co-exist in India.

The decision will have ramifications not just for India's 1,700 tigers, but for the tens, if not hundreds, of thousands of Indians whose livelihoods depend on the big cats.

"I couldn't believe it," says Singh. "I've spent 20 years, half my life, doing this. And sudd-enly I'm supposed to find a new job."

But Singh, and many environmentalists and conservationists, insist the real losers will be the creatures who have helped pay his bills for two decades.

"If the ban on tourism continues, it will be the end of the tiger in India," he says. "We're the ones who track them. We deter poachers."

Belinda Wright, executive director of the Wildlife Protection Society of India, based in New Delhi, says a tourist ban would be a "total disaster".

Stressing she is pro-tiger rather than pro-tourist, she says: "There is no way the forestry department alone can protect tigers from poachers and local encroachment on the land."

Since the court's judgment on July 24, Singh has not earned a penny. Along with dozens of other guides and drivers who feed their families by servicing the tiger tourists who flock to Ranthambore every year, he has been holding a roadside protest to remind the authorities how integral tigers are to the town.

The interim order has hit hard, says Goverdhan Singh Rathore, a doctor who runs a free hospital from the profit made from his guest house.

"We've already had 10 per cent of bookings for next season cancelled. Forty per cent of guests have asked us to let them know what happens. If the ban is extended, next season is over."

INTERNATIONAL FLIGHT SCHEDULE							
FROM PHNOM PENH				TO PHNOM PENH			
PHNOM PENH - YANGON				YANGON - PHNOM PENH			
Flights	Days	Dep	Arrival	Flights	Days	Dep	Arrival
8M 402	3.6	18:40	20:05	8M 401	3.6	15:15	17:40
PHNOM PENH - BANGKOK				BANGKOK - PHNOM PENH			
PG 938	Daily	06:40	08:15	PG 931	Daily	07:55	09:05
PG 932	Daily	09:55	11:10	TG 580	Daily	07:55	09:05
TG 581	Daily	10:05	11:10	PG 933	Daily	13:30	14:40
PG 934	Daily	15:30	16:40	FD 3616	Daily	15:15	16:20
FD 3617	Daily	17:05	18:15	PG 935	Daily	17:30	18:40
PG 936	Daily	19:30	20:40	TG 584	Daily	18:25	19:40
TG 585	Daily	20:40	21:45	PG 937	Daily	20:15	21:50
PHNOM PENH - BEIJING				BEIJING - PHNOM PENH			
CZ 324	Daily	08:00	16:05	CZ 323	Daily	14:30	20:50
PHNOM PENH - GUANGZHOU				GUANGZHOU - PHNOM PENH			
CZ 324	Daily	08:00	11:40	CZ 6059	2.4.7	12:00	13:45
CZ 6060	2.4.7	14:45	18:10	CZ 323	Daily	19:05	20:50
PHNOM PENH - HANOI				HANOI - PHNOM PENH			
VN 840	Daily	17:30	20:35	VN 841	Daily	09:40	13:00
PHNOM PENH - HONG KONG				HONG KONG - PHNOM PENH			
KA 207	1. 2. 6	11:25	15:05	KA 206	1. 2. 4. 6	08:55	10:30
KA 207	Daily	18:50	22:30	KA 206	Daily	18:00	18:45
PHNOM PENH - KUALA LUMPUR				KUALA LUMPUR - PHNOM PENH			
MH 755	Daily	11:10	14:00	AK 1474	Daily	15:15	16:00
MH 763	Daily	16:40	19:10	MH 754	Daily	09:30	10:20
AK 1475	Daily	16:45	19:35	AK 1472	Daily	07:05	07:50
AK 1473	Daily	08:35	11:20	MH 762	Daily	15:20	16:10
PHNOM PENH - HO CHI MINH CITY				HO CHI MINH CITY - PHNOM PENH			
VN 841	Daily	14:00	14:45	VN 920	Daily	15:50	16:30
VN 3856	Daily	19:20	20:05	VN 3857	Daily	18:00	18:45
PHNOM PENH - SHANGHAI				SHANGHAI - PHNOM PENH			
FM 833	2.3.4.5.7	19:50	23:05	FM 833	2.3.4.5.7	19:30	22:40
PHNOM PENH - INCHEON				INCHEON - PHNOM PENH			
KE 690	Daily	23:40	06:50	KE 689	Daily	18:80	22:20
OZ 740	Daily	23:50	06:50	OZ 739	Daily	19:10	22:50
PHNOM PENH - SINGAPORE				SINGAPORE - PHNOM PENH			
MI 601	1.3.5.6.7	09:30	12:30	MI 602	1.3.5.6.7	07:40	08:30
MI 622	2.4	12:20	15:20	MI 622	2.4	08:40	11:25
3K 594	1.3.6	12:50	15:40	3K 593	1.3.6	11:05	11:25
3K 599	2.4.7	18:15	21:05	3K 591	2.4.7	14:50	17:30
MI 607	Daily	18:10	21:10	MI 608	Daily	16:20	17:15
PHNOM PENH - TAIPEI				TAIPEI - PHNOM PENH			
BR 266	Daily	12:45	17:05	BR 265	Daily	09:10	11:35
PHNOM PENH - VIENTIANE				VIENTIANE - PHNOM PENH			
VN 840	Daily	17:30	18:50	VN 841	Daily	11:30	13:00
QV 920	Daily	17:50	19:10	QV 921	Daily	11:45	13:15
PHNOM PENH- PARIS				PHNOM PENH - PARIS			
AF 273	2	20:05	06:05	AF 273	2	20:05	06:05
FROM SIEM REAP				TO SIEM REAP			
SIEM REAP - BANGKOK				BANGKOK - SIEM REAP			
Flights	Days	Dep	Arrival	Flights	Days	Dep	Arrival
PG 924	Daily	09:45	11:10	PG 903	Daily	08:00	09:00
PG 906	Daily	13:15	14:40	PG 905	Daily	11:35	12:45
PG 914	Daily	15:20	16:45	PG 913	Daily	13:35	14:35
PG 908	Daily	18:50	20:15	PG 907	Daily	17:00	18:10
PG 910	Daily	20:30	21:55	PG 909	Daily	18:45	19:55
SIEM REAP - HANOI				HANOI - SIEM REAP			
VN 868	1.2.3.5.6	12:40	15:35	VN 843	Daily	15:25	17:10
VN 842	Daily	18:05	19:45	VN 845	Daily	17:05	18:50
VN 844	Daily	19:45	21:25	VN 845	Daily	17:45	19:30
VN 800	Daily	21:00	22:40	VN 801	Daily	18:20	20:00
SIEM REAP - HO CHI MINH CITY				HO CHI MINH CITY - SIEM REAP			
VN 3818	Daily	11:10	12:30	VN 3809	Daily	09:15	10:35
K6 3818	Daily	11:10	12:30	K6 3809	Daily	09:15	10:35
VN 826	Daily	13:30	14:40	VN 827	Daily	11:35	12:35
VN 3820	Daily	17:45	18:45	VN 3821	Daily	15:55	16:55
K6 3820	Daily	17:45	18:45	K6 3821	Daily	15:55	16:55
VN 828	Daily	18:20	19:20	VN 829	Daily	16:20	17:40
VN 3822	Daily	21:35	22:35	VN 3823	Daily	19:45	20:45
K6 3822	Daily	21:35	22:35	VN 3823	Daily	19:45	20:45
SIEM REAP - INCHEON				INCHEON - SIEM REAP			
KE 688	1.3.4.7	23:25	06:35	KE 687	1.3.4.7	19:00	22:25
OZ 738	Daily	23:40	07:10	OZ 737	Daily	19:20	22:40
SIEM REAP - KUALA LUMPUR				KUALA LUMPUR - SIEM REAP			
AK 281	Daily	08:35	11:35	AK 280	Daily	06:50	07:50
MH 765	1. 6	13:00	16:10	MH 764	2.4.6	11:00	12:05
SIEM REAP - SINGAPORE				SINGAPORE - SIEM REAP			
MI 622	2.4	10:40	15:20	MI 622	2.4	08:40	09:50
MI 630	5	12:25	15:40	MI 616	7	10:40	11:50
MI 615	7	12:45	16:05	MI 636	3	13:55	17:35
MI 636	3	06:25	21:35	MI 630	5	07:55	16:35
MI 617	5	18:35	21:55	MI 618	5	16:35	17:45
SIEM REAP - VIENTIANE				VIENTIANE - SIEM REAP			
QV 522	2.4.5.7	10:05	13:00	QV 512	2.4.5.7	06:30	09:25
SIEM REAP - GUANGZHOU				GUANGZHOU - SIEM REAP			
CZ 3054	2.4.6	11:25	15:35	CZ 3053	2.4.6	08:45	10:30
CZ 3054	1.3.5.7	19:25	23:20	CZ 3053	1.3.5.7	16:35	18:30



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DOMESTIC FLIGHT SCHEDULE

TO SIEM REAP			
PHNOM PENH - SIEM REAP			
Flights	Days	Dep	Arrival
K6 101	Daily	07:15	08:00
K6 103	Daily	10:00	10:45
K6 109	Daily	16:00	16:45
PREAM SIHANOUK - SIEM REAP			
Flights	Days	Dep	Arrival
K6 130	1-3-5	12:55	13:55

FROM SIEM REAP			
SIEM REAP - PHNOM PENH			
Flights	Days	Dep	Arrival
K6 100	Daily	08:40	09:25
K6 102	Daily	11:15	12:00
K6 108	Daily	17:20	16:45
SIEM REAP - PREAM SIHANOUK			
Flights	Days	Dep	Arrival
K6 131	1-3-5	11:20	12:20

AIRLINES CODE		COLOUR CODE	
MH - Malaysia Airlines	CI - China Airlines	1 Monday	
OZ - Asiana Airlines	CZ - China Southern	2 Tuesday	
PG - Bangkok Airways	FD - Thai Air Asia	3 Wednesday	
QV - Lao Airlines	FM - Shanghai Air	4 Thursday	
TG - Thai Airways	KA - Dragon Air	5 Friday	
VN - Vietnam Airlines	MI - SilkAir	6 Saturday	
AK - Air Asia	SQ - Singapore Airlines	7 Sunday	
BR - EVA Airways	3K - Jetstar, K6 Cambodia Angkor Air		

This flight schedule information is updated about once a month. Further information, please contact direct to airline or a travel agent for flight schedule information.

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Air France - (AF) #445, Monivong Blvd, 11 floor, Phnom Penh Tower, PP Tel: 023 965500 www.airfrance.com.kh	Eva Air (BR) Suite 11-14B, St. 205, Phnom Penh Tel: 023 219 911 www.evair.com	Singapore Airlines (SQ) Regency C, Unit 2-4, Turnnorb Teuk, Chamkarmorn PP. Tel: 023 988 629 www.singaporeair.com
Asiana Airlines (OZ) A16 Domestic Arrival Terminal, Phnom penh International Airport Tel: 023 890 441 Fax: 023 890 443 http://us.flyasiana.com	JetStar Asia (3K) #333B, Monivong, PP Tel: 023 220 909 Fax: 023 218 040 www.jetstarasia.com	Vietnam Airline No. 41, Samdech Pan (St. 214), angkat Boeung Raing, 12211, PP. Tel: 023 215 998 www.vietnamairlines.com
Bangkok Airways (PG) #61A, St. 214, PP Tel: 023 966 556-8 Fax: 023 966 554 www.bangkokair.com	Lao Airlines (QV) #111, Sihanouk Street, No 274. Tel: 023 222 956 E:pnhqv@laoairline.com www.laoairlines.com	SilkAir (MI) Regency C, Unit 2-4, Turnnorb Teuk, Chamkarmorn PP Tel: 023 988 629 www.silkair.com
China Airlines (CI) #32, Norodom, PP Tel: 023 222 056 www.china-airlines.com	Malaysia Airlines (MH) #35-37, Samdech Pan St. 214 Tel: 023 218 923 www.malaysiairlines.com	Shanghai Airlines (FM) No. 53, Preah Monivong (St. 93), Room K6, Ground Floor, Phnom Penh Hotel, 12201, PP Tel: 023 723 999 www.shanghai-air.com
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PHNOM PENH SORYA BUS TRANSPORT SCHEDULE	
INTERNATIONAL ROUTES	
PP-HO CHI MINH DEPARTURE	HO CHI MINH-PP
6:45, 8:30, 11:45	6:45, 8:00, 11:30
PP-BANGKOK	BANGKOK-PP
6:30	6:30
PP-PAKSE,VIENTIANE	PAKSE,VIENTIANE-PP
6:45	7:30
DOMESTIC ROUTES	
PP-SIEM REAP	SIEM REAP-PP
6:15, 7:00- 12:00, 13:00, 14:00	5:30, 6:30, 7:00, 9:30, 10:30,12:30, 13:30
PP -SIHANOUK	SIHANOUK-PP
7:00 To 12:00, 13:00, 14:30, 16:30	7:10, 8:00, 10:30, 12:15, 14:00,15:30,17:30
PP-BATTAMBANG	BATTAMBANG-PP
7:00, 8:00, 9:00, 10:00, 11:00, 12:00	5:30, 6:45, 7:45, 8:30, 9:30,10:30
PP-POIPET	POIPET-PP
6:30, 8:00 10:00, 12:00, 19:30	6:30, 8:00 10:00, 12:00, 19:30
PP-PREAH VIHEAR	PREAH VIHEAR-PP
8:15	7:30
PP-MONDULKIRI	MONDULKIRI-PP
8:30	8:30
PP-KOH KONG	KOH KONG-PP
7:30, 9:30, 12:30	7:30, 9:30, 12:30
PP -BT.MEANCHEY	BT.MEANCHEY-PP
6:30, 8:00, 9:00, 10:00, 12:00, 2:00	6:00, 7:00, 7:30, 9:00,10:30, 11:30
SR-SOUNG,KAMPONG CHAM	PURSAT, BATTAMBANG-SIEM REAP
7:30, 8:30, 10:30	7:30
PP-KRATIE	KRATIE-PP
6:45, 7:15, 7:30, 8:00,10:30	7:00, 8:30, 9:30, 11:30, 2:30
Further information, please contact: Tel: 023 210 359, email:168@ppsoryatransport.com	

Entertainment

NOW SHOWING

LEGEND CINEMA

TOTAL RECALL
Factory worker Douglas Quaid begins to suspect he is a spy after visiting Rekall – a company that provides its clients with implanted fake memories of a life they would like to have led – and when everything goes wrong, he finds himself on the run. 9:45am, 12:35pm, 9:35pm

THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN
Peter Parker finds a clue that may help him understand why his parents disappeared when he was young. His path puts him on a collision course with Dr Curt Connors, his father’s former partner. 10am, 9:20pm

PLATINUM CINEPLEX

BRAVE (3D)
Set in Scotland in a rugged and mythical time, *Brave* features Merida, an aspiring archer and impetuous daughter of royalty. 11:10am, 4:45pm

THE BOURNE LEGACY
An expansion of the universe from Robert Ludlum’s novels, this film centres on a new hero whose stakes have been triggered by the events of the previous three films. 9:20am, 11:50am, 2:20pm, 4:50pm, 8:15pm

THE FLICKS

BATMAN: THE DARK KNIGHT
When Batman, Gordon and Harvey Dent launch an assault on the Mob, they let the clown out of the box. The Joker is bent on turning Gotham City on itself and bringing any heroes down to his level. 6pm

BLOOD DIAMOND
A fisherman, a smuggler and a syndicate of businessmen match wits over the possession of a priceless diamond. 8pm



COMEDY CLUB CAMBODIA @ PONTTOON
Stand-up Allyson Smith, who will perform tonight as Phnom Penh’s Comedy Club returns. PHOTO SUPPLIED

TV PICKS



John Gallagher Jr, Emily Mortimer and Alison Pill
star in *The Newsroom*. BLOOMBERG

1pm - **UP:** By tying thousands of balloons to his home, 78-year-old Carl sets out to fulfil his life-long dream to see the wilds of South America. FOX Movies

4:30pm - **GROWN UPS:** After their high-school basketball coach passes away, five good friends and former team-mates reunite for a holiday weekend. HBO

7:20pm - **SHE’S OUT OF MY LEAGUE:** In this American romantic comedy, an average Joe meets the perfect woman, but his lack of confidence, and the influence of his friends and family, begin to pick away at the relationship. MAX

8pm – **THE NEWSROOM:** TV series about a news anchor who has found a safe niche but is forced to work with a new team of colleagues. HBO

Comedy Club Cambodia @ Pontoon

Comedy Club returns from its summer holiday with two international stand-up stars.

Canadian comic Allyson Smith and Britain’s Imran Yusef take to the stage tonight at Pontoon, promising to deliver a gag-packed night.

Former drama teacher Smith ditched the classroom for sassy, straight-talking stand-up, while Yusef, a fast-talking London geezer, is renowned for his biting street slang.

Admission: \$8.
Pontoon, St 172
7:30pm

Drink and Draw

They supply the art supplies and model. You do the rest.

Artillery, St 240 12, Phnom Penh
7-9pm

Strictly Salsa

Free beginners’ steps from 8-9pm and DJ Jimmy Salsa from 9-11pm. *Vamos a bailar!*

Equinox, St 278, Phnom Penh
8-11pm

Wassup Wednesday

Hip-hop and dance from resident DJs BBoy Peanut and Bob Revo

Riverhouse Lounge, corner Sisowath Quay and St 110, Phnom Penh

Thinking caps

Sudoku Pacific

Complete the grid so that every row, column and 3x3 box contains every digit from 1 to 9 inclusively.

				8	9			
5	3			6		9		
	8		5	7		4	6	1
				1	8		7	6
6				4				2
8	9		7	2				
2	5	7		9	4		1	
		8		5			2	9
			2	3				

8/22 DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★☆☆☆

“DEAL!”

ACROSS

1 O’Hara’s portrayer
6 They beg to differ
11 Sleep on it
14 Some arm bones
15 ___ Gras
16 Gene’s makeup, briefly
17 Holiday cookie
19 Put an end to alcohol?
20 Artificial water channel
21 Endow with a quality
23 Most fleet
26 Words to live by
27 They want to know
28 Leopard or lynx
30 Title in Russian history
31 Stable studs
32 Cry convulsively
35 Enjoy lunch
36 In vogue
38 The way, in philosophy
39 Change the color of hair, cloth, etc.
40 “For that reason”
41 “Jail” or “extremes” lead-in
42 Tree limb
44 Atlanta Braves field
46 Teem [with]
48 Irish moonshine whiskeys
49 Subject of some dictionaries
50 Naval rank
52 Paul McCartney or Elton John
53 Like some Valentine’s Day candies
58 Not-so-desirable bread slice
59 Shield of classical mythology
60 Like a great deal
61 “___ the season to be jolly”
62 Tongue-in-cheek humor
63 Asian kingdom

DOWN

1 Pull with perspiration
2 Cotton gin inventor Whitney
3 Hostel work environment?
4 Joke writer
5 Obedient dog
6 Sphere of influence
7 DEA worker
8 Elm, for one
9 Ms. Lupino
10 Fries, usually
11 Popular tire maker
12 Happen as a result
13 Female equivalents of knights
18 “Broom Hilda” creator Myers
22 Bert Bobbsey’s sister
23 Ill-___ [doomed]
24 Analyze
25 Ramped-up items?
26 Drinks in yards
28 Rip off
29 City on its own Great Lake
31 Lip-___
33 Like certain cereals
34 Churlish chaps
36 China’s most populous city
37 Keep goal in hockey
41 Small explosive shell
43 Baseball score
44 Male turkeys
45 Mormon, often
46 One might be liquid
47 Russian pancake
48 Swindler’s victim
50 Edible starch
51 “___ go bragh”
54 Ending for “musket”
55 “___ Goes the Weasel”
56 History book chapter, perhaps
57 Costa-Sol connector

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
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Tuesday’s solution

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3	1	7	6	4	9	2	8	5
5	9	8	1	2	3	4	7	6
7	2	6	8	1	5	3	4	9
1	5	3	2	9	4	8	6	7
9	8	4	7	3	6	5	2	1

Tuesday’s solution

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Armstrong fails in latest suit against anti-doping group

James B Kelleher

A US federal judge on Monday dismissed seven-time Tour de France winner Lance Armstrong's effort to block a probe into whether the retired cycling champ cheated by using performance-enhancing drugs.

Last month, US District Judge Sam Sparks, in Austin, Texas, dismissed Armstrong's original bid to stop the US Anti-Doping Agency (USADA) from proceeding with its case, calling the lawsuit a "lengthy and bitter polemic". But Sparks allowed Armstrong's lawyers to file an amended lawsuit.

On Monday, Sparks threw out the revised complaint, though he dismissed it "without prejudice", meaning Armstrong can try again. A lawyer for Armstrong could not immediately be reached for comment.

Accusations of doping have dogged Armstrong, who won seven straight Tour de France championships between 1999 and 2005 when he ascended to the top of the cycling world after overcoming cancer.

In a statement, USADA chief executive Travis Tygart said the agency was pleased with the ruling and defended its process for investigating doping charges, saying it had "protected the rights of athletes for over a decade".

The USADA, a quasi-governmental agency created by the US Congress in 2000, formally charged Armstrong in June with doping and taking part in a conspiracy with members of his championship teams. Five other cyclists have been accused of conspiring with Armstrong over the course of 14 years to hide doping activity.

The agency said in a letter to Armstrong that it has blood samples from 2009 and 2010 that are "fully consistent" with doping.

In the letter, which was published in



Seven-time Tour de France winning cyclist Lance Armstrong has had his lawsuit against the US ADA dismissed by a federal judge. REUTERS

the *Washington Post*, the agency said it also has at least 10 former teammates and colleagues of Armstrong who will testify he used doping drugs during races from 1999 to 2005.

Lawyers for Armstrong contend the USADA gathered evidence by threatening to ruin the careers of fellow cyclists who have agreed to testify against him. Lawyers for Armstrong also argue that the agency's rules vio-

late Armstrong's right to a fair trial and that it lacks proper jurisdiction to charge him.

In February, the Justice Department dropped an investigation centred on whether Armstrong and his teammates cheated the sponsor of their bike racing team, the US Postal Service, with a secret doping program.

Armstrong's attorneys contend that he has "passed every drug test ever

administered to him in his career - a total of 500 to 600 tests ... more drug tests than any athlete in history".

They say the International Cycling Union has proper jurisdiction in the case.

The USADA charges will be considered by its own arbitration process. Any penalties would be binding within the sport, but federal courts have the power to overrule the agency. REUTERS

No place for Pietersen in limited-overs squads

KEVIN Pietersen's rapid fall from grace in international cricket was completed yesterday when the controversial batsman was left out of the England squads for the Twenty20 World Cup and a one-day series against South Africa. Last week, the 32-year-old Pietersen was dropped for the third and final test against South Africa at Lord's after admitting to sending "provocative" text messages to opposing players. National selector Geoff Miller explained that Pietersen's international future "was still being determined" so it was always unlikely the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) were going to select him for the upcoming limited overs events. REUTERS

Nine, Fox Sports pay \$1 billion for rugby league

NINE Entertainment Co, the Australian media company owned by private equity group CVC Asia Pacific, retained broadcast rights to rugby league matches in the country alongside pay-television broadcaster Fox Sports. Nine and Fox Sports will pay A\$1.02 billion (US\$1.07 billion) to broadcast games over five years, the Australian Rugby League Commission said yesterday. That compares to the A\$1.25 billion that Seven West Media Ltd (SWM), Foxtel and Telstra Corp paid for rights to Australian Football League matches in April 2011. The ARL Commission, which runs rugby league in Australia, said in a statement that it signed the agreement following "several days of intense negotiations with representatives of all commercial television networks." BLOOMBERG

Valverde wins mountain top stage to take lead

ALEJANDRO Valverde won stage three of the Tour of Spain on Monday and moved into the overall lead. Fellow Spaniard Joaquim Rodriguez finished a narrowly defeated second in the four-man sprint that decided the mountain top stage, with Britain's Chris Froome in third and Spain's Alberto Contador in fourth. REUTERS

Kuznetsova among US Open tennis withdrawals

RUSSIA'S Svetlana Kuznetsova, the 2004 US Open champion, heads a group of players who joined Rafael Nadal in withdrawing from the final major tournament of the tennis season. Kuznetsova, 27, who also won the 2009 French Open, was 48th in the latest WTA Tour rankings. Also withdrawing from the women's draw are top-20 players Kaia Kanepi of Estonia and Flavia Pennetta of Italy, and Elena Baltacha of Britain. The US Tennis Association didn't give a reason for the withdrawals ahead of the US Open, which begins August 27 at the National Tennis Center in New York. BLOOMBERG

Chess Puzzle solution:

Qa7, Qxa1 (forced). It is a stalemate. White King has no squares to go.

Usain Bolt, Stars working out T20 role: Warne

SHANE Warne was appointed as captain of the Melbourne Stars Twenty20 cricket team and said the franchise is still

trying to find Olympic sprint champion Usain Bolt a role with the squad.

Warne, who came out of

retirement last year to play in Australia's inaugural Big Bash League competition, said talks with six-time Olympic

gold medalist Bolt were continuing after the Jamaican expressed an interest in joining the Stars.

"We'll have ongoing conversations with him and work out what sort of role he can play," Warne said yesterday at a televised news conference in Melbourne. "We hope he can come down, he's available and all those sorts of things."

Bolt, 26, played junior cricket before focusing on track. During the London Olympics, the 1.96-metre Bolt and training partner Yohan Blake, who took the silver medal in the 100 and 200 meters at the games, regularly bantered with Australian television reporters about their cricketing prowess.

Blake, 22, said in an interview last Thursday with the UK's Sky Sports that there was a possibility of him joining the Sydney Sixers, the defending Big Bash League champions.

"I would love it to come true," Blake said. "I'm a better cricketer than I am a runner."

Organisers have been warned that the moves to enlist mar-

quee athletes from other sports risk devaluing the competition and may hamper the development of local talent.

"We've got to be careful that it just doesn't become a novelty event," John Inverarity, Australia's national team selector, told reporters last week.

Leg-spinner Warne, who quit international cricket in 2007 with an Australian record 708 Test wickets, said Bolt's potential involvement won't cheapen the event.

"If you look at the bigger picture of it all, to have Usain Bolt, if he's good enough to play a game and he wants to be with us, then that's pretty good isn't it?" he said. "We'll just keep talking to him and see what we can come up with, but it's exciting that one of the biggest superstars on the planet wants to be involved in some capacity."

The Stars open the second edition of the Big Bash League, a six-week competition featuring 35 matches in the sport's shortest format, on December 7 against the Melbourne Renegades. BLOOMBERG



Jamaica's Usain Bolt bowls a bouquet into the crowd after receiving his London 2012 Games men's 4x100m relay gold medal at the Olympic Stadium on August 11. The sprinter has expressed an interest in playing cricket. REUTERS



The Spaniard Sergio García's closing round of 66 on Monday was sufficient to earn victory at the rain-delayed Wyndham Championship in North Carolina and a place on the European team for the Ryder Cup. REUTERS

García win seals Ryder Cup spot

Ewan Murray

SERGIO García supplied a timely reminder of his talent by winning the Wyndham Championship, thereby guaranteeing the Spaniard a place in Europe's team for next month's Ryder Cup.

García's triumph by two shots in the rain-delayed event in North Carolina on Monday was his first on the US PGA Tour in more than four years. A closing round of 66 – which included birdies at three of his four final holes – was sufficient for García to see off the challenge of Tim Clark and avert the possibility of Spain having no playing representation in a European team since the Ryder

Cup moved to its present format. "It's great," García said after moving up to 17th in the world rankings. "I kind of did it last year, too, in Germany when I needed to play really, really well to get into the Open, which is my favourite tournament, and I almost won there and then got myself into the Open. Winning is always nice. This means quite a bit."

García has played in five previous Ryder Cups and has performed impressively. When the event was last played, at Celtic Manor in 2010, he was a non-playing vice captain under Colin Montgomerie. His Wyndham success is more notable given he used the services of a local caddy for the week.

"Obviously I won a couple of times

last year in Europe but it's been a while here in the United States and it feels great," García added.

"I hit some really good shots and made some nice four- or five-footers when I had to. I'm very happy about the way the week has gone. Sometimes it hurts to hear people not giving enough credit to some of those other wins because they're in Europe."

"Fortunately, I know how much they mean to me and I know how difficult they are so, you know, they were great and they really helped a lot."

García's win means Ian Poulter has been knocked out of a guaranteed Ryder Cup spot a little over a week after tying for third at the US PGA

Championship. It remains virtually certain, however, that the Englishman will receive one of two wild-card selections available to the European captain, José María Olazábal. Those picks will be announced by Olazábal next Monday.

Rory McIlroy, Justin Rose, Graeme McDowell, Paul Lawrie, Francesco Molinari, Luke Donald, Lee Westwood, García and Peter Hanson are now guaranteed nine of Europe's 10 automatic places for the meeting with the United States at Medinah.

García's success, and a tied seventh place at the Wyndham for Nicolas Colsaerts, leaves Martin Kaymer in a vulnerable position. The German currently occupies the last automatic berth in the European

standings and unlike Colsaerts, will not feature at this week's Johnnie Walker championship at Gleneagles. That tournament represents the last chance for players to earn Ryder Cup qualifying points.

A finish of second place or better for Colsaerts in Scotland would see him leapfrog Kaymer, who has been out of form.

England's David Lynn, runner-up at the US PGA, and Rafael Cabrera-Bello of Spain could have earned a Ryder Cup debut by winning at Gleneagles but that option has now been removed after Hanson withdrew. There are no longer enough ranking points available for either Lynn or Cabrera-Bello to displace Kaymer. THE GUARDIAN



It's your move, plan carefully.

Peter Salazar v Vladimir Chomsky



White to play and draw

Solution on page 21

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Augusta, home of the Masters, admits first female members

AUGUSTA National Golf Club, home of the Masters golf tournament, finally ended an all-male policy that had endured for 80 years when it announced on Monday that two women would be admitted as members for the first time.

Former US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and financier Darla Moore will become the first women to don the renowned green jackets when the Augusta, Georgia, club re-opens for a new season in October.

Augusta National's male-only status has drawn criticism for years. Ahead of this year's Masters tournament in April, President Barack Obama weighed in on the matter, saying through a spokesman that he believed women should be admitted.

"This is a joyous occasion as we enthusiastically welcome Secretary Condoleezza Rice and Darla Moore as members of Augusta National Golf Club," Billy Payne, the club's chairman, said in a statement.

Payne, who has refused in the past to speak publicly about membership matters, did not directly address the gender bar issue in his statement, saying only that it was a "significant

and positive time" for the club and that Rice and Moore were subjected to the same review as other candidates.

"Consideration with regard to any candidate is deliberate, held in strict confidence and always takes place over an extended period of time," Payne said. "The process for Condoleezza and Darla was no different."

Obama had increased the pressure on Augusta National when he said in April that the club should admit women as members.

"He welcomes this development, thinks it was too long in coming but obviously believes it's the right thing to do," White House spokesman Jay Carney told a news briefing on Monday.

Rice, recently appointed to the US Golf Association's nominating committee, said in a statement: "I have visited Augusta National on several occasions and look forward to playing golf, renewing friendships and forming new ones through this very special opportunity." REUTERS



Augusta National Golf Club admitted former US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice (pictured) and Darla Moore as its first female members. REUTERS

Fergie blames poor finishing

Jamie Jackson

SIR Alex Ferguson bemoaned Manchester United's finishing and his side's inability to harness Robin van Persie as they were beaten by Everton in an early blow to their hopes of reclaiming the Premier League from Manchester City, who began their challenge by beating Southampton on Sunday.

Ferguson chose to start van Persie on the bench, introducing the striker only after 68 minutes as his team lost 1-0 to Marouane Fellaini's goal. He said: "It was a pretty good game and there wasn't anything between the two teams. We were the better football team, they had eight shots on target and David de Gea [the United goalkeeper] did very well for us in that way."

"But we had the possession and made some great openings without actually finishing it. We were a wee bit [disappointing] in terms of finishing off the approach play we had. Other than that we played good football, good combination play, and on another day we would have won the match."

"There were a couple of moments: Tom [Cleverley's shot was] blocked by Phil Jagielka on the line. We had these kind of moments but the team worked well and played some great football. It's difficult here. You have the crowd influencing the referee all the time."

On van Persie, who entered the match to play alongside Wayne Rooney in a 4-4-2 formation, Ferguson said: "We played around him too much, we didn't show enough penetration and, with Robin in your team, you know you want to use his ability against centre-backs in situations he is very good at. But we didn't use him enough."

With Rio Ferdinand, Chris Smalling, Phil Jones and Jonny Evans all injured, Ferguson had only Nemanja



Everton's Steven Pienaar (left) challenges Man United's Tom Cleverley during their English Premier League match at Goodison Park. REUTERS

Vidic of his recognised central defenders fit and he was making a first senior appearance following injury last December. This forced the manager to field Michael Carrick as an emergency centre-back. "That is a problem but we coped quite well. I don't think you can criticise their performance in that respect," said Ferguson.

David Moyes, the Everton manager, said: "I'm really pleased because I thought the team performed ever so well and got a great result. We haven't started the season very well [in recent seasons] and even tonight's result doesn't tell you you've started the season well."

"Just like if we'd lost tonight we

would not have said we started the season badly. You probably judge it after about 10 games how you start the season."

A positive omen for United is that they are the only Premier League club to have lost their opening match and gone on to claim the title. They have done it twice. THE GUARDIAN ■

Deportivo triumph on return to La Liga



Deportivo Coruna's Abel Aguilar (right) battles for the ball with Osasuna's Raoul Loe during their Spanish First Division match at the Riazor stadium in Coruna on Monday. REUTERS

RIKI and Nelson Oliveira helped Deportivo Coruna celebrate their return to La Liga in style with a 2-0 home win over Osasuna in their opening game of the new season on Monday.

Another promoted club, Real Valladolid, also started with a victory, winning 1-0 at Real Zaragoza, while Rayo Vallecano beat Granada by the same scoreline thanks to a dramatic 95th-minute freekick from Roberto Trashorras.

Depor's Riki cut in off the right flank and beat Osasuna goalkeeper Andres Fernandez at his near post in the 53rd minute, making up for a penalty miss just before the break when he fired against the post.

Jose Luis Oltra's side, who had made most of the running at a festive Estadio Riazor after a year in the second division, were penned back in their penalty area in time added on before Portugal forward Oliveira broke away to lob the ball over Fernandez for their second.

Along with Valencia, Depor are one of only two teams to have denied Real Madrid and Barcelona the Spanish league title in the last 16 years, and were regulars in European competition before sliding to relegation in 2011.

The win put them third in the standings, behind leaders Barca, who thrashed Real Sociedad

5-1 at home on Sunday, and Real Betis, who overcome Athletic Bilbao 5-3 in an eight-goal thriller at San Mames.

"We aren't going to get carried away with ourselves. The objective remains the same," Oltra told a news conference in reference to their stated aim of securing their top-flight future.

"The important thing is we have achieved a good result and started well. It is going to be a long and difficult year."

Valladolid were the brighter side at the Romareda and Oscar stabbed them in front from close range after helping set up the move just before the break.

Zaragoza goalkeeper Roberto kept the hosts in the game tipping a Victor Perez penalty on to the post in the 67th minute and joined his side in attack in the frantic finale, but to no avail.

It was a case of déjà vu in Valencia as Rayo Vallecano snatched all the points against Granada when Trashorras struck a superb freekick into the top corner in added time.

Rayo won by the same 1-0 scoreline in front of their own fans on the final day of last season against Granada, when Raul Tamudo also netted in time added on to save them from relegation and send Villarreal down instead. REUTERS ■

Preah Khan Reach beat national team in friendly

REIGNING Hun Sen Cup champions Preah Khan Reach defeated the Cambodian national team 2-1 at Olympic Stadium yesterday in the fifth of a series of friendly fixtures arranged with local clubs to help the senior squad prepare for the 2012 AFF Suzuki Cup qualifiers in Myanmar in October. The result was the second loss for the national side after three wins in their first three ties. In yesterday's game, Sos Souhana struck in the first minute before PKR midfielder Prak Mony Udom brought things back level 10 minutes later. A tighter second half saw Joseph Olatubosun snatch the winner on 73 minutes. Matches at Olympic Stadium against Metfone C-League champions Phnom Penh Crown and current leaders Naga Corp are scheduled for Saturday and next Tuesday respectively, before the national team take on their Filipino counterparts on September 5 and a team comprised of Cambodians living abroad on September 13. UNG CHAMROEUN

Barca complete signing of Song from Arsenal

CAMEROON midfielder Alex Song has completed his move from Premier League side Arsenal to Barcelona after signing a deal worth €19 million (US\$23.45 million), both clubs said on Monday. The 25-year-old, who has agreed a five-year contract, became Barca's second major reinforcement for the new season after Spain full back Jordi Alba was landed from Valencia for €14 million. Song was presented to fans at the Nou Camp later in the day when Barca lost 1-0 to Sampdoria in the annual Joan Gamper trophy, a traditional friendly. REUTERS

Australian FA appoint Gallop as their new CEO

FOOTBALL Federation Australia named David Gallop as its CEO on Tuesday, replacing Ben Buckley, whose position had been weakened by the country's shambolic campaign to host the 2022 World Cup. Buckley's six-year tenure had become blighted by Australia's failed bid, when A\$50 million (\$52.25 million) in taxpayers' money resulted in one vote from the FIFA Executive Committee when they selected Qatar to host the tournament in December 2010. Public fallouts with A-League club owners and the collapse of the North Queensland Fury and a proposed Western Sydney team did little to improve Buckley's reputation. REUTERS

TONIGHT'S FIXTURES

English Premier League

■ Chelsea v Reading – 1:45am

UEFA Champions League Qualifying Playoff Round

■ AEL Limassol v Anderlecht 1:45am

■ BATE Borisov v Hapoel Kiryat Shmona – 1:45am

■ Braga v Udinese – 1:45am

■ Din Zagreb v NK Maribor 1:45am

■ Malaga v Panathinaikos 1:45am

Sport

S Africa usurp England as Test No 1

Andy Wilson

MORE than an hour after his team had climbed to the top of the world Test rankings in an unforgettable, nerve-shredding final session on Monday, Graeme Smith was still staring at the tips of the fingers on his left hand.

South Africa's captain, who was leading his country for a record-equalling 93rd time in his 102nd Test, had been put thoroughly, almost sadistically, through the wringer, as Matt Prior counter-attacked thrillingly, and was reprieved first by a Morne Morkel no-ball, then by the third umpire Rod Tucker, who awarded him the benefit of the tiniest doubt in deciding that he had not been stumped.

Smith could almost touch the mace awarded to the world's best Test team with those big fingers. But England, apparently dead and buried at



South Africa's captain Graeme Smith holds the ICC mace as he walks around the ground with coach Gary Kirsten (right) after South Africa defeated England in the third cricket Test match at Lord's on Monday. REUTERS

45 for four, then 146 for six, and 208 for seven, and even 282 for eight, were now within 52 runs of the most improbable victory, one which would have dragged up all the old taunts

about South African chokers.

Then Vernon Philander, in his first over with the second new ball from the Nursery End, found Prior's outside edge, exactly as he had done in the first

innings. The ball flew low to Smith's left at first slip.

"All I keep thinking is it stuck in my left hand," he reflected, sharing a smile with Philander at the winners' press confer-

ence in the Lord's Museum. "That catch, that's the one moment. I'm conscious that these three fingers managed to hold on to Matt Prior."

In the stands, Smith's wife, Morgan, had cradled their tiny baby daughter Cadence, who took her first flight at less than a month old to be here for this special moment, one which South Africa's captain has dreamed of and worked towards for years.

The last time his team ascended to the top of those rankings, almost exactly three years ago on August 24, 2009, they did so almost by default, when England regained the Ashes to displace Australia.

South Africa did not even play a game as the world's best, because before they started their next Test, against England, India had beaten Sri Lanka to take over at the top. They were coached at the time by Gary Kirsten, who is now in charge of South Africa.

"Having touched it before we've learned some lessons," said Smith. "We're pretty humble about this whole thing. I don't think there will be too many flashy things happening with our team going forward. The initial achievement is of coming to England and winning 2-0. But the number one is something we've pushed for, and it will take a few nights for us to reflect on that."

"From a personal perspective, last year was an extremely tough year. So to come back like I have and have these milestones means a lot. I need time to reflect on them."

This time South Africa will be able to take the field as the world's best Test team when they head for Australia for a three-Test series, in which victory would lift Michael Clarke's team to top spot – and possibly dump England down to third, depending on how they do in India. THE GUARDIAN

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