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 their restaurants empty-handed.

“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 percent 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.

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 research, the average beer promoter made US$55 per month, but had monthly living expenses of about $116.
A professional's sobering statistics

Continued from page 1

study, conducted this year, the promoters’ average monthly wage has climbed to $70, which expresses greater modernity, to about $190 per month. “Now they’re averaging a BAC (blood alcohol content) of 0.35. They’re basically drunk every night,” he adds.

“Our use of alcohol at such a high rate leads to liver disease. Also, women aren’t told to drink when they’re pregnant.”

Major companies involved in Cambodia’s beer and tobacco industry, including Carlsberg (an owner of Anchor Beer) and Heineken (an owner of Carlsberg) have been largely ineffective.

“The current average base salary of $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.

Schuurink says his company recognizes the problems associated with beer promotion, which is why it founded BSC 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.

Heinzen’s priority was preventing alcohol use during working hours by giving training and information about its consequences, Schuurink adds.

“Besides that there is medical assistance available in case of problems,” he says.

Labek, 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,” he says.

That’s too late to prevent HIV/AIDS and alcohol dependence.

One company not affiliated with BSC, 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 . . . and also 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.”

Andromews, brewery 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,” Sophia 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,” Sophia says. “So if the women don’t sit and drink with clients, they won’t get any tips.”

“The clients are kings to them, because they have money.”

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

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 concessions, officials said yesterday, moving the way for them to secure economic growth concessions.

Recalssification 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 businesses.

But a loophole in that moratorium, criticised by rights groups as self-defeating and deliberately vague, allows the government to reclassify concessions conve-

The government on March 12; the prime minister signed off on the reclassification of land in Boeot, Kulen and Roveang districts to the Arak Boc hari (CA, Ltd) (7,863 hectares), Aminite Elite (Cambodia) Co, Ltd (7,399 hectares and Distinct Bia (Cambodia) Co, Ltd (7,960 hectares) respectively, according to the latest Royal Book.

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

When asked yesterday whether the government should still be negotiating ELCs in spite of the moratorium, Chan San, minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, declined to comment, “We’re busy with a guest.”

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

Numerous ELCs have been granted in Preah Vihear province since the moratorium, and Am Sam A, a senior investigator at the rights group Licadho, told former opposition leader Sam Rainsy that the reclassification was a “blatant violation of the moratorium’s provisions.”

“We don’t know how many companies have been granted concessions, but it makes the people confussed with the government and the directive 01 [ELC moratorium] ineffective,” he said.

Deaths, injuries, illness? Blame it on the python

Mem Kunheak

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

On Thu, a Phnom Krasung commune councillor, said yesterday that a woman died earlier this year was blamed on the snake, as was another man a few days later.

According to Thu, the bodies of both snake ghosts victims were burned and vermin were set on fire, and their skin swells scales resembled a python’s leathery exterior.

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

John-Paul Schuurink, a spokesman for Heineken International, says promoters who sell their company’s beer are also well paid.

“It is an unhealthy environment to work in, frankly.”

But some clients just don’t listen,” Sophia says. “So if the women don’t sit and drink with clients, they won’t sell any wine.”

According to Thu, “As the fortune told said, the spirit of the python will average 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 not serve time.”

At the funeral for the man last Sunday, villagers reported that villagers reported that the snake had been found in the area.

Sicknesses and accidents were not long in arriving.

“Some 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,” he said.

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,” Thu recalled.

And the appetite of the muzelmus, gudgeonbearer reptile is far from sated.

According to Thu, “As the fortune-teller said, the spirit of the python will average 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 not serve time.”

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

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Blame it on the python

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pedophile charged

french national given one-year sentence, fine

A FRENCH national accused of raping five minors was sentenced yesterday in Siem Reap to one year in prison and ordered to pay R$60,000 (US$9,000) to each of the victims, in addition to a 2 million riel (US$3,000). The man, 56, was found guilty of indecent acts against five minors under the age of 15, Judge Chhay Sang said.

On March 18, the man entered a provincial anti-human trafficking and juvenile protection office in Siem Reap and confessed that he had arrested Marcel on February 18 at a guest house in the Svay Dangkom district.

During the night by buying them food, kissing and caressing their private parts, finding their genitals and inviting them into his guest house,” Thawery said. THIN KALIAMM

BEATCELLO IN CONCERT

Jayavarman VII Hospital

( Katrina Bopha III)

Siem Reap Ankgor

Every Saturday

7.15 pm

Dr. Beat Richner (BEATCELLO) plays Cello Music and informs about the activities of the five Kantha Bopha Children’s Hospitals

Free admission

THE PHNOM PENH POST
AUGUST 22, 2012

2
OFFICIALS from Cambodian immigration, labor and diplomacy circles were either unaware of, or refused 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 Phnom Penh’s Russey Keo district’s administrative manager, Spech Chenda, in reference to the immigration bureau.

He would not confirm or deny that the government was adding its neighbor 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 Thailand’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced that thousands of Cambodian Muslims were entering Thailand as “tourists” every year, but that the immigration bureau was given instructions to keep tabs on their movements.

He also said that Cambodian authorities would be asked to cooperate with the Cambodian ambassador to Thailand, You Ay, who was not immediately contacted by Khmer Times.

“The Thai government is aware that Cambodian Muslims cross into Thailand and 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.

Haji Yusef, an Imam of the Al-Azhar mosque in Phnom Penh’s Russey Keo district, confirmed to Radio Free Asia that it was rather a case of “interference” coming from other parties.

“Whatever he is saying is only for the impression to come,” he said, referring to the Cambodian government.

Haji Yusef assured the government of its “total support” in the fight against insurgency.

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 Information, said it’s a matter of religious profiling.

“The Thai government is always speculating about Khmer Muslims who cross into Thai land 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 Ken Loo, secretary-general of the Cambodian Labor Confederation, said that it was rather a case of “assisting specific perpetrators” to court on the vague charge of “terrorism”.

Haji Yusef, an Imam of the Al-Azhar mosque in Russey Keo, 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,” he said.

He added that there were “thousands of education” about the alleged Thai policy online, but rejected the idea that it was a case of “Islamophobia” targeting the millions of Muslims that existed in Cambodia.

“We have a good network of Khmer Muslims in the north, 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,” he said.

“I think in almost more than 10 years, I have not seen a claim of sexual harassment in the garment industry, yet we know it is common in this industry,” she said, holding up courage and solidarity of the women.

But Ken Loo, secretary-general of the Cambodian Labor Confederation, said sexual harassment was not endemic in the industry, and that it was rather a case of “friendly behaviour being misunderstood as sexual advances”.

He also levelled against him, Beehive party president and Development for Cambodia official, Bun Ratha, who is also suspected to have connections with bad Muslims from outside.

“Whatever he is saying is only for the impression to come,” he said, referring to the Cambodian government.

It’s unclear how the Thais would be able to accurately identify Cambodian Muslims apart from their dress.
Moek Dara trial continues

CHARGES relating to corrupt anti-drug operations domi-
nated 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 Chan-
daravann summarised from
trial hearing documents.

“The deal was sealed, 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 deal-
ers confessed that Leng via an
undercover agent had sold
them the heroin, but that Dara
allegedly to protect the identity
of the undercover agent, doc-
tored the dealers’ confessions.

“He corrected the dealers’
phrases to say the drugs were
bought from a Teala gas station
near the National Police Com-
missions,” the judge said.

Both Leng and Dara have
pleaded innocent.

“I recommended my police
officers correct the drug deal-
ers’ 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, orig-
inally slated to take all week,
was “impossible, siek said yester-
day, 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’ pre-
sumed accuracy into question.

He 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 testimo-
cy continues today.

Lawyer says witness
was ‘fed’ memories

Michael Karna-
vax, defence coun-
sel for Leng, Sary,
also took a jab at
co-investigators,
citing a subtle dis-
crepancy between a
signed summary
of Siek’s statement to the court
and her testimony.

Yesterday, Siek acknowl-
edged the “irregularity,” which
concerned whether she had
seen Leng 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 yester-
day, given that on that date
there was no ministry.

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

IMMEDIATE VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT
Temporary Personal Assistant/Secretary
Special Service Agreement
(10th of September to 31st of December 2012)

UNFPA wants to use the services of a young professional as a
temporary Personal Assistant/Secretary to assist the Cambodia
Office from 10th of September to 31st of December 2012. As part of
our Cambodia Young Professional Initiative, we are specifically aiming
at giving young Cambodians an opportunity to work with the UN for
a short period. If you have a degree in Secretary Support or Office
Management and if you are immediately available to come and
contribute to the UNFPA country programme, please send us your
resume and a motivation letter to Mr Vinita Ros at ros@unfpa.org.

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 shortlisted 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.

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Cheating rampant: report

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

Southern China now on your television set

THE PHNOM PENH POST  AUGUST 22, 2012

NATIONAL High School Exam candidates each spent an average of 200,000 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 this year’s exams, which took place 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 exam was made and sent around by email,” Ley said, pointing to more diligent monitoring of exam rooms by police officials as stemming from the Cambodian Independent National High School Exam Committee’s “somewhat ‘small sample’”, so it was incapable of evaluating the whole high-school exam.

“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.

Shorn Behai, 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 Souan Bopha (Golden Girl) had been a hit with Chinese viewers.

“Many pretty female artists, like Souan Bopha, were invited to perform in China to perform shows to show off Cambodia’s arts,” Behai said.

Southern China now on your television set

Southern China now on your television set

More maids head home

More maids head home

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.

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

Rong Chhan, 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 Sereth, 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.

“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. 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.

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.

Amid concerns that the flight home was Ggal 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.

A maid from Cambodia named Bopha (golden girl) has been staying with a family in southern China now.

Chinese viewers have been watching the Cambodian program Souan Bopha (Golden Girl) on TV since 2004.

“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.

According to independent research released yesterday, 92 per cent of students were involved in bribery or cheating during this year’s exams, which took place 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, pointing to more diligent monitoring of exam rooms by police officials as stemming from the Cambodian Independent National High School Exam Committee’s “somewhat ‘small sample’”, so it was incapable of evaluating the whole high-school exam.

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Students will be sent to the police for their hand phone after the exam was made and sent around by email, social researcher Kem Ley’s report Turning a Blind Eye purported.

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. Ministry of Education and government development partners UNESCO and UNICEF interviewed more,” he said.

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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 per $70 for 1.2 square metres, according to vendor representative Nem 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 Savoeun claimed deputy provincial governor Chhay Meng Heang had told her: “I reminded you to move. Otherwise, you would be surprised when military police come to take your stuff.” YOM KUTHKHEA

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 Zhilong, 26, were arrested last year in possession of meth, heroin and marijuana in Prampi Makara after another trafficker tipped off police. When arrested, Makara informed police of heroin and marijuana 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 on route to distribute the dope and have been sent to court. DEUM ANpile

Current affairs

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.” Sophan said that of Cambodia’s seven million current work force, 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, carpentry 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.

Drunken trio injure foreigner in accident

A BARAND 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 ANpile

Motor hi-jinks land two alleged dealers in jail

Six alleged 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 on route to distribute the dope and have been sent to court. DEUM ANpile

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 thrash and toss 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. KAMPONG SPEU TIMES

Souvenirs D’Orient

From August 15th to September 30th we have added a touch of the Orient at La Coupole.

Discover our new flavors including traditional Tajines, Couscous, Oriental Breads, as well as a spicy Macaron Station, a new cocoa corner and mint tea.

Starting from only 30 USD (exclusive of taxes) from 6.00pm to 10.00pm.

Also, be sure not to miss our Friday Seafood buffet and our Sunday Champagne Brunch with live music and full day access to the pool.

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Phnom Penh Phnom Penh,

Life is Magnifique

Translated by Sen David
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—Preak Vihear, Kratie, Koh Kong and Mondulkiri—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 standardized, 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 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 Pohny, president of the Cambodian Honey Hunter Community, which represents about 10,000 hunter communities in Cambodia, said yesterday.

“We released young lobsters in Angkor Wat and 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.

However, hatching lobsters is a problem due to their tendency to fall ill and die, said Yang. “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$35, up from US$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.

From Vach, who runs a lobster hatchery in Angkor Borei district in Takeo province, who previously hatched about 26,000 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.

“Every year we have had 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, said that he increased the number of lobsters hatched to meet demand from customers who have been successful in feeding their stock properly.

“My clients in Siem Reap and other provinces have ordered 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.
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, will 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 upfront and I don't have to pay for working capital."

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

Rising interest payments have eroded profit, causing the company to report its first quarterly loss since 2004 in the three months through June.

Shares in the Jain 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 KB Choksey, a Mumbai-based brokerage that rates Jain Irrigation "sell." It’s stock is down 25 per cent from a year ago.

The Jalfao, 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) at yesterday’s morning in Mumbai trading, after gaining as much as 2.3 per cent. The shares last fell 9.5 per cent after the company reported a loss of 169 million rupees (US$3.6 million) for the 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 83.4 billion rupees.

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

The shares have declined 15 per cent this year, whereas the benchmark Sensex has gained 15 per cent.

"We are confident that the worst is over and the company is on the right track," Jain said.

The company reported a loss of 732 million rupees in the three months through June.

Jain expects sales growth of 10 per cent to 25 per cent in the December quarter of this fiscal as it plans to sell seeds, pipes and micro-irrigation systems to farmers at lower cost, Jain said.

Jain Irrigation is one of the few industrial companies to report profits in the latest quarter.

Some customers are showing a strong interest, Jain said.

The lender will be able to extend immediate cash, unlike in a loan, he said.

"We can give a (loan) to prepare your field in the same season," Jain said.

Jain said he will start with 60 million rupees in capital and expects to lend money up to six months.

"We hope to have Rs 1,000 crore (10 billion rupees) by the end of the financial year," he said.

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

Thailand lacks long-term energy security

Soonya Vanichkorn

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 electricity generation.

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 2018.

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

In addition to the rising cost that would be passed on to the population, it gas pipelines are disrupted, we would face severe power cuts in the country if we rely only on one source, Telenanda Group president Pratiposh Pathiya, Edtig's assistant governor for corporate social responsibility.

Although the Power Development Plan 2010 calls for reduction of gas dependency 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 petroleum, which is now only about 2 per cent of the total energy mix.

"We should no longer be dependent on one fuel, said Pongdith Parija, an expert on energy security at the National Economic and Social Development Board.

In the second quarter of last year, a spike in oil prices caused about 11 billion yen in additional cost, Parija said.

"If we were to be faced with a similar situation, it could have a severe impact on our economy," he said.

In 1978, the government decided to diversify fuel sources with the aim of reducing oil dependency.

Gas was the only fuel to see a significant increase in its share of power generation through this period, with its share rising from 7 per cent in 1978 to 26 per cent in 2008.

The share of coal in power generation increased from 36 per cent in 1995 to 47 per cent in 2008, while electricity generated from hydropower dropped from 26 per cent in 1978 to 16 per cent in 2008.

One of the main reasons is that the public is concerned about the environment, Parija said.

In addition, gas-powered thermal power plants can be used to generate less electricity, he said.

In the long term, Parija said, Thailand should consider other energy sources such as solar and wind to reduce its dependency on gas.

According to the Energy Authority of Thailand, the country’s total electricity demand is expected to increase by 65 per cent to 264,000 gigawatt-hours (GWh) by 2032 from 160,000 GWh in 2012.

Most of the growth will come from the northern region.

The government has been working on a national energy strategy to ensure energy security with a focus on diversification of fuel sources.

Gas-fired power plants are expected to generate 45 per cent of total electricity demand in 2032, up from 30 per cent in 2012.

However, the energy authority said the share of gas-fired power plants in total electricity generation is likely to decline to 26 per cent in 2032 from 28 per cent in 2012.

Non-gas-fired power plants are expected to generate 55 per cent of total electricity demand in 2032, up from 27 per cent in 2012.

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Jain calls for upgrade to Don Mueang Terminal 2

Boonsong Kositchotethana

NO-FRILLS airline group Air Asia is urging flights of Thai carrier Air Asia's new renovate Terminal 2 at Don Mueang airport in parallel with work being done to deal with traffic that will quickly build up.

Tassapon Bijleveld, the chairman of Thai Air Asia, a sister airline of Asia's biggest 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 air port authority's plan to renovate Terminal 2 only after Terminal 1 reaches capacity, to avoid what Air Asia now perceives as a potential bottleneck.

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**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 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 Vithol, 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 collecting 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 is it 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.

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, he said.

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

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

The Singapore Venture Capital & Private Equity Association and the Hong Kong Venture Capital and Private Equity Association host two unique workshops presented by VDB Loi partners Edwin Vanderbruggen, Chris Muesssel and Darassat.

To register, please contact Joanna Estember at +855 95 777 660 or joanna.esterber@vdb-loi.com. For further information, visit www.vdb-loi.com/events.

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29 August, 9:00-13:00

The CEO Suite @ Singapore Land Tower

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The CEO Suite @ Singapore Land Tower
Part of the daily grind in Korea

Hyunjoo Jin

HESE 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 battle-ground for coffee chains. “There are few places where I can meet my friends comfortably, so I go to coffee shops,” Kó 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 138,000 tonnes over the past four years, the Korea Customs service says.

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 Tae-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 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 Kó Financial Group.

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

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 retailers, 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
Asian markets finished mixed on Monday, with China's Shanghai Composite index gaining 0.25 per cent to close at 2,789.00.

The Nikkei 225 closed down 0.45 per cent at 18,771.80, dragging down Japan's top five sectors with the number one dropping 1.16 per cent to 8,660.90.

The Hang Seng index added 0.53 per cent to 23,744.80 and the Taiwan Taiex index closed 0.29 per cent higher at 8,271.70.

Japan's 10-year government bond yield fell to 0.800 per cent from 0.830 per cent on Friday.

The US 10-year government bond yield was unchanged at 1.625 per cent as the dollar eased to 105.45 yen.

The yen weakened to 99.09 from 98.80 against the dollar.

The US dollar index was flat at 83.426.

In commodity markets, Brent crude for December delivery was quoted at $81.77 per barrel, up 25 cents from Friday.

Gold for December delivery was quoted at $1,647.77 per ounce, down $10.99.

Copper for December delivery was quoted at $3,502.50 per ounce, down $26.10.

The Thai SET 50 index was up 1.06 per cent at 1,460.51.

The Thai stock market has not moved much over the past few months, with the SET index fluctuating between 1,410 and 1,470.

The key points of the market watch are:

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

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- Brent crude futures were up 0.76 per cent.
- Gold futures were down 0.69 per cent.
- Copper futures were down 0.94 per cent.

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- The key rate was 0.75 per cent.
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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.

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 menacing 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 example 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 utilized,” 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.

“I 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 against the Assad regime, but also to prevent them in a threatening manner.

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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 says 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 damage 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 Tehran.

“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.

“The Fateh-110 appears to stand up to bullying and put a halt to their plans.”

The United States has also 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 tested 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. “The necessary search operations are being conducted,” a representative of the Moscow police told the Interfax news agency.

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

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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 sects exchanged gunfire and launched rocket-propelled grenades, residents said, in fighting that continues sporadically through the night.

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-seater Piper Seneca plane that had been carrying him, Transportation and Communication Secretary Mar Roxas told reporters.

Kyrgyz forces shoot fugitive border guard
Kyrgyz forces shot and wounded a Soviet republic said.

New Zealand killed by Swede in bar brawl
A NEW Zealand man said he was stabbed to death by a Swedish man in a bar in Pattaya, Thailand during a quartal about the suspect's girlfriend and pet dog, police said yesterday. Police said they received a report about 2am yesterday that a foreigner had been killed in a bar. TheSwedishman was

Japanese Ground Self-Defence Force CH-47 helicopter carries an armoured vehicle with ropes past A Japanese Ground Self-Defence Force CH-47 helicopter carries an armoured vehicle with ropes past

Japan may widen response

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.

Kyrgyz border with Kazakhstan
Kyrgyz border with Kazakhstan

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.

He was nowhere near the aircraft. We had to lower its expectations.

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.

President Meles’s government said last month Meles was making 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 had 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 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 engagement to other countries, at least until the new leader is firmly established in office,” David Shinn, a former US ambassador to Ethiopia, said regarding the critical need to sustain the peace process.

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

But Ethiopian leaders are less willing to devote a lot of time and resources to the conflict in the Horn of Africa, where the international community has had to lower its expectations.

Japanese Ground Self-Defence Force CH-47 helicopter carries an armoured vehicle with ropes past

Historic parliament opens in Somalia

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

About 250 MPs wearing new ID tags and, in some cases, new epaulettes 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 engulfed the strategic region of central government in 1991. It is not clear whether the process is already tainted and likely to unravel.

The meeting 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 withdrawal of the US-led coalition, the al-Shabaab was driven out of the city, suicide bombings and assassinations remain a constant threat.

Although ordinary citizens now once again were campaigning in Mogadishu, with election posters hanging on buildings and cars, a scene scarcely imaginable in a war zone.

By the end of the day, Somalia had achieved a parliament, still short of the final target of 275 members. There should also have been a president, but, in a transition process that has taken a year longer than originally planned, the international community has had to lower its expectations.

Ethiopian strongman dies abroad

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Focusing on a good user experience

Gregory Pelachich

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 week’s T3CON12-ASIA conference in Phnom Penh.

The conference focused on being professional and enthusiastic from the Web and mobile development fields to exchange 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, also the 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 system.

“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 certain something that is one thing that is increased 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. There 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 organizer of the conference, 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 and it is something that online universities 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 going on internationally on an e-commerce level. Additionally, Cambodia needs to handle credit card sales efficiently and maintain their loyalty. It is likely to be the trump card for any e-commerce e-commerce friendly,” 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.

“People are using technology effectively to leapfrog developing. We have technology. When we have more affordable technology, mobile technology is one of those things that is a massive enabling technology. We have access to a lot of online content. We also have accessibility on mobile devices and a high penetration rate, you can do a lot of things differently.”

“Developed countries have a lot of it; but in Cambodia, we can leapfrog heavily in old infrastructure and the cost of change is significant. Developing countries will be used to these stages. Good design can inform how we use technology effectively to leapfrog developing.”

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

Heard and agreed that user experience works, Ng said.

“Price-wise, the bottom has been pretty much reached. User experience will be factors to focus on even more,” he said, adding that Smart Mobile, Cambodia’s first smartphone, was not very popular and had to take advantage of this shift.

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

Gregory Pelachich

India blocks hundreds of websites

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 blacklist ranged from Facebook to tumbrl, an online social network. Authorities also banned the sending of text messages to more than five people at a time for two weeks.

Thousands of people from northeastern India gathered in 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 deliberately tried to inflame passions, hosting mirrored 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 Paki- stan,” Home Secretary RK Singh told reporters in New Delhi on Monday.

Pakistan Interior Minister Rehman Malik has asked India for evidence about the alleged violation of anonymity.

Other sites that were blocked included websites for the Islamic Solidarity Movement, the Islamic Expo, the Islamic Institute of Punjab, and the Islamic University of Madina.

Activists from Assam Public Work, an Indian NGO, burn Pakistan's flag during a protest against India blocking websites.

US satellite to begin tracking space debris

The US Air Force yesterday said it would begin operational use of a new Boeing surveillance satellite built to monitor 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. The system would help identify and monitor debris in space, officials said.

“The system is the only space-based sensor capable of detecting debris, satellites and other space objects with disruptions from weather, atmospheric factors or the time of day that can limit ground-based systems.”

“The improved access to observe orbiting objects significantly enhances the ability to provide timely, critical information, so desperately needed to support warfighting and early warning,” the air force said.

When the satellite was launched in September 2010, it was described as being able to observe orbiting objects with near-constant 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.
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 wonse to make the threat, legal and diplomatic experts say.

But Ecuador’s leftist, ardently anti-American 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 there’s realistic, but not very attractive, way to resolve an impasse to Play the waiting game. “And, in a way, Britain has everything to gain by playing the waiting game.”

“Moreover, I think, is the option of just waiting it out, because it’s very difficult to see what Britain’s other options may be.”

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 extradition, but 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 may be.”

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 worst in the Americas.”

Craig Barkey, a law professor at Sussex University, says Assange and the Ecuadorians 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 Ecuadorian embassy until he gets tired of it, the media gets tired of it and the Ecuadorians get tired of it.”

“Depending on Assange’s ongoing activities, there may be something that would embarrass them.”

“Is the time to say quiet. He’s going to have to keep bringing his case to the media, and the Ecuadorians will begin to wonder what the benefit is to them.”

WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange speaks to the media from a balcony at the Ecuadorian embassy in London this week. [Reuters]
Khmer Rouge refugee a rare ‘Miss Cambodia’

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

Phanith Sovann, a Cambodian-American singer who was nearly killed as a child by the Khmer Rouge, will represent Cambodia in an international beauty contest for the first time.

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 representing 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 San Srey Mom, who competed in Miss World in 2006. She was the first in more than 50 years to vie for the coveted title.

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

Phanith Sovann 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, backing 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.”

Smith and Yusuf have both had heart attacks, and are now on the mend, according to People magazine.

Sovann, who had come to visit her, manager Mit Suchin said: “She had a smile on her face, as you’d expect,” Suchin told Reuters. Diller’s publicist Fred Westbrock, called her “a true pioneer” and “the first female of comedy”.

“Sometimes it can be intimidating to see that Cambodia is marvellous,” she said.

The show begins at 8pm this evening.

Post staff

A STAR-STUDDDED comic lineup 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 wise-cracking, 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 well coming 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 England. 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, 5172. Tickets can be bought from Pontoon bar before hand or on the door. The show begins at 8pm.

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 connected to his work.

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 world got out of her car last week, the former talk show host felt an ache in her chest and soreness in her arms.

Lifestyle

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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 Mit Suchin said.

“Phyllis Diller, a true pioneer and ‘the first lady of stand-up comedy’ Joan Rivers, a friend and fellow comic, said on Monday Diller had cleaned 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 Phnom Penh tonight.

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 wise-cracking, often about being a Muslim in Britain.

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

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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 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 Longborough – 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 dependence; 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.”

One of the most common reasons for taking sleeping tablets is good oral hygiene with a lower risk of developing dementia later in life, according to a new study.

Researchers who followed close to 5,500 participants ranged in age from 52 to 105, the new findings, published in the Journal of the American Geriatrics Society, suggest that good dental health practices over a lifetime may have particularly strong protective effects against dementia.

The study was one of many that have found a link between good oral health and lower risk of developing dementia. Researchers who followed close to 5,500 participants ranged in age from 52 to 105, the new findings, published in the Journal of the American Geriatrics Society, suggest that good dental health practices over a lifetime may have particularly strong protective effects against dementia.

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

Avid tooth-brushers less likely to develop dementia

Natalja 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 Amanda 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 a lifetime would predict better cognitive function in later life.

The researchers followed 5,468 resi- dents of a Californian retirement com- munity 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
A tiger relaxes at the Pench Pench reserve in Madhya Pradesh, one of many reserves affected by the ban.

Helen Field

I t'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 pillow. The orange and black stripes.

Since 1992, he has run tiger tours and has made a penny. Along with 25 cubs that would be a "total disaster".

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."

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."

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 Ramthambore 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."
NOW SHOWING

LEGEND CINEMA

TOTAL RECALL
Factory worker Doug 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, 9:30pm

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

AN EXPANSION OF THE UNIVERSE FROM ROBERT LUDLUM'S NOVELS, THIS FILM CENTRES ON A NEW

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

BLOOD DIAMOND
A fisherman, a smuggler and a syndicate of

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

TV PICKS

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

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

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.

BLOOD DIAMOND
A fisherman, a smuggler and a syndicate of

Wassup Wednesday

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

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

Admission: $8.

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

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 gap-packeted 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.

Ponteon, St 172
7:30pm

Drink and Draw

Free beginners’ steps from 8-9pm and DJs Jimmy Salsa from 9-11pm.

Vamos a bailar!

Equinox, St 278, Phnom Penh
8-11pm

Thinking caps

Sudoku Pacific

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

ACROSS
1 O’Hara’s portraitry  6 They beg to differ
2 Sleep on it  7 Give a great deal
3 Some arm bones  8 Not-so-desirable bread slice
4 Black on black  9 Shield of classical mythology
5 _____ Gren 10 Sailors’ swears
11 Sleep with it  11 Enriven with a quality
12 Some arm bones  13 Most fleet
13 Most fleet  14 Enriven with a quality
14 Some arm bones  15 Most fleet
15 Most fleet  16 Enriven with a quality
16 Some arm bones  17 Most fleet
17 Some arm bones  18 Enriven with a quality
18 Some arm bones  19 Most fleet
19 Some arm bones  20 Enriven with a quality
20 Some arm bones  21 Most fleet
21 Some arm bones  22 Enriven with a quality
22 Some arm bones  23 Most fleet
23 Some arm bones  24 Enriven with a quality
24 Some arm bones

DOWN
1 Pull with perspiration  6 Armed forces
2 Hostel work environment?  7 DEA worker
3 Obedient dog  8 DEA worker
4 Russian pancake  9 DEA worker
5 Edible starch  10 DEA worker
6 Surfboard  11 DEA worker
7 DEA worker  12 DEA worker
8 DEA worker  13 DEA worker
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DIFFICULTY RATING: 2/2

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Tuesday’s solution

Tuesday’s solution

Phnom Penh Post August 22, 2012
Armstrong fails in latest suit against anti-doping group

James B Keileyer

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 champion 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 would press on 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 who have agreed to testify said they were “shocked and appalled”.

The agency says Armstrong and his teammates cheated the sponsor of their team, Livestrong, of $100 million and the value of his career.

Armstrong contended the USADA’s 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 violate 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 overturn the agency.

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 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”.

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Valverde wins mountain top stage to take lead

No place for Pietersen in limited-overs squads

Kevlin 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” as it was always unlikely the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) would accept him for the upcoming limited overs events.

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 $1.02 billion (US$1.07 billion) to broadcast games over five years, the Australian Rugby League Commission said yesterday. That compares to the $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 “intense negotiations with representatives of all competitors and transmission networks.”

Kuznetsova among US Open tennis withdrawals

RUSIA’S Svetlana Kuznetsova, the 2004 US Open champion, heads a group of players who joined Rafael Nadal in withdrawing from the final major of the year, the US Open, in the latest WTA Tour rankings.

Also withdrawing from the women’s draw are top-20 players Ana Konjuh of Slovenia and Flavia Pennetta of Italy, and Kei Nishikori of Japan.

That leaves top-20 player Kaia Kanepi of Estonia and Flavia Pennetta of Italy, and Kei Nishikori of Japan.

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.

Chess Puzzle solution: White King has no squares to go.
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.

**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, club re-opened for a new season in October.

Peter Salazar v Vladimir Chomsky

“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 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 well, really good 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 lot.”

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 caddie for the week.

“Of course I did it last year, too, in Germany. Garcia’s win means Ian Poulter has now guaranteed nine of Europe’s 10 automatic places for the meeting next Monday.

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

Kaymer.

It’s your move, plan carefully.

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.”
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 88 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.”

“Before we had the possession and made some great openings without actually finishing it. We were a wee bit (disappointing) in terms of finishing of 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 late alongside Phil Jones and Jonny Evans all injured, Ferguson had only Nemanja Vidic of his recognised central defenders to 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.

Fergie blames poor finishing

The win put them third in the table, helping the team to have removed their opening match and gone on to claim the title. They have done it twice.

Deportivo triumph on return to La Liga

Deportivo Coruna’s Abel Aguilera (right) battles for the ball with Osasuna’s Resul Leo 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 in the same scoreline thanks to a dramatic 95th minute freekick from Roberto Trashorras.

Deport’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 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 Omar Elabdellaoui broke away to lob the ball over Fernandez for their second goal.

Along with Valencia, Deport 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 Bar- ca, who thrashed Real Sociedad 5-1 at home on Sunday, and Real Betis, who overcame 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 with a close range shot after helping set up the move just before the break.

Zaragoza goalkeeper Roberto kept the hosts in the game against a Pajarito penalty miss in the 67th minute and joined his side in attack in the frantic finale, but to no avail.

It was a case of deja vu in Val lecas as Rayo Vallecano snatched all the points against Granada when Trasorras 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 Phnom Penh on Sunday.

The result was the second loss for the national side after three wins in their first three Tests in Tournament’s game, as Sov Sosouha struck in the first minute before PHR midfielder Prak Mony Udom brought things back level 10 minutes later. A tighter second half saw Joseph Dolutoboun snatch the winner on 73 minutes against 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 being abroad on September 13.

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 (£23.45 million), according to local media.

The 25-year-old, who has agreed a five-year contract, became Barcelona’s top summer signing and major reinforcement for the new season after Spain full back Alba’s recent switch to Juventus for €14 million. Song was presented to fans at the Nou Camp later in the day when Barca lost 1-0 to Sampdoria in their first game, 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 become blighted by the country’s campaign to host the 2022 World Cup. Buckley’s six-year tenure had become blighted by Australia’s failed bid, when Australia’s failed bid, when $450 million (£52.25 million) in taxpayer’s money resulted in one vote from the FIFA Executive Committee when they selected Qatar to host the tournament in December 2010.

Public fall out with the country’s club owners and the collapse of the North Queensland Fury and a proposal to Western Sydney Wanderers to make a move to FFA was too much.

Gallop will take over from the exit of outgoing CEO Mark Barbaro and will assist in the running and development of the country’s football through the A-League, Olympic and World Cup campaigns. 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 Hajduk Split - 1:45am
■ Hapoel Ironi Kiryat Shmona - 1:45am
■ Bilba Leones - 1:45am
■ Din Zagreb v NK Maribor - 1:45am
■ Malaga v Panathinaikos - 1:45am

Football
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 45 for four, then 146 for six, and even 208 for seven, and 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 conference in the Lord’s Museum.

“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 India, Sri Lanka had beaten England.

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.

“Having touched it before we’ve learned some lessons,” said Smith. “We’re pretty humbled 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.”

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