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Exchange Rates:

- 1 USD = 59.10 INR
- 1 USD = 11735.00IDR
- 1 SGD = 47.04INR
- 1 SGD = 9344.64IDR

Forecast**SINGAPORE**

29°C

Heavy Rain Shower

Humidity 79%

NEW DELHI

38°C

Sunny

Humidity 35%

JAKARTA

34°C

Sunny

Humidity 60%

MANDALAY

37°C

Sunny

Humidity: 41%

Ukraine's new leader vows to crush rebels after deadly attack

Ukraine's President-elect Petro Poroshenko has vowed to punish "bandits" after pro-Russian rebels shot down an army helicopter, killing 12. "These criminal acts of the enemies of the Ukrainian people will not go unpunished," he was quoted as saying by the Unian news agency. The helicopter was shot down near the eastern city of Sloviansk. An army general was among those killed. Sloviansk has seen fierce fighting between the rebels and Ukraine's army. Russia has reiterated calls for Ukraine to stop its military campaign against the pro-Moscow rebels and "start a real national dialogue". In a separate development, Ukraine, Russia and the EU are due to open a new round of talks in Berlin on resolving a growing dispute over Moscow's gas supplies to Kiev. Russia's Gazprom has threatened to cut off gas supplies to Ukraine if it fails to pay its huge debt. (BBC)

Shangri-La dialogue: Japan PM Abe to urge security role

Japan will push for a greater role in Asian security at a regional summit on Friday, in a move set to anger China. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe is expected to promote Japan as a counterbalance to China at the three-day Shangri-La Dialogue in Singapore. The summit involves the US and Asean countries, and comes amid territorial disputes in the South China Sea between China, Vietnam and the Philippines. Japan-China ties are also strained over disputed islands in the East China Sea. Mr Abe will give the keynote address at the Shangri-La Dialogue, which is also known as the Asia Security Summit, on Friday evening. He is expected to set out a vision of Japan and its ally, the US, playing a greater role in security co-operation in Asia. Regional defence officials, and US Defence Secretary Chuck Hagel, will be at the event. Japan's top government spokesman, Yoshihide Suga, said Mr Abe would call for "constructive discussions... towards [Asia's] peace and safety". "Heightening situations in the South China Sea and the East China Sea" made this particularly important, Mr Suga added. China's delegation, led by vice Foreign Minister Fu Ying, is expected to describe Tokyo, not Beijing, as a threat to security. China has been angered by Mr Abe's call for a new interpretation of Japan's constitution, which bans acts of war and "the threat or use of force" to settle international disputes. (BBC)

Pakistan PM Nawaz Sharif orders action on stoning

Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif has described the stoning to death of a woman by her family in front of a Lahore court as "totally unacceptable". Farzana Parveen, who was three months pregnant, was pelted with bricks and bludgeoned by relatives furious because she married against their wishes. Her husband told the BBC that police simply stood by during the attack. Lahore's police chief has denied this and said Ms Parveen had been killed by the time police arrived at the scene. There are hundreds of so-called "honour killings" in Pakistan each year. This incident has prompted particular outrage as it took place in daylight while police and members of the public reportedly stood by and did nothing to save her. Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif has ordered the chief minister of Punjab province to take "immediate action" and submit a report by Thursday evening. (BBC)

Illegal EU migration surges as thousands flock to Italy

The number of people attempting the dangerous sea crossing from North Africa to Italy has risen sharply, says Frontex, the EU border agency. From January to April, 42,000 migrants were detected on these routes, with 25,650 of these crossing from Libya. Combined with seven other less busy routes, the total figure for this year is probably now about 60,000. On Wednesday, the Italian government said the number of migrants reaching its shores had soared to more than 39,000. The total for 2014 so far is more than the equivalent period in 2011, the year of the Arab Spring, which eventually saw the arrival of 140,000 illegal migrants. (BBC)

Narendra Modi charms Chinese Premier Li Keqiang with Hiuen Tsang story

After flooring the neighbourhood by inviting Saarc leaders for his swearing-in, Prime Minister Narendra Modi enthralled Chinese Premier Li Keqiang on Thursday when he referred to the memoirs of 7th century Chinese scholar Hiuen Tsang to underline the importance of ties between the two countries. The conversation took place at the initiative of Li, who wanted to congratulate Modi. The telephone conversation was Modi's first with a foreign head of government since taking over as Prime Minister of India. Modi told the premier that Hiuen had even visited his village Vadnagar in Gujarat, top government sources told TOI. Modi is apparently familiar with Hiuen's memoirs which he wrote after travelling all over India during his stay of close to 15 years in the country. Largely forgotten in China, Hiuen is remembered in India for the most authoritative and captivating account of social, economic and political conditions in India in the 7th century. Modi and Li hit it off so well that the conversation lasted for about 30 minutes. Modi mentioned Hiuen's visit to his village to emphasize the importance he attached to ties with China. He told Li China would be a priority country for him. Any talk about the civilizational links between the two countries is incomplete without a reference to Hiuen. By mentioning Hiuen's visit to his village, Modi has in a way made himself central to India's foreign policy imperatives on China. The government also confirmed after the conversation that foreign minister Sushma Swaraj would meet her counterpart Wang Yi in the second week of June. Wang will come as a special envoy of President Xi Jinping who is expected to visit India later this year. Li said China wanted to have a robust relationship with India. (TOI)

Govt moves to hike defence FDI up to 100%

Within two days of taking charge, the Narendra Modi government has begun work on allowing up to 100% foreign investment in defence production, in a bid to send a strong signal to global investors as well as to try and move the production base of some equipment into the country. The commerce and industry ministry has circulated a Cabinet note seeking comments from other government agencies, sources familiar with the development told TOI. The ministry is also readying other proposals to allow FDI in sectors such as railways, where the list of areas where investment will be allowed is being expanded, according to sources. Earlier, the government had planned to allow FDI in high-speed train systems, suburban corridors, high-speed tracks and freight lines connecting ports and mines. Similarly, there is a proposal to ease FDI norms in construction. On Tuesday, Arun Jaitley had spoken of the government's intent to hike the FDI cap in the sector to 100% from 26% at present — a move that has been resisted by the defence ministry for years. With Jaitley holding both the finance and defence portfolios, opposition

may be muted this time. In any case, during his election campaign Prime Minister Narendra Modi had announced his support for greater private participation in the defence sector. The commerce & industry ministry has suggested a graded foreign investment ceiling. It has suggested a cap of 49% FDI for companies that do not transfer technology, while in ventures where the foreign partner is willing to transfer knowhow, the government intends to allow up to 74% FDI, and there will be no cap (100% FDI) for companies engaged in manufacturing state-of-the-art equipment and machinery or those undertaking modernization projects. (TOI)

K Chandrasekhar Rao sworn in as first CM of Telangana, India's 29th state

Today is a new dawn in the history of the Indian Union. For the first time — outside the Hindi- and Bengali-speaking areas — two states speaking the same language have been created. Both Telangana and Andhra Pradesh, the two successor states to Andhra Pradesh, that come into existence on Monday, swear by Telugu. This knocks down the basis on which the internal map of the Indian Union was redrawn in the first decade after Independence. With the linguistic basis of states — language being assumed as the indicator of a homogeneous culture — being challenged, there is scope for another exercise to redraw the internal map of India. Whether this will happen or not is a moot point but the question is why did this "Telugu state" break down. And what are the lessons for the future? Although there was a demand for a composite Telugu state from before Independence, the Nehru-led government created Andhra Pradesh due to Congress's political interests. History has thus come full circle. In Andhra state (which was carved out of the Telugu speaking areas of then Madras state in 1953), the Congress was facing a tough electoral contest from the Communists. So it was decided to merge Andhra with the Telugu speaking areas of the dominion of the deposed Nizam of Hyderabad. This would create a larger entity where the communists could be defeated. The exercise created a monopoly. In the 1977 post-Emergency elections, the Congress was soundly thrashed nationally but won 41 of the 42 seats in AP! The following year, Indira Gandhi romped home to the Lok Sabha from Madras. The second unstated reason was that the Nehru government, chastened by the experience of the integration of Kashmir, did not want to leave the territories of the Nizam as they were. Therefore, while the Telugu-speaking areas went to Andhra Pradesh, the Marathi and Kannada speaking areas went to Bombay and Mysore provinces. As K Chandrasekhar Rao of Telangana Rashtra Samiti and N Chandrababu Naidu of the TDP take the reins of office today, they would do well to remember that instead of indulging in gimmickry, the best way to ensure they have a bright future is to provide it to the people of their states — both in rural and urban areas. (TOI)

Victims still await full settlement after eight years

Jarwadi, 68, a resident of Siring village, Sidoarjo regency, East Java, had not previously known 65-year-old Sadawi Priadi of nearby Glagah Arum village. However, they shared the same fate when their homes and all their belongings were engulfed by the hot mudflow originating from the Panji I oil well drilling conducted by PT Lapindo Brantas Inc. in 2006. Lapindo is partially owned by the Bakrie family, which is under the patronage of Golkar Party chairman Aburizal Bakrie. Neither Tjarwadi, a trader, nor Sadawi, a driver for a shoe factory, have received the full compensation long promised by the government. "Whereas in fact, President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono personally promised to compensate every one of the victims of the Lapindo mudflow by February 2010, this has not happened in reality," Tjarwadi told The Jakarta Post during the commemoration of the eighth anniversary of the eruption of the mudflow on Thursday in Sidoarjo. He claimed that Lapindo should have already paid Rp 635 million (US\$54,588) for his 235-square-meter plot and 135-square-meter house, but Tjarwadi and his wife Saropah, 55, have so far only received Rp 247 million. "The initial payment was 20 percent of the total amount, while the rest was to have been paid in installments at Rp 15 million per month, but that happened for eight months only. I've received no cash transfers for the past year," said Tjarwadi. The same tale was also related by Sadawi who lost 887 square meters of land and a house measuring 165 square meters. He should have received compensation of Rp 1.1 billion, but has only received Rp 320 million as of now. Thousands of people swarmed on top of embankment 22, located west of the gush point, bordering the railway line and the Porong-Sidoarjo highway to commemorate the eighth anniversary of the Lapindo mudflow. Presidential candidate Joko "Jokowi" Widodo also attended the commemoration and met the mudflow victims on Thursday. (TJP)

Police increase security for presidential candidates

The National Police are preparing to dispatch 372 personnel to improve security for presidential and vice presidential candidates in the lead up to the July 9 election. Insp. Gen. Putut Eko Bayuseno of the National Police's security maintenance division said that personnel would assemble a special security team, which would begin working following the General Elections Commission (KPU) formal announcement of Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle's (PDI-P) Joko "Jokowi" Widodo-Jusuf Kalla and Gerindra Party's Prabowo Subianto-Hatta Rajasa as the official tickets in the race. "Each of the four candidates will be protected by a group consisting of 93 personnel. The group will be divided into three work shifts, so that each candidate will receive protection from 31 police personnel around the

clock," Putut said on Wednesday at National Police headquarters in South Jakarta. While on the campaign trail or making other visits, the candidates will be protected by a motorcade of police on motorcycles and in cars. Putut, however, said that the increased protection was designed to compliment the security teams already established by each candidate. "However, final details regarding security measures are up to the candidates. We are ready to meet their needs, whether that be a request for plainclothes officers or a reduction in the size of the force," he added. Members of the security team would also keep a close eye on food consumed by presidential candidates to prevent them from poisoning. The security detail, which would run through the presidential inauguration on Oct. 20, would extend in part to the children and spouses of the candidates. (TJP)

Locals, foreigners call for a safer Bali

Hundreds of foreigners and locals, dressed in all-white, gathered at Batu Bolong Beach in Canggu, Badung regency, on Monday to support the safer Bali campaign. Although many were in mourning for an 18-year-old Korean girl, who died recently after being mugged, their spirit and motivation to make the island a better place remained strong. Bali was shocked by the death of Kim Eun-sol who died after a motorcycle ran over her on a road in Kerobokan, Denpasar. Eun-sol was on a motorcycle in the early hours of May 17 when muggers on two motorcycles tried to take her bag. She tried to keep a hold on it, but fell off the bike only to be run over by another vehicle driving in the other direction. The muggers remain at large. At the event, which was titled We Love Bali Safe, Gonzalo Assiego read a declaration at the beginning of the gathering, stating that they would work with all stakeholders to promote peace on the island. "We Love Bali Safe has the deepest respect for Bali, its people, its culture and heritage. We will work together with other local communities as one community," he said. "Our focus is to work alongside the authorities with the aim to implement and provide education to the public which will create a safer Bali for all of us." Sudarsana, a local figure, praised the community for organizing the event. "Let's make Bali shanti [peaceful]. We are responsible for securing Bali." He added that such a campaign was important for the island as Bali was a tourism magnet. An unsafe Bali might make tourists choose other destinations, he said. Bali has also seen several rape cases, especially those attacking foreigners. A Swedish woman recently reported that she had been raped inside her hotel room in the famous tourism area of Kuta. On Thursday, a British woman was found dead with multiple injuries to her body in a villa in Junjungan, a quiet neighborhood of upscale villas in Ubud. The woman was found lying on the floor with a black cloth covering her face. A few days later, the Bali Police arrested a suspect named Hambali, a native of Karawang, West Java, for his alleged involvement in the murder. (TJP)

Suu Kyi Calls on Army Members to Sign Constitutional Reform Petition

Burma's main opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi has urged members of the military to support a nationwide petition to reform the country's undemocratic Constitution. For many months the National League for Democracy (NLD) chairwoman has been calling for amendments to the military-drafted charter, which was adopted following a flawed referendum under the previous junta in 2008. On Tuesday, her party and the 88 Generation Peace and Open Society began a petition campaign to gather public support for reforming the charter's Article 436. "We are doing something to change the future of our country. Please urge anyone in your community to join it. Please do it," Suu Kyi said at the start of the two-month petition period. She said members of the Burma Army, which numbers between 300,000 and 400,000 soldiers, should also sign the petition and support change in their country. "I want to urge army men to sign it because as the country's employees they have right to sign it too," Suu Kyi said, adding that support from military lawmakers in Parliament is also imperative to achieving charter reform. A quarter of Burma's parliamentary seats are reserved for military officers, in accordance with the Constitution. They are routinely replaced and have to vote on orders of Commander-in-Chief Min Aung Hlaing. Suu Kyi's party and ethnic opposition parties hold a small number of seats in Parliament. The rest are controlled by the Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP), which comprises members of the former junta. The Constitution's Article 436 states that key amendments to the charter can only take place if more than 75 percent of Parliament supports it—a provision that gives the military a de facto veto. Suu Kyi challenged the notion that army MPs should vote in accordance with their commander's orders and said, "any change to the charter is totally dependent on a person's wish and whether he wants to change [the Constitution] or not." Wai Lin, a Lower House military lawmaker, said in a reaction that only military MPs on the parliamentary committee for constitutional reform could decide whether or not Burma Army members could support Suu Kyi's petition. (IP)

Betel Addiction Trumps Burma's Anti-Tobacco Campaign

An anti-tobacco campaign in Burma has had little effect, campaigners say, as the popularity of chewing betel nut continues to grow. "Of anywhere in Southeast Asia, Burma has the most people consuming betel quid with tobacco. More than 51 percent of the population here chews it with tobacco," Dr. Tint Tint Kyi, a specialist at Insein General Hospital, said at a forum in Rangoon ahead of World No Tobacco Day on Saturday. That's up from about 25 percent of the country's population five years ago and 10 percent of the population a decade ago, she said. Betel quid, commonly known as betel nut, consists of areca nuts wrapped in betel

leaf and coated with lime. Tobacco and spices are added upon preference. Street stalls throughout Burma sell the addictive nut, which stains the teeth of chewers a dark red color as it gives them a boost much like a cup of coffee. Dr. Khin Maung Lwin, a former director at the Ministry of Health, said anti-tobacco awareness campaigns needed to reach a bigger audience. "Most attendees at our talks are nonsmokers and people who don't chew betel," he said at the forum in Rangoon. "As long as we are only raising awareness among people who don't use tobacco, there will be no progress." According to the World Health Organization (WHO), someone dies every six seconds around the world from tobacco use, while tobacco kills nearly 6 million people each year. Of those, more than 600,000 people are nonsmokers who have been exposed to second-hand smoke. "Many people are smoking in tobacco-free public places," Tint Tint Kyi said. Burma's 2006 tobacco control law bans smoking and chewing betel nut in tobacco-free places such as schools, hospitals and sports facilities. (IP)

'Conflict Negotiators' Meet in Myitkyina

The first meeting of a new commission to negotiate during armed conflicts in northern Burma met in the Kachin State capital of Myitkyina on Wednesday. Five representatives from the Burmese government and five from the Kachin Independence Organization (KIO) are part of the Conflict Negotiation Commission, which formed during bilateral peace talks between both sides earlier this month. Members of the commission are tasked with working together to reduce fighting between the KIO's armed group and the Burmese army, as the government continues to push for a nationwide ceasefire accord with all armed groups. Lamai Gum Ja, a member of the KIO advisory technical team, said Wednesday's meeting was mostly an introduction. "This was the first time we were getting to know the other members involved in the commission," he told The Irrawaddy. "We also talked about how to negotiate systematically if there is conflict. Third, we discussed how to communicate with each other when fighting breaks out. Finally, we talked about setting up an office for the commission." He said KIO representatives also suggested that government soldiers reduce hostilities by informing the Kachin army before entering their territory. Fighting is ongoing between the Kachin Independence Army (KIA) and the Burmese army in Kachin State and northern Shan State. In April, an escalation of clashes forced thousands of civilians to flee their homes. They join more than 100,000 people who have been displaced by the conflict since 2011. In early May, KIA leaders requested a meeting with Burmese peace negotiators. During a meeting in Myitkyina on May 13, both sides agreed to form the Conflict Negotiation Commission. Col. Naing Aung (IP)

Ferrari 'need to allow engineers more creativity for success'

Ferrari have the resources to succeed in Formula 1 but have been hampered by the way the team has been run in recent years, their design boss says. James Allison, who joined in September, said Ferrari's designers needed to be given the space to be more creative. "There is a wealth of talent at Ferrari, the experience and quality of the people on the technical side is a match for any team," said Allison. He added that he expected progress from the team in the next few races. "It is a question of giving them the encouragement to actually go off and do more unusual things and then have the time to look at them and know that if they fail it's OK because there's still time to put a back-up plan in place and for that to work," Allison said. "Creativity and originality will only come if you set out to allow the engineers in your organisation the space and the time to do that." "If you force them to operate with their back against the wall, up against deadlines that are very tight, then there is no time for them to think about how they might approach something differently." Ferrari have suffered a tumultuous season so far, with an uncompetitive car and only one podium finish by Fernando Alonso in the first six races. Their poor form led to the resignation of team principal Stefano Domenicali last month. President Luca Di Montezemolo has said the team are to be restructured internally to allow the design office to work more efficiently. Di Montezemolo and new team principal Marco Mattiacci have made it clear they will recruit more big names if they believe they will be of benefit (BBC)

Roger Federer knocked out of French Open by Ernests Gulbis

Roger Federer failed to reach the French Open quarter-finals for the first time since 2004 as he lost in five sets to Latvia's Ernests Gulbis. The 17-time Grand Slam champion led by a set and a break, but went down 6-7 (5-7) 7-6 (7-3) 6-2 4-6 6-3. Fourth-round victory would have taken the 32-year-old Swiss into a record 42nd major quarter-final. Gulbis, seeded 18th, goes on to face sixth seed Czech Tomas Berdych in the last eight. The temperamental 25-year-old gave a typically unpredictable performance, big serving and brilliant shot-making interspersed with racquet smashing and verbal exchanges with spectators. "It's probably the most important win of my career, especially because it was five sets," said Gulbis. "I beat him before, but it was a three set match. So for my confidence and just for me as a tennis player, a five set win over Roger Federer, it's really big." "There was no doubt where the crowd's affections lay on Court Philippe Chatrier, with 2009 champion Federer given the support of a home player. The Swiss looked in control when he served for a two-set lead, but he inexplicably failed to put away a smash on set point, and the afternoon took a very different turn. Gulbis came back to win the tie-break

and broke serve twice to move into the lead in the third. (BBC)

Maya Angelou was 'a real original' says Toni Morrison

Author Toni Morrison has paid tribute to her friend, the poet, author and activist Maya Angelou, saying she was a "real original" with "no duplicate". "She launched African-American women writing in the United States," Morrison told the BBC at the Hay Festival. "She was generous to a fault." Angelou died on Wednesday, aged 86. She made her name with the memoir *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*, which charted her childhood of oppression and abuse in the Deep South in the 1930s. Angelou's family described her as "a warrior for equality, tolerance and peace". In a statement on Facebook, they said she passed away quietly at home in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, adding they were "extremely grateful that her ascension was not belaboured by a loss of acuity or comprehension." "She lived a life as a teacher, activist, artist and human being... The family is extremely appreciative of the time we had with her and we know that she is looking down upon us with love." US President Barack Obama called her "one of the brightest lights of our time... A brilliant writer, a fierce friend and a truly phenomenal woman He presented Angelou with the country's highest civilian honour, the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2011." Over the course of her remarkable life, Maya was many things - an author, poet, civil rights activist, playwright, actress, director, composer, singer and dancer. LinkLink "But above all, she was a storyteller - and her greatest stories were true," he said. "A childhood of suffering and abuse actually drove her to stop speaking - but the voice she found helped generations of Americans find their rainbow amidst the clouds, and inspired the rest of us to be our best selves." Raised by her grandmother in Stamps, Arkansas, Angelou was raped by her mother's boyfriend at the age of seven. After she told her family what had happened, the boyfriend was killed. "I thought my voice had killed him, so it was better not to speak - so I simply stopped speaking," she said. She remained mute for five years, but read voraciously. Former President Bill Clinton, who invited Angelou to read at his 1993 inauguration, said America had lost a national treasure and he and wife Hillary had lost "a beloved friend". "The poems and stories she wrote and read to us in her commanding voice were gifts of wisdom and wit, courage and grace," he said. Others paying tribute included civil rights campaigner Reverend Jesse Jackson, who wrote on Twitter: "The renaissance woman has made a peaceful transition. She acted, sang, danced and taught. She used poetry as a road for peace." Oprah Winfrey wrote on her website: "I've been blessed to have Maya Angelou as my mentor, mother/sister and friend since my 20s." "What stands out to me most about Maya Angelou is not what she has done or written or spoken; it's how she lived her life." She moved through the world with unshakable calm, confidence and a fierce grace... She will always be the rainbow in my clouds." (BBC)

Etihaad finalises conditions for Alitalia investment

Etihaad says it has finalised the conditions it requires for a major investment in Alitalia, following months of negotiations. Etihaad did not give further details, but in a TV interview Italy's transport minister said Etihaad was ready to invest around 600m euros in Alitalia. Reports say that in return Abu Dhabi based Etihaad will receive a 49% stake in Alitalia. The deal needs to be confirmed by the board of Alitalia and other parties. Reuters reports that Alitalia has agreed as many as 2,900 job cuts under the deal and that the Italian government has agreed to back a redundancy scheme for affected staff. Etihaad said the Italian government "looks favourably" at the partnership between the airlines. "An equity investment in Alitalia will be beneficial not only for both airlines, but, more importantly, it will give more choice and broader travel opportunities to business and leisure travellers into and out of Italy," said chief executive of Etihaad Airways, James Hogan. Alitalia flies about 25 million passengers a year, but is weighed down by debts of about 800m euros (£656m). Last October, Alitalia approved plans for a 300m euro capital increase as part of a deal to fend off bankruptcy. Gabriele Del Torchio, chief executive of Alitalia, said: "This is an excellent outcome for Alitalia. This investment will provide financial stability and confirms Alitalia's key strategic role as an infrastructure player in the travel and tourism industry in Italy for long-term growth." (BBC)

Spain to launch 6.3bn euro stimulus package

Spain will unveil a new stimulus package worth 6.3bn euros (£5.1bn; \$8.6bn) next week, Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy has announced. He said the main rate of corporate tax would also be cut to 25% from 30%. The measures are designed specifically to boost the economy's competitiveness and to create jobs. The Spanish unemployment rate is running at almost 26%, with more than half of the workforce under 24 years of age out of work. "Next Friday, the government will present a package of measures to increase competitiveness and productivity," Mr Rajoy said. "The plan will include investments totalling 6.3bn euros, of which 2.67bn will come from the private sector and 3.63bn from the public sector." Reports suggest the package will include credits to small and medium-sized firms, and investments aimed at research and development, transport and energy saving. Spain emerged from recession in October of last year. The economy grew at its fastest quarterly pace since 2008 during the first three months of this year, with GDP up by 0.4% over the quarter. Compared with year earlier, it grew by 0.6%, the fastest pace in three years. Spain was hit particularly badly during the financial crisis, with its banking sector needing a bailout from its European partners in 2012. (BBC)

12 of the world's largest carriers ready with environmental alliance

A new ambitious network of carriers – the Trident Alliance – headed by, among others, Norwegian Wallenius Wilhelmsen Logistics and Maersk, the primary goal of which is to ensure meticulous control of the new and tightened sulphur requirements for ship fuel in Northern Europe that will come into force on January 1st 2015, is now close to becoming a reality. Following a full-day meeting with representatives from a total of 12 carriers hosted by Maersk Maritime Technology in Copenhagen on Wednesday, the basis for the alliance has been negotiated into place. The meeting counted more carriers than otherwise mentioned a few weeks ago, where estimates said that 8-10 carriers would participate in the first meeting. "We principally agree to establish the Trident Alliance and we have formulated the basis for the alliance. We will now each of us present this basis to our respective companies, our legal team, just as it will need to be anchored among the CEO's of the companies. We've given ourselves two weeks for this process, after which we'll be able to announce the names of the members of the Trident Alliance," Roger Strevens, Vice President and Global Head of Environment at Wallenius Wilhelmsen Logistics, tells Shipping Watch: "The meeting in Copenhagen was highly constructive and everyone agrees that the Trident Alliance is the right tool to handle this challenge. None of us want to see this evolve into a coffee club. This is an initiative that will get the work done." Here are the principles behind the Trident Alliance. So far Wallenius Wilhelmsen and Maersk are the only names in the environmental alliance that have been made public, but carriers from Sweden, Germany, Japan, and South Korea are said to participate. The EU's Commissioner for Climate Action, Connie Hedegaard, along with the Danish Minister for the Environment, Kirsten Brosbøl, have voiced their support for the collaboration, which according to Niels Bjørn Mortensen, Head of Regulatory Affairs at Maersk Maritime Technology, could help ensure that some carriers are not tempted to commit fraud by opting not to use low sulphur fuel in regions where the new sulphur regulations are set to come into force. And Kirsten Brosbøl believes the alliance could make a difference "I absolutely believe that this will make a difference, when several major carriers join forces to call for increased control of shipping in national and international waters. Denmark is already working toward making all countries perform controls to ensure that shipping complies with the new sulphur regulation, so this is certainly going to benefit us. I look forward to hearing the alliance's proposals on how to make sure that the new sulphur regulations are respected by everyone. I also hope the alliance can help put a greener shipping industry on the global agenda." (SHIPPING NEWS)

RECIPE OF WEEK

Baby eggplants stuffed

Ingredients:

6 baby eggplants washed, stalk trimmed and partially slit into quarters
 2 tsps coriander powder
 1 tsp cumin powder
 1/2 tsp turmeric powder
 1/2 tsp red chilli powder
 3 tbsps grated dessicated coconut
 1 tsp very finely chopped garlic
 Small marble-sized lump of tamarind soaked in a small bowl of warm water
 3/4 tsp black mustard seeds
 6-8 curry leaves
 2 dry red chillies
 Salt to taste
 3-4 tbsps vegetable/ canola/ sunflower cooking oil
 Chopped fresh coriander to garnish

Preparation:

Put the coriander, cumin, turmeric, red chilli powders, coconut and chopped garlic in a bowl and mix. Squeeze the tamarind that has been soaked in the warm water so as to remove all the pulp from it and into the water. Strain and throw away the pith. Add this tamarind pulp to the spice mix a little at a time to get a thick paste. Add salt to taste and mix well. Fill the slits in the eggplants with this spice paste. Keep aside. Heat the oil in a pan (on a medium flame) till hot. Now add the mustard seeds, dry red chillies and curry leaves and cook till spluttering stops. Now add the eggplants and gently stir. Cook till the eggplants are done. Stir occasionally but do it gently so as to avoid knocking the filling out of the eggplants. Garnish with chopped fresh coriander and serve with plain white rice.

SAFETY NEWS

Emergency exit cuts like a knife

During an engine room fire drill, the crew practised an evacuation through the emergency escapes. After successfully exiting via the escape hatchway, the team leader instructed a rating to operate the external hand-wheel to ensure the free opening of the hatch lid for emergency entry purposes. The rating attempted to rotate the handwheel with all his strength in order to overcome the residual resistance of the securing dogs below. The dogs released with a jerk causing the wheel to turn freely. Due to the sudden absence of resistance, the rating's right hand

shot past the sharp bottom edge of the housing lid, which inflicted a deep gash near the knuckle. Crew members immediately gave first aid, applying pressure on the wound to stop the bleeding. The victim was escorted to the ship's hospital where the wound was cleaned, dressed with antibiotic powder and tightly bandaged.

Contributing factors:

The faulty design of the hand-wheel housing lid, with its sharp edges and wheel rim located very close to edge of housing cover. The hasty and vigorous operation of hand-wheel under the prevailing pressure of an ongoing emergency drill. The sudden release of securing dogs.

The absence of gloves (normally not a requirement for emergencies or drills).

Corrective actions

The incident was discussed at a special stand-down safety meeting held after the incident. An injury report was sent to management with a corrective action plan; a rubber strip was permanently glued to the sharp bottom edge of hand-wheel housing lid and a warning note was stencilled on the underside of lid.



We celebrated Cpt Kumars Birthday on 27 May 2014. Wishing him all the best.....

In the month of May we have taken over chemical tanker

GAGASAN JOHOR



On 28 May we celebrated Neptune family day @ Sentosa



It was Indeed a family fun with staff and kids.....