

Greek premier vows to cut back austerity

BY ALEXANDRA ZAVIS

Alexis Tsipras, leader of the far-left Syriza party, was sworn in Monday as Greek prime minister, setting the stage for a showdown with creditors over painful budget cuts and tax increases that could have potential ripple effects across the European Union.

Tsipras has vowed to renegotiate the austerity measures demanded by European leaders in exchange for a \$270-billion lifeline that has kept Greece's economy afloat since 2010. His party's sweep to power is being closely watched across the region, where frustration is building among voters over policies that many blame for years of recession and relentless unemployment.

Tsipras, a youthful and charismatic figure long seen as a political outsider, has called for a write-down of Greece's nearly \$360-billion public debt to allow more government spending, which he says would stimulate growth and create jobs in a country where more than 25% are unemployed. He also has pledged to raise the minimum wage, reverse pension and welfare cuts and rehire thousands of laid-off public sector employees.

"Greece is leaving behind the destructive austerity, fear and authoritarianism," Tsipras, 40, told a crowd of cheering supporters late Sunday. "It is leaving behind five years of humiliation and pain."

European leaders moved swiftly to damp hopes of debt forgiveness, although they said they might consider giving Greece more time to repay its loans.

[See Greece, A4]



SAURABH DAS Associated Press

INDIAN Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Obama pledged to ease hurdles that have prevented their nations from mining what Obama called "so much untapped potential" in their economic relationship.

White House places hope in India

The rapport between Obama and Narendra Modi is seen as a key that could open door to better relations.

BY CHRISTI PARSONS, SHASHANK BENGALI AND KATHLEEN HENNESSEY

NEW DELHI — First came a military band riding camels draped in bright pompoms and tiny mirrors. A float carried a giant, snapping crab.

Then the Russian-made tanks rolled by, and Russian-manufactured helicopters flew overhead.

India's Republic Day parade Monday was both an illustration of its culture and a demonstration of its standing in the world, and taking it all in was President Obama, who had accepted a personal invitation from Prime Minister Narendra Modi to attend.

After years of chilly relations between their countries, the White House is hoping that the growing warmth between the men will turn into a more cooperative relationship between their governments.

The Soviet-style military pageantry illustrated the awkwardness that remains. Even as Modi tries to edge closer to the U.S., India's traditional orientation remains strong. During a side-by-side news conference over the weekend, Obama criticized Russian President Vladimir Putin while Modi — who has called Putin "a leader of a great nation" — stood by silently.

Later, Indian Foreign Secretary Sujatha Singh responded tersely to a question about Obama's comments, saying, "You are aware of our strategic partnership with Russia."

There are other issues poised to challenge the still-burgeoning Obama-Modi relationship, principally breaking the barriers to trade with India's \$5-trillion economy and, perhaps highest on the Obama administration's agenda, brokering a major climate change deal.

U.S. officials acknowledge the hurdles. Despite a lot of overlapping interests between the U.S. and India, it has been hard to "get out of the old habits of mistrust," said Ben Rhodes, deputy national security advisor.

But the White House, which often downplays the effect of personal ties or friction between leaders, says it's looking to the relationship.

[See India, A4]

Missing signs of measles

The last homegrown cases were wiped out by 2000, and younger doctors may never have seen the disease.

BY ERYN BROWN, RONG-GONG LIN II AND ROSANNA XIA

It was spring of 2014. Dr. Julia Shaklee Sammons looked around and saw trouble.

An infectious disease specialist at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, she had read the headlines about new measles cases — including outbreaks in California and Ohio — and decided it was time to speak out.

Writing in the journal *Annals of Internal Medicine*, Sammons implored doctors to get more familiar with the disease. In two tightly packed pages, she described measles' potentially deadly effects and outlined how to diagnose it.

She included archival photos to

How to spot measles

Initial symptoms: Similar to other illnesses: a cough, runny nose, redness of eyes and a fever as high as 106 degrees.

Early sign: White lesions called Koplik spots can appear inside the cheek a day or two before the measles rash begins.

Rash: Usually appears about two to four days after the first symptoms, beginning at the head and spreading to the rest of the body. Health officials say patients are usually contagious during the four days before and the four days after the rash erupts.

Sources: The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, *Annals of Internal Medicine*

drive her point home: A tow-headed boy covered in an angry rash in 1963. A child's upper lip pulled back to display tiny white spots, an early sign of measles that sometimes can lurk unnoticed.

She knew how badly coaching was needed.

Like many younger physicians, Sammons, who graduated from medical school in 2006, trained when the disease was no longer an issue in the United States.

"I have not cared for a patient with measles," she said. "I hope I never have to."

A decades-long effort to immunize American children managed to wipe out the last homegrown cases in 2000. But the virus still can arrive here from other countries and spread.

[See Measles, A9]



SHASHANK BENGALI Los Angeles Times

DEVA REIDAS, 16, gets a tattoo of the name of his betrothed, whom he is to marry in April, as children watch in their western Nepalese village of Shihokhor.

COLUMN ONE

In Nepal, child grooms shoved into adulthood

BY SHASHANK BENGALI REPORTING FROM RUPANDEHI, NEPAL

The groom remembers his wedding day only in snapshots, like a dream that comes back in fragments.

A band played Hindi songs. He rode in a rented van, his family dancing alongside. Guests dined on rice, dal and potato fritters known as pakoras, a food for special occasions.

It looked, he was told, much like the wedding of his older brother, who was now

in Saudi Arabia working to feed his two children. The groom had already started to think about how he would support his own family.

The marriage had been arranged by his parents, so it wasn't until he lifted his bride's veil to apply the ceremonial vermilion powder that he saw her face for the first time. She looked pretty, he says now, recalling that her skin was a shade darker than his.

The next day, he went back to school. He was 9 years old.

Children grow up fast in western Nepal, a land of mud-walled farming villages

and golden paddy fields stretched beneath a low, dusky sky.

Boys not yet old enough to shave begin driving bullock carts, feeding the cows and helping in the fields. Girls watch over babies scarcely younger than themselves, carrying them to and fro in toothpick arms ringed with tiny bangles.

Before long, according to a custom that has been observed for generations, it is time for the children to marry.

Nepalese law prohibits marriage before age 18 — the family asked that the name

[See Nepal, A5]

Mattel's CEO resigns as toy maker struggles

BY SHAN LI

Mattel Inc.'s ground-losing tussle in the toy aisle has claimed a victim.

Bryan G. Stockton, the El Segundo company's chairman and chief executive, resigned after failing to turn around the toy maker.

Mattel had been hustling to revamp the business as classics Barbie and Fisher-Price were losing favor with young customers.

But its efforts have been unsuccessful. In the last three months of last year, which includes the crucial holiday-shopping season, sales slid 6% to \$2 billion, according to preliminary estimates released Monday.

Mattel's troubles come at a time when the toy industry is scrambling to evolve with changing consumer tastes. Parents are cutting back on buying traditional playthings as children ask for smartphones and tablet computers instead.

"Companies like Mattel, LeapFrog and Hasbro are facing challenges from technology," said Jason Moser, an analyst at the Motley Fool. "Physical toys are just maintaining a much shorter life span than ever before."

But Mattel's problems went deeper. Going into the holiday season, the toy maker offered few innovative products. Even American Girl, which has been a bright spot, reported a sales drop in the third quarter. In September, Mattel lost its long-held mantle as the world's biggest toy company to Dan-

ish rival Lego.

Mattel's innovation problem can partly be blamed on a bureaucratic culture that unwittingly stifled creativity — the lifeblood of toy firms. The 61-year-old Stockton, who earned \$15.5 million in 2013, has been described as smart and affable but lacking a leader's charisma.

"They got slow," said Ger-

[See Mattel, A9]



ANDREW KELLY EPA

SNOWY SILHOUETTES

The Brooklyn Bridge is mostly empty at the start of a potential record blizzard that began Monday. Walking was about the only way to get around New York, with driving banned and buses, subways and trains canceled. **NATION, A6**

Weather
Clearing and sunny.
L.A. Basin: 74/54. **B8**

