President U Thein Sein receives British Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs

Nay Pyi Taw, 5 Jan—President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Thein Sein received British Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs Mr William Jefferson Hague and party at the Credentials Hall of the Presidential Residence, here, at 2 pm today.

Also present at the call were Union Minister for Foreign Affairs U Wunna Maung Lwin, Union Minister for Industry U Soe Thein, Union Minister at the President Office U Thein Nyunt, Union Minister for Finance and Revenue U Hla Tun, Union Minister for National Planning and Economic Development U Tin Naing Thein and departmental heads.

The British delegation was accompanied by British Ambassador to the Republic of the Union Myanmar Mr Andrew Richard Heyn.

They focused on political developments in the two countries and mutual cooperation.—MNA

Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) Lt-Gen Soe Win meets the Chief of Army Staff of the Indian Army

Myanmar to cooperate with India, Turkey in cooperatives, livestock breeding

David Moyes unhappy with Everton’s performance after Bolton defeat
PERSPECTIVES
Friday, 6 January, 2012

Time and tide wait for no man

Time and tide wait for no man. We all should think of how we spend our times for our whole life, our families as well as our country and our society and how we serve the interests of people, country and family. The year 2011 is said to be a milestone for Myanmar. The country sees unprecedented reforms, which bring a good deal of benefits to people. To establish a good environment and a community, unity and cooperation of the citizens are a must. The already-prevailed circumstances are to be carried forward to the 2012. The people with different views and ideas are to actively engage in nation-building endeavors on the common ground. Because of time, diligence and unity of their people, developed countries achieved successes. To be able to keep abreast of those developed countries, our people are to effectively use precious times with the sense of patriotic spirit in order to hit the development goal in a short period of time.

Types of telephones exchanged daily

NAY PYI TAW, 5 Jan—For ensuring convenient communication of the people, Myanma Posts and Telecommunications exchanges CDMA fixed phone (01-72xxxx) and CDMA mobile phone (09-80xxxxx) with GSM, CDMA-450 and CDMA-800 telephones up to 31 January. Those wishing to exchange telephones must take endorsement on clearance of debt from the Accounts Department of MPT in Yangon and countryside and submit the applications.

To exchange mobile telephones, the applicants must submit telephone bill, original agreement, photo copy and original Citizenship Scrutiny Cards to MPT. The telephones are being exchanged at Economic Sections in States and Regions are being carried out at respective MPT offices.

MPT to install auto-telephones worth K 650,000

NAY PYI TAW, 5 Jan—Myanma Posts and Telecommunications has allowed the people to subscribe line auto-telephones as of 2 January. A subscriber can hire the auto-telephone from the enterprise at cost of K 650,000 initial installation charge. The user must pay K 300,000 for the first installment to the enterprise on the day the contract was signed. K 100,000 for the second installment within five days after two months when the contract has been signed. K 100,000 for the third installment within five days after four months. K 100,000 for the fourth installment within five days after six months and K 50,000 for the fifth within five days after eight months.

Arrangements have been made to install telephones after paying the first installment to the enterprise within three days.

For further information, enquire respective MPT branches.

Union Foreign Minister meets British Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs

Union Minister for Foreign Affairs U Wunna Maung Lwin receives Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs Mr William Jefferson Hague held talk at his office here at 10.15 am today.

Both sides discussed further cementing relationships and bilateral cooperation between the two countries.

The delegation members arrived in Nay Pyi Taw at 9.15 am today and they left for Yangon in the evening by a special flight.—MNA

Myanmar to cooperate with India, Turkey in cooperatives, livestock breeding

Indian Ambassador Dr Villur Sundararajan Seshadri called on Union Minister for Cooperatives and for Livestock and Fisheries U Ohn Myint at his office, here, at 8.30 am today.

They discussed cooperation in cooperatives and livestock breeding tasks between the two countries and sending of a delegation to milk and diary production industries in India.

The Union Minister also received Honorary Consul General Mr Ercan Aygiin and party of Turkey at his office at 9.40 am today. They discussed cooperation in cooperatives and livestock and fishery tasks between the two countries.

Also present at the calls were Deputy Minister Than Tun, and departmental heads.—MNA

CEO Classic Golf Tournament commences

NAY PYI TAW, 5 Jan—The CEO Classic Golf Tournament, jointly organized by Myanmar Golf Federation and Myanmar PGA with sponsorship of CEO Group, kicked off at Royal Mingaladon Golf & Country Club in Mingaladon Township this morning.

Chairman of Zaygabar Co Ltd Dr Khin Shwe, Director U Myint Hnin of CEO Group and Vice-President of Myanmar PGA and MGF, U Aung Kyi and U Min Thein formally opened the tournament.

After the first round, Zaw Zaw Latt (Srixon) led the professional golfers division with 67, followed by Illa Myo (APPO) with 68, Zaw Win Win (Srixon) and Nay Bala Win Myint with 69 each.

In the men’s amateur division, Aung Hsan Myo, Maung Maung Oo and Thein Naing Soe tied at first position with 69 each.

Take Fire Preventive Measures

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Iraq blasts kill at least 72, raise specter of civil war

BAGHDAD, 5 Jan—A wave of bombings targeting Shiites in Iraq killed 72 people on Thursday, deepening sectarian tensions that exploded just after the last American troops left the country in mid-December. The coordinated attacks targeting Shiites bore the hallmarks of Sunni insurgents linked to al-Qaeda, although there was no immediate claim of responsibility.

The bombings began early in the morning when explosions struck two Shiite neighborhoods in Baghdad, killing at least 27 people. A few hours later, a suicide attack hit Shiite pilgrims heading to the holy Shiite city of Karbala, killing 45, said provincial official Qassim al-Abadi. The explosions took place near Nasiriyah, about 200 miles southeast of Baghdad. Hospital officials confirmed the casualties.

The blasts occurred in the run-up to Arbaeen, a Shiite holy day which marks the end of 40 days of mourning that follow the anniversary of the death of Imam Hussein, a revered Shiite figure.

During this time, Shiite pilgrims from across Iraq make their way to Karbala, south of Baghdad.

Baghdad military spokesman Maj Gen Qassim al-Moussawi said the aim of the attacks is “to create turmoil among the Iraqi people.” He said it was too early to say who was behind the bombings.

India clears 950 million euro deal to procure 500 missiles from France

NEW DELHI, 5 Jan—India on Wednesday cleared a 950 million euro deal to procure 500 air-to-air missiles from a French firm for the Indian Air Force (IAF)’s Mirage 2000 aircraft fleet, reported Press Trust of India.

A Cabinet Committee on Security meeting chaired by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on Wednesday cleared the deal to procure 490 MICA missiles manufactured by French firm MBDA for 950 million euros, the report quoted Indian Defence Ministry sources as saying.

The missiles would be deployed on 51 Mirage 2000 aircraft, which are already undergoing upgrades at French facilities under a 1.47 billion euro deal signed earlier this year. Under the deal, MBDA would have to do offsets worth 30 percent of the deal meaning that they will have to invest to the tune of €155 million in India in exchange for the offsets.

The Defence Procurement Procedure mandated that foreign vendors bagging deals worth over three billion euros back in the Indian defense sector, according to officials.

The US undecided on inmate release for Taliban talks

WASHINGTON, 5 Jan—The United States said it has taken no decision to release prisoners held at Guantanamo Bay in order to boost negotiations aimed at ending the 10-year war with the Taliban in Afghanistan.

But State Department spokeswoman Victoria Nuland said Washington is “prepared to support” a proposed overseas Taliban office that backs an Afghan reconciliation process provided it meets US and Afghan standards.

She said the United States and Afghanistan seek true reconciliation based on the Taliban’s renouncing violence, cutting its ties with Al-Qaeda and embracing the Afghan constitution, which enshrines human rights.

“With regard to Guantanamo...no decisions have been made with regard to any releases,” Nuland told reporters. The United States has discussed with Taliban representatives the possibility of releasing or transferring some militants from Guantanamo in return for Taliban concessions, including its breaking with Al-Qaeda, a US official said.

No decisions have been made and the negotiations are still in the early phase, the official added.

The hardline Taliban announced on Tuesday that they had come to an “initial agreement with relevant sides including Qatar” to set up their first representative office outside Afghanistan.

The move is seen as a precursor to talks to end the bloody war between the Taliban and the US-backed government of President Hamid Karzai. It is the first time the militant group has publicly raised the prospect of a negotiated peace after more than a dozen years of fighting, always previously insisting they would not talk until all foreign troops had left Afghan soil.

Iraq landslide kills 25 in southern Philippines

MANILA, 5 Jan—A landslide buried dozens of people Thursday at a small-scale gold mining site in the southern Philippines, leaving at least 25 dead months after government officials warned miners that the mountain above them was guaranteed to crumble.

The landslide struck around 3 a.m. (2100 GMT Wednesday), when most residents were asleep. Aside from those already dead, more than 100 people were believed to be buried in the rubble in Napnapan village in Pantukan township, Compostela Valley provincial Gov Arturo Uy said.

Army Lt Col Camilo Ligayo said about 120 soldiers were heading to the area to help dig for survivors and bodies.

Environment and Natural Resources Secretary Ramon Paje said he had warned residents and local officials last year of a fissure on a ridge of the mountain that geologists said was “highly susceptible” to landslides that could occur anytime.

“We were absolute that it will give in,” he told The Associated Press. “It was a 100 percent warning. We told them it’s just a matter of time. This is it. This is what happened this morning.”

Thousands of poor Filipinos dig and pan for gold in the area, hoping to strike it rich despite the dangers of largely unregulated mining. The tunnels are often unstable and accidents are common.

Saul Pingroy, a local resident, told DZMM radio that he was sleeping in a house about 50 yards (metres) away from the landslide when he felt the ground shake and boulders falling on roofs. It wasn’t raining at the time, he added.

“The mountain itself was already sending a warning with falling rocks. That’s why we were woken up... and then it collapsed,” he said. “Big boulders and the ground from the mountain covered the area.”

Child bride’s torture renews Afghan rights worries

KABUL, 5 Jan—Just 15 years old, Sahar Gul has become the bruised and bloodied face of women’s rights in Afghanistan. The teenager’s bride’s eyes were swollen nearly shut as she was wheeled into the hospital after her arranged marriage. Blackened, she traced her fingers where her navel used to be.

According to officials in northeastern Baglan province, Gul’s in-laws kept her in a basement for six months, ripped her fingernails out, tortured her with hot irons and broke her fingers — all in an attempt to force her into prostitution. Police freed her after her uncle called authorities.

The horrific images, captured by television news cameras last week, sparked a flurry of condemnation. President Hamid Karzai set up a commission to investigate, and his health minister visited her bedside. Police arrested her in-laws, who denied abusing her. A warrant was issued for her husband, who serves in the Afghan army.

The case highlights both the problems and the progress of women 10 years after the Taliban’s fall. Gul’s egregious wounds and the horror of her situation underscore how many women still suffer shocking abuse. But the public outrage and the government’s response to it also show that the country is slowly changing.

“Let’s break the dead silence on women’s rights,” read the title of an editorial Wednesday in the Afghanistan Times.

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WASHINGTON, 5 Jan— Steep declines in fatal cases of four major cancers have led the drop in cancer deaths in the United States in the last several years, according to data by the American Cancer Society Wednesday. In all, more than a million deaths have been avoided since cancer deaths first began to decline at the start of the 1990s, said the Cancer Statistics 2012 report based on US government health data and statistical models. But while deaths from four major cancers—lung, colorectal, breast, and prostate—continued to drop in the past decade, other potentially lethal cancers have been on the rise, including throat and mouth cancers linked to human papillomavirus, a common sexually transmitted infection. Cancers of the pancreas, liver, thyroid, and kidney and melanoma of the skin have also been mounting over the past 10 years. Some of those may be tied to the obesity epidemic in the United States, as well as better early detection practices for certain cancers, the report suggested.

For the most recent four years of the study, 2004-2008, overall cancer incidence rates declined 0.6 percent per year for men and were stable in women. Cancer death rates for that period dropped 1.8 percent per year in men and 1.6 percent annually in women.—Internet

Children in child care get little exercise

CINCINNATI, 5 Jan— Three-fourths of US preschool-age children are in child care centres with little opportunity for recommended levels of physical activity, researchers say.

Kristen A Copeland of Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Centre and colleagues said the study involved nine focus groups with 49 child care providers —55 percent African-American— assembled from 34 centres from the inner city, suburban, Head Start and Montessori in Cincinnati.

Three researchers independently analyzed verbatim transcripts for these centres.

The study, published in the journal Pediatrics, identified three main barriers to children’s physical activity in child care — injury concerns, financial and a focus on academics.

Stricter licensing codes intended to reduce children’s playground injuries have resulted in playgrounds less physically challenging and interesting, while at the same time, some parents, who also require, request staff to restrict playground participation for their children, Copeland said.

Copeland also said since child care centers operate on limited income their ability to install abundant playground equipment is also limited.—Internet

First Lady Michelle Obama leads an exercise demonstration for preschool students at the Royal Castle Child Development Centre in New Orleans on 1 Nov, 2011, to promote her ‘Let’s Move!’ campaign for healthy lifestyles among children.—Internet

Hair loss, more common among men

WASHINGTON, 5 Jan—Hair loss, more common among men, was the most frequent issue found by a team of dermatologists who conducted 18,000 online consultations a day in a survey. The National Health, Lung and Blood Institute says many factors can lead to hair loss, including:
- Headache or fatigue
- Heart failure or asthma
- High blood pressure
- Hyperthyroidism, the term for an overactive thyroid
- Heartburn
- Menopause and associated hot flashes.
- Other sleep disorders, including sleep-related breathing problems or restless legs syndrome.

Growing to meet demand

WASHINGTON, 6 Jan— Apple announced on Wednesday that iPhone 4S, its latest smartphone product, will be available in China and 21 other countries as of 13 Jan.—Xinhua

Apple iPhone 4S to hit China market in mid January

SAN FRANCISCO, 5 Jan— Apple announced on Wednesday that iPhone 4S, its latest smartphone product, will be available in China and 21 other countries as of 13 Jan. “Customers response to our products in China has been off the charts,” Tim Cook, Apple’s chief executive officer, said in a statement.

He noted that with the launch in China next week, iPhone 4S will be available in over 90 countries and regions, making it Apple’s fastest iPhone rollout ever.

The iPhone 4S was launched in October last year. Apple is scheduled to report in 2012 first fiscal quarter earnings on 24 Jan. As one of Apple’s biggest revenue sources, the iPhone 4S sales are seen key to the results. In the last quarter, Apple missed projections from the Wall Street as customers had been awaiting the launch of iPhone 4S.

Last October, Apple announced that it had sold more than four million units of iPhone 4S, just three days after the launch. Analysts have been giving rosy estimates on iPhone 4S sales. For the first quarter after it hit the stores, saying that the company could have sold more than 10 million iPhones during the period. The iPhone 4S, which looks the same as the iPhone 4, has major hardware upgrade inside, including a faster chip, a higher-resolution camera and Siri intelligent voice control.—Xinhua

Automakers see slower US sales growth in 2012

DEERFIELD, 5 Jan— US auto sales rose 10 percent in 2011 but major automakers forecast a slowdown in growth this year because of weak job growth and risks to the American economy from a slowdown in Europe.

Auto sales have been a relative bright spot in the economy since late summer with cash-strapped consumers forced to buy to replace cars that have been on the road for a decade or more.

December US auto sales rose 9 percent to hit an annualized sales rate of 13.6 million vehicles, in line with Wall Street expectations. Full-year 2011 sales totaled 12.8 million vehicles compared with 11.6 million in 2010.

Auto sales are tracked as an early indicator of consumer spending, and analysts said December results were boosted by lower interest rates and a greater selection of vehicles on dealer lots. On a full-year basis, the biggest winners were Chrysler, bouncing back from crisis under the control of Fiat SpA, and Korean powerhouse Hyundai-Kia. Both posted a 26 percent gain in annual sales.

The biggest losers were Toyota Motor Corp and Honda Motor Co, which both saw US sales drop 7 percent after the March earthquake in Japan shut down production and left dealer lots short of popular cars like the Camry and Accord.

Most major automakers forecast 2012 sales between 13.5 million and 14 million vehicles, implying annual growth of 2-2.5 percent per year in men and were stable in women. Cancer death rates for that period dropped 1.8 percent per year in men and 1.6 percent annually in women.—Internet

CensusReporter.net

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China’s yuan hits new high on 2012 first trading day

BEIJING, 5 Jan—The Chinese currency Renminbi, or the yuan, rose 8 basis points to a record high of 6.3001 against the US dollar on Wednesday, according to the China Foreign Exchange Trading System.

In China’s foreign exchange spot market, the yuan is allowed to rise or fall by 0.5 percent from the central parity rate each trading day.

The central parity rate of the yuan against the US dollar is based on a weighted average of prices before the opening of the market each business day.—Xinhua

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The central parity rate of the yuan against the US dollar is based on a weighted average of prices before the opening of the market each business day.—Xinhua

Oil prices rose amid upbeat economic data, euro zone concerns

NEW YORK, 5 Jan— Oil prices continued to rise on Wednesday after a strong rally on previous trading day, as US economic data provided solid support. US Commerce Department said that factory orders in Nov rose 1.8 percent, lifted by strong aircraft orders. The upbeat data helped to stimulate investors’ confidence on the US economic recovery and supported the oil price.

However, news from Europe added new concerns about the eurozone. Italy and Spain, who are expected to be bailed out, were dumped in European stock market as Spanish authorities are considering applying for loans from the International Monetary Fund and Europe’s bailout fund. The composite PurchasingManagers Index for the euro zone released on Wednesday rose to a three-month high of 48.3 in December. However, the figure was still in the contraction territory, suggesting weakness of the manufacturing activities in euro zone.—Xinhua
Lizard tails inspire more agile robots

BERKELEY, 5 Jan—Researchers in robotics say they’re looking at leaping lizards and dinosaurs as sources of inspiration in designing robots with “tails” that are more agile. University of California, Berkeley, researchers studied how lizards manage to leap successfully even when they slip and stumble, swinging their tail upward to prevent a forward pitch that could send them head-over-heels into a tree.

Agile theropod dinosaurs like the velociraptor may have used their tails as stabilizers to prevent forward pitch researchers said. The scientists added a tail to a robotic car they named Tailbot and discovered both robots and lizards have to adjust the angle of their tail just right to counteract the effect of the stumble.

Given an actively controlled tail, even robots can make a leap and remain upright, the found. “We showed for the first time that lizards swing their tail up or down to counteract the rotation of their body, keeping them stable,” the first time that lizards swing their tail up or down to counteract the effect of the stumble.

A red-headed Agama lizard stands beside Tailbot, a simple car equipped with an actively controlled tail that can quickly right itself in midair even when dropped nose-down.—INTERNET

Parasitic fly could explain bee die-off

FRESNO, 5 Jan—Northern California scientists say they have found a possible explanation for a honey bee die-off that has decimated hives around the world. A parasitic fly that hijacks the bees’ bodies and causes them to abandon hives.

Scientists say the fly deposits its eggs into the bee’s abdomen, causing the infected bee to exhibit zombie-like behavior by walking around in circles with no apparent sense of direction. The bee leaves the hive at night and dies shortly thereafter. The symptoms mirror colony collapse disorder, in which all the adult honey bees in a colony suddenly disappear.

The discovery could lead to increased concern, because bees pollinate about a third of the United States’ food supply. Its presence is especially alarming in California, the nation’s top producer of fruits and vegetables, where bees play an essential role in the $2 billion almond industry and other crops.

The latest study, published Tuesday in the scientific journal PLoS ONE, points to the parasitic fly as the new threat to honey bees. It’s another step in ongoing research to find the cause of the disease.

Researchers haven’t been able to pin down an exact cause of colony collapse or find a way to prevent it. Researchers are far from understanding all of the factors that cause colony collapse disorder, but they’re starting to put together a puzzle.

Interaction among the parasitic and multiple pathogens could be a possible factor in colony collapse, according to the latest study by researchers at San Francisco State University. An Apocephalus borealis fly implants its eggs into the abdomen of a honey bee.—INTERNET

Invasive plants said climate change risk

AMHERST, 5 Jan—Climate change will boost US demand for imported drought- and heat-tolerant plants, at the risk of raising imports of more invasive species, researchers say.

Invasive species could overrun native ecosystems in the same way kudzu, Oriental bittersweet and other plant species have in the past, researchers at the University of Massachusetts said.

The kudzu invasion of the past few decades saw whole forests overgrown in the Southeast, and Oriental bittersweet, if left unchecked, shades and chokes out native trees, bushes and shrubs along streams, forest and field edges, they said.

Ecologist Bethany Bradley and colleagues recommend US authorities adopt proactive management practices, especially pre-emptive screening of nursery stock before new plants are imported, to prevent such an explosion of new invasives, a UMA release said Wednesday.

The combination of a parasitic, pathogens and other stressors could cause die-off, lead investigator John Muffato said. The Apocephalus borealis fly serves as a reservoir to harbor pathogens — honey bees from parasitic-infected hives tested positive for deformed wing virus and other pathogens, the study found.—INTERNET

Samsung’s new Galaxy Ace Plus announced, looks very familiar

SEOUL, 5 Jan—Not content with enraging Apple with their alleged iPhone 4-like designs, Samsung has now taken a shine to the previous model.

We can see it, you can see it and it’s fairly likely the lawyers can see it too. We’re talking about the distinct design similarity between Samsung’s new Galaxy Ace Plus and the Apple iPhone 3G/GS.

Yes, the cameras may be in a different spot, but the front and side views along with that grey surround make it uncannily reminiscent of the previous iPhone. Well, we’re sure Samsung knows what it’s doing, so let’s move on and take a look at the spec of the new device.

Samsung has ever-so slightly increased the screen size, from 3.5-inches to 3.65-inches, but has left the resolution the same at 320 x 480. Next is a slight boost in power, with the Ace Plus using a 1GHz processor instead of the old 800MHz chip.

Like its predecessor, it uses a 5-megapixel camera with an LED flash and Google Android 2.3 Gingerbread, but adds Bluetooth 3.0 and Samsung’s range of apps and services, such as the ChatON service.—INTERNET

Google adds more IBM patents to tech arsenal

SAN FRANCISCO, 5 Jan—Google on Wednesday confirmed that it has added more IBM patents to its technology arsenal as smartphone rivals increasingly battle in courts over innovations.—INTERNET

Google has been confirmed that it has added more IBM patents to its technology arsenal as smartphone rivals increasingly battle in courts over innovations. Some of the patents that HTC got from Google had belonged to Motorola Mobility, which Google is buying for $2.5 billion in cash. Motorola Mobility’s trove of patents was a key motivation for Google, which is keen to defend Android.

The California Internet powerhouse has been buying patentsoser claims infringement of patented technology.

The Internet giant said it has smartphone intellectual property clashes with Apple in a lawsuit alleging infringement of its smartphone technology arsenal. Google has sued HTC and other smartphone makers using

Samsung has given its popular Galaxy Ace an update, releasing the Galaxy Ace Plus. Features include a larger screen, more powerful processor and a very familiar design.—INTERNET

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Google has been strengthening its patent portfolio as the fight for dominance in the booming smartphone market increasingly involves lawsuits claiming infringement of patented technology.

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“Our acquisition of Motorola will increase competition by strengthening Google’s patent portfolio, which will enable us to better protect Android from anti-competitive threats from Microsoft, Apple and other companies,” Google chief executive Larry Page said when the Motorola Mobility buy was announced.
Princess William’s wife Catherine takes on royal roles

The official titles Duke and Duchess of Cambridge. The Duchess’s first patronages and her volunteer position reflect Her Royal Highness’s personal interests in the arts, the promotion of outdoor activity, and supporting people who are in need of all ages, especially young children,” her office St James’s Palace said in a statement.

“The Duchess’s new roles reflect Her Royal Highness’s wish to support the Royal Family’s work in highlighting important causes in the charitable and voluntary sector and the arts. The Duchess has chosen to support organizations that complement the charitable work already undertaken by her husband. The statement said she would make a number of public and private visits across Britain in the coming months to the organizations she had chosen.

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Police nab Mexican drug boat north of LA, arrest 10

Los Angeles, 5 Jan— Police seized a Mexican motorboat loaded with more than a ton of marijuana north of Los Angeles early on Wednesday and arrested 10 people, the latest in a growing number of seizures as smugglers seek to ferry drugs north to market by sea, authorities said.

US Border Patrol agents found the 27-foot (8-metre) vessel packed with numerous bales of marijuana on the coast of Ventura County shortly before dawn, the US Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency said in a news release. Authorities also seized two vehicles located in the landing area believed to be linked to the smuggling attempt.

Four of those detained arrived on board the boat and the other six arrested were found in the landing area, the agency said. As security has tightened in recent years along the United States’ porous border with Mexico, authorities have increasingly taken to smuggling drugs and illegal immigrants north to the United States by sea.

From January to October 2011, authorities recorded 26 maritime smuggling incidents in the greater Los Angeles area, including seven in Ventura County. Since then there have been 10 further cases, including two in Ventura County and one in Santa Barbara County. The US Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency said it had seized more than a ton of marijuana north of Los Angeles early on Wednesday and arrested 10 people, the latest in a growing number of seizures as smugglers seek to ferry drugs north to market by sea, authorities said.

Army official says Rwandan Hutu rebels kill 26 in DR Congo

KINSHASA, 5 Jan—At least 26 people have been killed and 13 wounded so far this year in two attacks by Rwandan Hutu rebels in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, an army official said Wednesday.

The attacks — blamed on the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) — took place on the night of 3 January in the Shabanda area in Sud Kivu Province.

“The first attack targeted the leadership of Luyuyu and killed 18 civilians while six houses were burned,” Colonel Sylvain Ekengbe, a spokesman for military operations in Nord and Sud Kivu, told AFP.

“The second attack in the town of Ngolombo left eight dead.” Overall 13 people had been injured, he said. A rights group cited by Radio Okapi said that in total 40 people had died.

Ekengbe said the toll may indeed be higher, saying that “men on the ground tell us that there are more than 26 killed and 13 wounded.”

The rebels are accused of having taken part in the 1994 genocide in neighbouring Rwanda, where 800,000 were killed according to the UN. They are also accused of committing atrocities, including rapes, murders and looting, especially against civilians.

Bangladeshi gets jail term over Facebook status

Dhaka, 5 Jan—Bangladesh’s high court on Wednesday sentenced a university lecturer to six months in jail after he posted a Facebook status wishing for the death of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, a lawyer said.

Ruhel Khandakar, who was sentenced in absentia because he is studying in Australia, posted the comments after the death of Bangladesh’s most famous filmmaker Tarq Masud in a road accident last year.

“Tareq Masud died as a result of government giving licence to unqualified drivers. Many die, why does not Sheikh Hasina die?” the status said, according to court officials. The status, which Khandakar posted from Australia, has since been deleted.

In August, Khandakar was summoned to appear in court and explain the comments but he reportedly failed to attend and so was sentenced for contempt, deputy attorney general Alfar Hossein told AFP.

The court directed Khandakar’s university employers to take action against him according to law, which could result in him losing his job.

Official says Reno air races on despite deadly crash

RENO, 5 Jan—Officials are moving ahead with plans for this year’s National Championship Air Races despite a tragic crash at September’s event that killed 11 and injured more than 70, the head of the Reno Air Races said Wednesday. Association President Mike Houghton said it’s “way too early” to say whether there will be changes to the format of the event scheduled for 12–16 Sept at Reno-Stead Airport.

But he said the association is enlisting a panel of experts, including former National Transportation Safety Board Chairman Jim Hall, to help ensure its safety.

“In short, we’re moving ahead,” Houghton told more than 100 supporters, who cheered the announcement at the Reno-Sparks Convention Centre. “We are absolutely committed to doing everything we need to do to hold this historic event in 2012.”

Race officials said they must secure a number of permits to make sure the competition happens. But as of now, tickets for the 10th event are on sale. The event dates for the 2011 races — in which a modified World War II-era racing aircraft climbed, rolled and then abruptly plunged nose-first into spectators — led to calls that officials consider ending the event, the only one of its kind in the country. The NTSB has scheduled a hearing 10 Jan to examine the safety of air shows and air races in general.

The Reno group’s directors said in a 28 Dec letter on their website that they are “committed to preserving this unique and historic aviation event” that began four decades ago.
Foreign Heads of State send felicitations to President U Thein Sein

Nay Pyi Taw, 5 Jan— The following are messages of felicitations from foreign heads of State to President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Thein Sein, on the occasion of the 64th Anniversary Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

From Truong Tan Sang, President of Socialist Republic of Vietnam

Your Excellency,

On the occasion of the 64th Anniversary of the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, on behalf of the State and people of Vietnam and in my own name, I have the great honour to extend to Your Excellency and the people of Myanmar the warmest congratulations.

I would like to congratulate the people of Myanmar for their great achievements recorded over the recent years and firmly believe that under your talented leadership, Myanmar shall continue to record greater achievements in their course of national construction and defence.

We are very delighted at the relations of long friendship and fine cooperation between our countries which have been continuously nourished over the past decades by generations of leaders and peoples of our countries. I firmly believe that with the contributions of our generation, these relations will be more fruitful, for the benefit of our people and for the peace, cooperation and prosperous development in the region and the world over.

On this occasion, I wish Your Excellency the best of health, happiness and many successes in your noble position.

From Nguyen Tan Dzung, Prime Minister of Socialist Republic of Vietnam

Your Excellency,

On behalf of the Government and People of Vietnam and in my own name, I would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations and best wishes to you and the people of Myanmar on this joyous occasion of the 64th Anniversary of the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

I would like to congratulate the people of Myanmar for their great achievements recorded over the recent years and hope that under your leadership, Myanmar shall continue to record greater achievements in their course of national construction and defence.

May the traditional relations of friendship and the fine cooperation between Viet Nam and Myanmar be further strengthened and broadened for the interests of our two peoples and for the sake of peace, stability, cooperation and development in the region and the world over.

We are very delighted at the outcomes of our recent official visit to Myanmar and attending the 4th Greater Mekong Summit in Myanmar. We firmly believe that with these outcomes, the existing relations of our countries will be more fruitful, for the benefit of our people and for the sake of peace, cooperation and prosperous development in the region and the world over.

On this occasion, I wish Your Excellency the best of health, happiness and many successes in your noble position.

From Kim Yong Nam, President, Supreme People’s Assembly of DPRK

Your Excellency,

I warmly congratulate you, your government people on 64th anniversary of the independence of Myanmar.

I also sincerely wish you, your government and people greater successes in the future work for independent development and prosperity of the country.

I take this opportunity to express my conviction that friendly and cooperative relations between the DPRK and Myanmar will further expand and develop in common interests and desires of the two peoples.

From Raul Castro Ruz, President of the Councils of State and of Ministers of the Republic of Cuba

Your Excellency,

On the occasion of the National Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar; I extend to you cordial congratulations and ratify to you the interest in enhancing the friendly relations between our countries.

I reiterate my assurances of my highest consideration.

From Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran

Excellency,

I would like sincerely to congratulate Your Excellency, the government and the nation of your country the National Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

I am hopeful that due to our common political will and desire and in line with the interests of the nations of Iran and Myanmar our friendly relation and cooperation will be further expanded and strengthened.

I pray to the Almighty God for Your Excellency’s success and good health, and for happiness and prosperity of the government and the nation of Myanmar.

From Field Marshal Mohammed Hussein Tantawi, Chairman of the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces, Arab Republic of Egypt

Dear Excellency,

It gives me great pleasure to extend to Your Excellency my most heartfelt congratulations on behalf of the people and government of the Arab Republic of Egypt on the occasion of the 64th Anniversary of the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, wishing to you all success and the friendly people of Myanmar more progress and prosperity under your wise leadership.

On this occasion allow me to express my full confidence that the ongoing positive developments witnessed in the Republic of the Union of Myanmar will continue towards the transfer to democracy, economic reforms, national reconciliations, and open policy to guarantee evermore development and stability for the friendly people of Myanmar.

I would like to seize this opportunity to praise the distinguished historic relations between Egypt and Myanmar since 1953, and further to assert our political will to enhance and develop the ties of cooperation for the common interest of our two countries and people.

From Norodom Sihamoni, King of Cambodia, Excellency,

On the auspicious occasion of the 64th Anniversary of Independence of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, the Royal Government and the people of Cambodia join me in conveying our warmest congratulations to Your Excellency, the Government and the people of Myanmar. We would also like to extend our best wishes for Your Excellency’s good health and happiness as well as for the peace, progress and prosperity of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and the people.

May I also express my confidence that the traditional relations of friendship and close cooperation between our two countries will continue to grow stronger and deeper for the benefit of our two Buddhist peoples.

Please accept, Mr President, the assurances of my highest consideration.

From Islamul Akka Sena Padil Techo Hun Sen, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia, Excellency,

On behalf of the Royal Government and people of Cambodia, I have the great pleasure to extend to Your Excellency and through you to the Government and people of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, my heartfelt congratulations on the auspicious occasion of the 64th Anniversary of the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

I strongly believe that the relations of good friendship and close cooperation between our two countries will be further developed and deepened in the years to come for the mutual interests of our two peoples as well as the whole ASEAN family.

May I take this opportunity to extend to Your Excellency my best wishes for your personal good health and greater success in the fulfillment of your noble tasks and for the prosperity of the people of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration and my best wishes for a prosperous and Happy New Year 2012.

Public notice for remonstration

1. Kayin Democratic Party, headquartered at No.254, Bogyoke Road, No.9 ward (Yekyaw), Hpa-an Township, Kayin State, applied for registration as a political party on 5-1-2012 in accord with Political Parties Registration Law Section 5. In applying for its registration, the party has

Flag of Kayin Democratic Party

submitted its name, flag and seal to be used as mentioned hereunder:

1. Kayin Democratic Party

Sa/ Win Ko
Secretary
Union Election Commission

Cash and kind provided to fire victims

Yangon, 5 Jan—Yangon Region Fire Relief Camp Control Committee is rebuilding 100 houses for those who lost homes and damages in the outburst of fire in Kutohseik Ward of Mingala Taungnyunt Township. At present, some families of fire survivors are living at the already-rebuilt and-repaired houses.

At the control centre at Maw Lay Lay Mingalayama Monastery in Mingala Taungnyunt Township, Deputy Commissioner U Hlaing Soe Thant and party of Yangon East District provided 160 kg of foods and personal goods and K70,000 each to each fire victim family for the first time. —MNA
Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker receives British Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs

NAY PYI TAW, 5 Jan—Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann received a British Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs Mr. William Jefferson Hague at Zabuthiri Hall of Pyithu Hluttaw Building here at 1:00 pm today.

The meeting concentrated on Myanmar current affairs of transition into democracy, arrangements for holding a fair by-election, and progress of cooperation tasks with national transition into democracy, arrangements for holding a fair by-election, and progress of cooperation tasks with national transition into democracy, arrangements for holding a fair by-election, and progress of cooperation tasks with national transition into democracy, arrangements for holding a fair by-election, and progress of cooperation tasks with

Also present at the call with Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker were Pyithu Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U Nanda Kyaw Swa, Pyithu Hluttaw Committee Chairmen and Secretaries. The British delegation was accompanied by British Ambassador to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Mr. Andrew Richard Heyn.—MNA

Football tune-up match held between HEDs

NAY PYI TAW, 5 Jan—A tune-up match between football teams of Higher Education Departments (Upper Myanmar) and (Lower Myanmar) was held at Nay Pyi Taw FC football ground, here, at 3 pm today.

Among the spectators were Union Minister for Education Dr. Mya Aye, Union Minister for Hotels and Tourism and for Sports U Tin Hsan, Deputy Ministers for Education U Aye Kyu and U Bu Shwe, Deputy Minister for Information U Soe Win, Deputy Minister for Sports U Aye Myint Kyu.

The sports team representing Myanmar universities stood third in the 14th Asian Universities Games held in Thailand in 2010. The tune-up match was aimed for emerging outstanding athletes to take part in the 15th ASEAN Universities Games to be held in Laos in 2012. In the tune-up match, HED (Lower Myanmar) team beat its opponent with a 1-0 win.

After the match, Union Minister Dr Mya Aye and deputy ministers spoke words of encouragement to the players.

Mid-year Myanmar Gems Emporium 2011 reviewed

NAY PYI TAW, 5 Jan—The Central Committee for Organizing the Myanmar Gems Emporium reviewed the Mid-year Myanmar Gems Emporium 2011 at the meeting hall of Mani Yadana Jade Hall, here, at 2 pm today.

Patron of the Central Committee Union Minister U Thein Htay Htak expressed the desire of the gem merchants to attend international fairs with the gem merchants abroad to meet the international standards. Member of the Central Committee Deputy Minister U Htay Aung and members of the Panel of Patrons of the Central Committee Union Minister for Transport U Nyan Tun Aung gave advices.

In his remarks, Patron Union Minister U Thein Htak stressed the need to meet the requirements of the international Gem Emporiums. The mid-year Gem Emporium 2011 was successfully organized at Mani Yadana Jade Hall, here, from 24 December 2011 to 3 January 2012. A plan is underway to sell the polished jade lots in the emporiums, he said. He urged those present to make concerted efforts for holding the emporium to meet the international standards.

Also present at the meeting were chairmen and secretaries of the work committee, vice-chairmen of the Myanmar Gems Entrepreneurs Association and officials. The Mid-year Myanmar Gems Emporium 2011 was successfully organized at Mani Yadana Jade Hall, here, from 24 December 2011 to 3 January 2012. A plan is underway to hold the 49th Myanmar Gems Emporium soon.—MNA

Members of German Federal Parliament calls on Chairman of Pyithu Hluttaw Planning and Financial Development Committee

NAY PYI TAW, 5 Jan—Chairman of Pyithu Hluttaw Planning and Financial Development Committee U Soe Thu received Members of German Federal Parliament Mr. Jurgen Klimke and Dr. Bijan Djir-Savai at No. 1 meeting hall of Hluttaw Building here at 4:00 pm today.

It was attended by the committee members. The meeting focused on bilateral cooperation between the two Hluttaws of Myanmar and Germany.—MNA

Dy Construction Minister meets staff

YANGON, 5 Jan—Deputy Minister for Construction U Soe Tint met service personnel at the meeting hall of Storage and Distribution (Yankin) of Public Work, Yangon Region on 2 January. He called for systematic storage and distribution of materials, fire drill for fire security measures, serving duties in line with civil service ethics and minimizing losses. —MNA
NAY PYI TAW, 5 Jan—A goodwill delegation led by the Chief of Army Staff of the Indian Army General Vijay Kumar Singh, PVSM, AVSM, YSM, ADC and wife Chief of Army Staff of Indian Army arrived at Nay Pyi Taw Airport here this afternoon. They were welcomed at the Airport by Commander of Nay Pyi Taw Command Maj-Gen Maung Maung Aye, Maj-Gen Maung Maung Ohn of Commander-in-Chief’s Office (Army), Indian Military Attaché Colonel Rajesh Kumar and officials.

NAY PYI TAW, 5 Jan—A ceremony to extend a welcome to the Chief of Army Staff of the Indian Army General Vijay Kumar Singh, PVSM, AVSM, YSM, ADC by Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) Lt-Gen Soe Win, took place at Zeyathiri Beikman here this afternoon. Lt-Gen Soe Win cordially welcomed the Chief of Army Staff of the Indian Army in front of Zeyathiri Beikman. After that, they took the salute of the guard of honour and inspected it.

The Deputy Commander-in-Chief introduced Lt-Gen Hla Hay Win of Commander-in-Chief’s Office and senior military officers to the Chief of Army Staff of the Indian Army. And the Chief of Army Staff of the Indian Army also introduced Indian delegation members to the Deputy Commander-in-Chief.

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Both sides discussed matters related to mutual relationships between the armed forces of the two countries.

MNA

Deputy Commander-in-Chief Lt-Gen Soe Win meets Chief of Army Staff of Indian Army General Vijay Kumar Singh

Deputy Commander-in-Chief Lt-Gen Soe Win meets Chief of Army Staff of Indian Army General Vijay Kumar Singh, PVSM, AVSM, YSM, ADC.

Deputy Commander-in-Chief Lt-Gen Soe Win and Chief of Army Staff of Indian Army General Vijay Kumar Singh, PVSM, AVSM, YSM, ADC taking salute of the guard of honour.—MNA

MNA

Kayin Democratic Party applies for registration as political party

NAY PYI TAW, 5 Jan—Union Election Commission (UEC) has been scrutinizing and granting application for registrations as political party. Kayin Democratic Party applied for registration as a political party to the UEC on 5-1-2012.

MNA

Ayeyawady Region Chief Minister attends opening of library in Pathein

NAY PYI TAW, 5 Jan—Chief Minister of Ayeyawady Region U Thein Aung yesterday attended the opening ceremony of Naungyoe Library in the compound of Pathein District General Administration Department. The Chief Minister donated books and publications. Chairman of Region Hluttaw National Races Affairs Committee Daw Khin Saw Mu and Head of Region Settlement and Land Records Department U Kyaw Htin, books, Naungyoe Family K 1 million, townships of the district K 1 million, Pathein Township Administrator U Chit Ko Ko and wellwishers books through the deputy commissioner of Pathein District.

Region Minister for Finance and Revenue U Win Ko Ko, Deputy Commissioner U Aye Han and U Aung Kha of Naungyoe Family formally opened the library.

MNA
Detroit police stations to severely cut public hours

DETROIT, 5 Jan.—Detroit, which has one of the highest crime rates of large American cities, plans to close its police stations to the public for 16 hours a day — including the critical overnight hours — as the cash-strapped city struggles to slash costs. Public-facing desks at the eight stations that represent the eight precincts or districts of the Detroit Police Department will be closed 4 pm every day and reopen the next morning at 8 am on Monday.

It means residents could have a harder time immediately finding face-to-face help from the police during key hours of the day. The moves are expected to lead to “virtual precincts,” as the police department plans to redeploy desk-bound officers to more time on the streets during the affected hours. The cuts come as Detroit is seeing a sharp rise in its murder rate, up 14 percent in the first half of 2011 from the same period a year earlier, according to FBI statistics. The administration of Mayor Dave Bing is under intense pressure to cut hundreds of millions in costs. The city estimates it could run out of money within the next 90 days if immediate action is not taken.

The plan to cut public hours at police stations was first reported by Detroit media outlets and confirmed Wednesday by Stephen Serkaia, a spokesman for Bing. — Reuters

Forget passwords! Phones and tablets to identify users by sight and touch

LONDON, 5 Jan — Trawling through possible password combinations could become a distant memory in the future as new smartphones and tablets will allow access to users at the sight of their own face or a single touch.

According to the Sunday Times, software giants Google and Apple are introducing phones that identify users through sight and touch recognition, the Daily Mail reported. Last week Apple applied to the US patent office to register facial recognition software, so instead of sliding to unlock the iPhone, iPod or iPad Touch, one could simply point it at one’s face.

The patent entitled ‘Low Threshold Face Recognition’ was picked up by Apple Insider blog, who said that “using a forward-facing camera to recognise an individual user, future iPhones and iPads from Apple could automatically customise applications, settings and features to a person’s unique preferences once they pick up the device.” The website explained that Apple’s application stated rather than analysing a user’s entire face which can drain the battery, Apple’s concept would rely on a ‘high-information portion’ of a human face. It is understood that their system will scale the distance between a user eyes and mouth and once it has measured that against the image originally captured, it will be able to confirm that it is the same user and unlock. The patent also details that each user could customise their personal profile with unique wallpaper, applications and settings, and that profile would be immediately accessed once the iPad recognizes a user’s face.— Reuters

More US women having twins; rate at 1 in 30 babies

ATLANTA, 5 Jan.—The number of twins born in the US soared over the last three decades, mostly the result of test-tube babies and women wanting to have children until their 30s, when the chances of twins increase.

In 2009, in every 30 babies born in the US was a twin, an astounding increase over the 1 in 53 rate in 1980, according to a government report issued Wednesday.

“When people say it seems like you see more twins nowadays, they’re right,” said Joyce Martin, an epidemiologist who co-authored the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention’s report.

“People are changing,” Martin said. “Children are coming into the world now. Expectant mothers and fathers are choosing to have their babies at older ages.”

Some increase was expected as more women are delaying starting a family until they are over 30. For some unknown reason, mothers are far more likely to have twins when they are younger or older women. As much as a third of the increase can be attributed to that, Martin said.

The rest of the rise is due to fertility drugs and treatments.

“You have a double whammy going on. There are more older mothers and more widespread use of fertility-enhancing therapies,” Martin said.

Starting in the early 1980s, couples who had trouble conceiving began to benefit from medical advances like fertility drugs and in vitro fertilization and other procedures. These treatments became fairly widespread in the 1990s but are expensive, and availability and insurance coverage varies.

The twin birth rate rose by more than 2 percent a year, on average, from 1980 through 2004. It leveled off to less than 1 percent annually although the rise from 2008 to 2009 was nearly 2 percent.

In 2009, twin rates increased in all 50 states, though the jumps were highest in lower New England, New Jersey and Hawaii. In Connecticut, twins now account for nearly 5 percent of births.

That’s high. Nationally, 3.3 percent of all births were twins in 2009, up from 2.9 percent in 1980.

Over the last three decades, rates rose for white, black and Hispanic women, but the increases were not uniform. Rates doubled for whites, rose by half for blacks and by about a third for Hispanics. Historically, black moms have twins most often, but white moms have almost caught up.

In this file photo of 19 June, 2009, twins Daniel, left, and Thomas O’Brien, 2, look at books at a Barnes & Noble in New York. The number of twins born in the US has soared over the last three decades.— Inquirer

Seoul approves Samsung investment in China

SEOUL, 5 Jan—South Korea on Wednesday approved Samsung Electronics’ plan to build a new plant in China to produce high-tech memory chips used in tablets and smartphones, the Ministry of Knowledge Economy said.— Reuters

A South Korean walks past Samsung Electronics’ main building in Seoul. South Korea has approved Samsung Electronics’ plan to build a new plant in China to produce high-tech memory chips used in tablets and smartphones, the Ministry of Knowledge Economy said.— Reuters

Police kill Texas student, 15, armed with pellet gun

MCAULEY, 5 Jan.—Police fatally shot a 15-year-old student armed with a pellet gun at a middle school in Brownsville, Texas, on Wednesday after he pointed it at officers, police said.

Brownsville police received a call of a student with a handgun at Cummings Middle School about 8 am local time Wednesday, department spokesman 3 J Trevino said.

The boy, eighth-grader Jaime Gonzalez, aimed at officers and ordered Gonzalez to drop the gun, but instead he pointed it at the officers, who shot the boy twice, police said.

“The subject pointed the weapon at officers, which in turn, the officers had to use deadly force,” Trevino said.

The gun, a .177-caliber pellet pistol, resembles a Glock semi-automatic handgun, police said.

The student was rushed to a hospital where he was pronounced dead, said Cameron County Justice of the Peace Kip Johnson Hodges.

A preliminary investigation indicated Gonzalez assaulted a student before officers arrived and told witnesses he was going to “engage officers with the weapon,” a police news release said.— Reuters

Bushfire threatens residents in Western Australia

SYDNEY, 5 Jan.—A bushfire caused by lightning strikes in Perth’s northern suburb of Western Australia (WA) is threatening people’s lives and homes in the area, the Fire and Emergency Services Authority of Western Australia (FESA) warned on Wednesday.

A bushfire watch and alert is in place for people in Jandupab in the City of Wanneroo, FESA said.

The fire, sparked by lightning strikes on Wednesday morning, has burnt 25 hectares of land and is burning in swamp land near Jandupab Lake, according to FESA.

“There is a possible threat to lives and homes as a fire is approaching the area and conditions are changing,” FESA said in a warning issued on Wednesday.

Residents have been urged to leave or be ready to actively defend their homes.

The bushfire is moving slowly in a westerly direction towards Forrest Road and has not yet been controlled, FESA said.— Xinhua

In this file photo of 19 June, 2009, twins Daniel, left, and Thomas O’Brien, 2, look at books at a Barnes & Noble in New York. The number of twins born in the US has soared over the last three decades.— Inquirer

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China launches Asia's largest helicopter in market

BEIJING, 5 Jan—China's largest-ever civil helicopter on Thursday received its largest-ever civil helicopter by the Chinese Navy on Wednesday after its seventh attempt to sail alone around the tip of South America was found tired but alive by the Chilean Navy on Wednesday after its seventh attempt to sail from land in the South Pacific.

The Chinese Navy said it had deployed for emergency on Tuesday morning, proming to send out an Orion search and rescue plane, which searched a vast area off the coast of Japan's northern Aomori prefecture—stood at an eye-level depth of 5.49 million yen (576.50) when the hammer came down in the first auction of the year.

The helicopter, as the previous high of 32.49 million yen paid at last year’s inaugural auction at Tsukiji, a huge working market that also features on many Tokyo tourist itineraries.

Grants Pass, 5 Jan—A young male gray wolf that has wandered hundreds of miles across Oregon and eventually crossed into California has been searched for a mate has apparently been photographe for the first time.

The black-and-white photo shows a wolf sniffing the ground in a stand of dense forest. It is likely the animal known as OR-7, said Roblyn Schneider Brown, an Oregon state biologist.

The photo was taken 14 Nov by an automatic trail camera set up by a hunter tracking blacktail deer on private land east of Butte Falls.

Brown said the wolf in the photo appeared to be wearing a tracking collar, and GPS data showed that OR-7 was in the same area of the Cascades in southern Oregon around that time.

Though the young male wolf was captured and fitted with the collar by a state biologist last spring, OR-7 was not photographed. Following an examination, the wolf made headlines last month when it wandered into the southern Cascade Range.

The 2012 Olympics Aquatics Centre Organizers of the London 2012 Olympics on Wednesday admitted they had mistakenly oversold tickets for synchronised swimming sessions, leading to thousands being offered tickets to other events.

On Wednesday it was announced that 3,000 ticket-holders and offered them access to more prestige events — including the men’s 1,500m athletics final — that they had previously applied for unsuccessfully.

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The extra tickets will come from a batch of one million emergency tickets that will go on sale in May after seating plans for the venues have been finalised.
Physical activity, academic performance may be positively related

WASHINGTON, 5 Jan — A systematic review of previous studies suggests that there may be a positive connection between physical activity and children's academic performance, according to a report published on Monday in the Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine. A group of scientists at the Vrije Universiteit (Free University) Medical Centre in the Netherlands reviewed evidence on the relationship between physical activity and academic performance because of concerns that pressure to improve test scores may often mean more instructional time for classroom subjects with less time for physical activity.

The authors identified 10 observational and four interventional studies for review, 12 of which were done in the United States, one in Canada and one in South Africa. Sample sizes ranged from 53 to about 12,000 participants between the ages of eight years and 18 years old. Follow-up varied from eight weeks to more than five years. "According to the best evidence synthesis, we found strong evidence of a significant positive relationship between physical activity and academic performance. The findings of one high-quality intervention study and one high-quality observational study suggest that being more physically active is positively related to improved academic performance in children," the report said.

Background information in the article suggests that exercise may help cognition by increasing blood and oxygen flow to the brain, increasing levels of norepinephrine and endorphin to decrease stress and improve mood, and increasing growth factors that help create new nerve cells and support synaptic plasticity. "More high-quality studies are needed on the dose-response relationship between physical activity and academic performance and on the planetary mechanisms, using reliable and valid measurement instruments to assess this relationship accurately," the report concludes. — Xinhua

Rail e-ticket sales get off-track

BRUNO, 5 Jan — People planning trips hoping for a return to the days of 
free rail ticket booking began their search on Monday for the online ticket booking system was made to spare travelers the discomforts of buying tickets at stations during peak seasons, but it has been challenged by problems, including high demand.

Railway ticket booking hotline is easier to use and successful, but he had to pay again, and he will have to wait to get that extra money back.

At least a dozen posts on online forums described experiences similar to Yang's. Many other posts said the railway's telephonic ticket hotline is easier to use and more reliable. Meanwhile, the crowds at train stations are growing. The number of people waiting to buy tickets at stations in Guangzhou, Guangdong Province, has dramatically increased in recent days, according to China Railway. "It cost about 2,000 yuan ($320) each time for the service," he said.

"It is about time for the railway authorities to do all they can to secure his freedom," said his family. "To my family, please do whatever to raise the two million US dollars they are asking for my release as soon as possible," the 53-year-old former soldier said in a video obtained by the Sydney Morning Herald.

Police said they had also received a number of revellers at the gathering had been armed and that gunfire broke out following an argument over a weapon.

A proactive approach to luck

BRUNO, 5 Jan — Superstitions live on in China because, as many doubters say, better safe than sorry. Li Yao reports. Imagine leaving a 12-year-old at home on an already cold and wintry day without doors and windows tightly closed, only to open them exactly at midnight with the child struggling to stay awake. Mao Weiwu, now 26, spent just such a day in the summer of 1997, supposedly for her own good. She needed to avoid the evil spirits and bad luck that were believed to be going to her. The superstitions and precautions followed word-by-word the advice of a fortuneteller a month old had visited. Mao's parents were indifferent to fortunetelling but wanted to be on the safe side for their only child. That makes them fairly typical in China. But her aunt, now 57, has always gone to great lengths to pursue good luck and dodge ill fortune. She invited Buddhist monks in Tibet to pray for Mao when she sat for college and graduate school entrance exams in 2004 and 2008.

"It cost about 2,000 yuan ($320) each time for the service. I would like to think my success in both exams was thanks to her efforts to ask for Buddha's blessings on my behalf. I know it is due to my own hard work," Mao said. She teaches at an English training centre in Beijing. — Xinhua

Passengers line up to buy tickets at a railway station in Beijing, capital of China. The online ticket booking system was made to spare travelers the discomforts of buying tickets at stations during peak seasons, but it has been challenged by problems, including high demand. — Xinhua

Philippine kidnappers demand $2m for Australian

MANILA, 5 Jan — An Australian kidnapped by suspected Muslim extremists in the Philippines said his captors were demanding US$2 million in ransom as his birthday gift in a video released Thursday.

A distressed-looking Warren Rodwell, who was snatched from his home in the town of Ipi, on the troubled southern island of Mindanao, said in the video obtained by the Sydney Morning Herald.

"To the Australian embassy here in the Philippines, this is your constituent appealing for his life and safety. Please help facilitate. "I was former army of my country but it's different here, particularly the terrain. The only solution to ensure my safety is to go with whatever they need."

Map showing Mindanao in southern Philippines where a search is on for an Australian man kidnapped by an armed group at the beginning of December. — Internet

A university student (left) waits for her turn of fortune-telling in downtown Jinan, capital of East China's Shandong Province, in March. More and more Chinese who have an university education are turning to fortune-telling and divination. — Xinhua

Mount Rainier ranger shooting: Iraq veteran found dead

WASHINGTON, 5 Jan — The body of an Iraq war veteran was found dead after the shooting of a park ranger in Washington state has been found, officials said.

"We have found the suspected gunman, Benjamin Colton Barnes, in Mount Rainier National Park. The park has been closed since Margaret Anderson, 34, was shot dead early Sunday morning. Barnes, 24, had also been linked to an earlier shooting at a New Year's party. The body of Barnes, reported to have been suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder, was found face down in the snow. Mount Rainier Park Chief Ranger Chuck Young said that they were seeking to establish the exact cause of death. "He was wearing a T-shirt, a pair of jeans and one tennis shoe. That was it," Pierce County Sheriff's spokesman Ed Troyer said. Police said they had also recovered his vehicle, which had weapons, body armour and survivalist gear inside. The gunman spied past a park checkpoint that was monitoring vehicles for tyre chains, sometimes required in snowy conditions. As one ranger gave chase, mother-of-two Mrs Anderson blocked the road with her vehicle to stop the driver. Both of them were fired on, but only Mrs Anderson, who was married to another ranger, was hit. Response teams could not reach the wounded officer for nearly an hour-and-a-half before the gunman continued to shoot, the Seattle Times newspaper quoted officials as saying.

Police said Mr Barnes was also wanted for questioning over an early-morning shooting at a party in Skyway, just south of Seattle, which left four people injured, two critically. Wineses said a number of revellers at the gathering had been armed and that gunfire broke out following an argument over a weapon.

Internet
Aussie snake weighs 302 pounds

Workers at an Australian reptile park said Atomic Betty, a reticulated python believed to be the country's largest snake, weighed in at 302 pounds.

Staff at the Australian Reptile Park in Gosford said the 21-foot python weighed in Wednesday at 4 1/2 pounds heavier than at last year’s total, Sky News reported Tuesday.

Tim Faulkner, the park's operations manager, said getting Atomic Betty out of her enclosure and onto the scales was a delicate operation, which this year took six reptile keepers a half hour.

"The scary thing is that she has the ability to crush us," Faulkner said. "You've got about a second to grab (her head) because as we go down they've got extremely good vision and she is going to strike."

World's oldest twins celebrate 102nd birthdays

The world’s oldest twins celebrated their 102nd birthday together on Wednesday. Born on January 4, 1910, Edna Pugh and Lily Millward have spent each of their birthdays together.

They were presented with a copy of Guinness World Records, which includes their entry. More from the Daily Mail: Lily’s daughter Dianne Powell, 65, told Wales News Service: "My mum’s recovering in hospital after she slipped and fell just before Christmas. But she’s in good spirits and enjoying the attention of being one of the world’s oldest twins."

Edna pips in to see her in hospital when she can - they are very close. And despite the terrible weather she made a special effort to get together on their birthday.

The English twins were born before the beginning of World War I, and they still meet up for weekly shopping trips and talk on the phone nearly every day. Lily Millward said "laughter and having a joke with each other" has been the secret to their longevity. "We used to work on the farm all day, but we would enjoy ourselves," Millward said. "It was a lot of fun and sociable. We’ve been very lucky and we have always had good health."

And the twins manage to get by without some modern technological innovations, including central heating. "Until my mum’s accident, they would jump on a bus to their own every Friday so they can go shopping together and have a chat over a cup of tea," Powell said. "And they ring each other almost every evening although they are both very hard of hearing—they can’t really always know what the other is saying but just enjoy talking to each other."

Family life: Sisters Edna Pugh, right, and Lily Millward have celebrated their 102nd birthday today, making them the world’s oldest twins.

News Album

Moms give birth on New Year's Day again

A Canadian woman gave birth for the second New Year’s Day in a row, officials say.

Grace Olivia Ketochen was born at the Medicine Hat, Alberta, hospital at 12:46 a.m. Sunday, exactly 365 days and 4 minutes after her brother Jack was born at a Regina hospital, the Medicine Hat News reported. The daughter of Bobbi Joe and Kurtis Ketcheson weighed in at 4 1/2 pounds and she’s 16 inches long, the newspaper said.

Because Grace was having trouble arriving, doctors were just about to perform a Caesarean section. But when a doctor went to grab a pen for her to sign a consent form, Bobbi Joe decided that wouldn’t be necessary.

"That’s when I just said screw it, I don’t have time for a c-section," she said. "Somebody lift up the blanket and catch. She was born right there on the operating table."

The Ketochenos now have four children under the age of 4, the News said. All four of her pregnancies apparently came despite some form of birth control, the newspaper reported.

"We’re like the two most fertile people in Canada," the mother joked. "It’s like we don’t even have to be in the same city."

‘Paranormal Activity 4’ in the works

LOS ANGELES, 5 Jan— Paramount Pictures plans to release a fourth low-budget "Paranormal Activity" movie this year. The Hollywood Reporter said.

No specific release date has been disclosed.

Last year’s "Paranormal Activity 3" cost $5 million and took in $202.2 million in box-office receipts worldwide.

The first entry in the spooky movie franchise, which opened in limited release in late 2009, cost $15,000 to produce, then went on to gross $193.4 million worldwide.

"Paranormal Activity 2" cost $3 million and raked in $177.5 million globally in 2010, The Hollywood Reporter said.—Internet

LOS ANGELES, 5 Jan— Superheroes will make a splash in the Olympics with "Paranormal Activity 4" in 2012, Variety reported Wednesday.

Paramount Pictures plans to release a fourth, low-budget "Paranormal Activity" movie this year, the Hollywood Reporter said.

No specific release date has been disclosed for the film, which has a 20-minute effects sequence early in the story, also moved on to the next round, a "bakeoff" in which clips from the 10 semi-finalists will be shown to voters at the Academy on January 19. After that presentation, branch members will vote and the field of 10 will be cut in half to produce the final five nominees.

The most surprising cut from the list of 15 is probably "Super 8," with its spectacular train crash sequence. Other films that were eliminated include "Cowboys & Aliens," "Sherlock Holmes: A Game of Shadows," "Sucker Punch" and "Thor."

"Captain America: The First Avenger" "Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows Part 2"

The shortlist: "Captain America: The First Avenger" "Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows Part 2"

Internet

LOS ANGELES, 5 Jan— Adele’s “21” is No 1 on the US album chart for a 14th non-consecutive week, Billboard.com reported Wednesday.

Coming in at No 2 on the Billboard 200 is Drake’s “Take Care,” followed by Young Jeezy’s “TM103: Hustlerz Ambition” at No 3, Lady Antebellum’s “Own the Night” at No 4 and LMFAO’s “Sorry for Party Rocking” at No 5.

Rounding out the top tier are Florence + the Machine at No 6, The Black Keys’ “El Camino” at No 7, Coldplay’s “Mylo Xyloto” at No 8, Rihanna’s “Talk That Talk” at No 9 and the “Now!4” compilation CD at No 10.—Internet

LOS ANGELES, 5 Jan— Rounding out the 25-28 April, organizers have

"The Tree of Life" from 23 to 28 April, organizers have announced. There will be no competing section this year, and the festival will select a number of nominated or award-winning films from last year’s international film festivals. Highlights will include a film market for producers and buyers, a film carnival that brings filmmakers together, and a seminar of major global studios’ executives. The film market at last year’s festival sold deals worth nearly 3 billion yuan (476.7 million US dollars). Internet

2nd Beijing Int’l Film Festival to open in April

BEIJING, 5 Jan— The 2nd Beijing International Film Festival is scheduled to run from 23 to 28 April, organizers have announced. There will be no competing section this year, and the festival will select a number of nominated or award-winning films from last year’s international film festivals. Highlights will include a film market for producers and buyers, a film carnival that brings filmmakers together, and a seminar of major global studios’ executives. The film market at last year’s festival sold deals worth nearly 3 billion yuan (476.7 million US dollars). Internet
United’s title hopes hit by 3-0 loss at Newcastle

Omar Gonzalez and George John react after stopping Manchester United’s Wayne Rooney (C) from scoring next to Ivorian midfielder Cheik Tiote (R) at St James’ Park, Newcastle upon Tyne, England — Internet

Newcastle United’s Dutch goalkeeper Tim Krul (L) reacts after stopping Manchester United’s Wayne Rooney (C) from scoring next to Ivorian midfielder Cheik Tiote (R) at St James’ Park, Newcastle upon Tyne, England — Internet

Newcastle, 5 Jan — Newcastle consigned Manchester United to a second straight loss in the English Premier League by thrashing Alex Ferguson’s side 3-0 at St James’ Park on Wednesday.

United slipped three points behind league leader Manchester City after sublime strikes by Demba Ba and Yohan Cabaye either side of halftime were added to by a calamitous own goal by Phil Jones in the 90th minute.

Cooming four days after a shock 3-2 upset at the hands of Blackburn, United’s latest defeat also left the reigning champions just three points above third-place Tottenham in what is shaping up to be a three-horse race for the title.

“We have had our opportunity and it’s an advantage to Man City,” said Ferguson, whose team’s next game is against its cross-town rival in the third round of the FA Cup on Sunday.

Newcastle’s strike pair of Ba, who grabbed his 15th goal of the campaign, and Shola Ameobi bullied United’s defense all night while the returning Wayne Rooney had a frustrating game before being substituted in the 74th.

Newcastle United’s Ryan Taylor (R) vies with Manchester United’s South Korean midfielder Park Ji-Sung (L) at St James’ Park, Newcastle upon Tyne. Internet

Williams withdraws from Brisbane with injury

Brisbane, 5 Jan — One thought entered Serena Williams’ mind as she sprawled across the baseline after failing to keep her ankle: “Not again!”

Yet another Australian Open campaign is in doubt due to injury — she missed the 2002, 2004 and 2011 editions because she was hurt. In between, she has won five Australian titles and lost only twice at Melbourne Park.

Williams will reluctantly accept the first treatment since losing the Open semifinal in September. Williams was serving for the match with a 6-2, 5-3 lead against Bojana Jovanovski of Serbia on Wednesday when she twisted her left ankle and crashed heavily to the court.

Brisbane — Serena Williams will not play at the Australian Open because of an ankle injury. The 35-year-old American has been ruled out of the tournament after injuring herself the day before.

Australian Open organizers said the American, who has won the title six times, will now be considered a wildcard for the tournament.

She was knocked out of the French Open last year with a cyst on her ankle and was out for 11 months with a stress fracture in her right foot in 2011.

Williams, 31, has been out of action since pulling out of a tournament in Auckland in late December with a left ankle injury.

Newspapers and websites immediately focused on her status for the Open, Australia’s only Grand Slam championship.

The world number one, who has won 20 Grand Slam titles, said she had twisted her ankle and was in pain while hitting in practice on Wednesday.

“I am so disappointed to have to withdraw,” she said

Derek Joubert, the San Diego-based researcher, said he would try to track the feline down, as lions have never been known to wander more than 10 miles from their territory.

Joubert said he has spent hours in a helicopter over the weekend looking for the lion,

Barcelona beats Osasuna 4-0 in Copa del Rey

Barcelona — FC Barcelona beat Osasuna 4-0 to enter the Copa del Rey quarterfinals as a substitute in a 4-0 win over Osasuna in the first leg of their Copa del Rey series on Wednesday.

With Messi starting on the bench and David Villa out with a broken leg, Cesc Fabregas launched the rout by scoring off passes from Xavi Hernandez in the 14th and 19th minutes to take his goal tally to 13 goals in all competitions this season.

Messi, who was a last-minute inclusion in the squad, went on after halftime.

Showings no signs of illness because of the flu, he was included after “responding well to treatment,” according to the club’s official website.

Barcelona’s French midfielder Cesc Fabregas celebrates after scoring his second goal against Osasuna during their Copa del Rey quarterfinals at the Camp Nou stadium in Barcelona, Spain

Lisicki bows out in Auckland with back injury

AUCKLAND, 5 Jan — Top-seeded Sabine Lisicki retired from her quarterfinal match in the ASB Bank Classic on Wednesday after injuring her ankle.

The 22-year-old player left the court after the first set to receive treatment.

Lisicki bows out in Auckland with back injury

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Austria’s Julia Glushko bows out in Auckland with back injury

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Continued from yesterday...

**January transfer window**

We, the NLM-ner profiles the most likely transfer targets during the January window - at home and abroad. The transfer headlines were made on deadline day when Chelsea spent £50m on Fernando Torres and Liverpool replaced the Spaniard with £3.5m striker Andy Carroll. Here are our top 50 suggestions for high-profile moves this time.

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**Potential Football League and SPL Movers**

JAMESTOMAIS (22, centre-back) West Ham United: Talented England Under-21 central defender who could be snapped up by a top-flight club should they be looking to strengthen their backline.

ROBERT SNOGRASS (24, winger) Leeds United: Had appendix surgery at Christmas but wants to cement his place in the Scotland team. A Premier League club could target him.

JORDAN RHODES (21, forward) Huddersfield Town: Has already scored 19 League One goals and West Ham have declared a strong interest in the English-born Scottish international.

LEWIS MCGUGAN (23, midfielder) Nottingham Forest: With Forest struggling, he may be sold by Steve Cotterill to bring in more players. His thunderbolt shooting is his greatest asset.

LIAM RIDGEWELL (27, centre-back) Birmingham: The defender had a transfer request rejected in August. Nothing has changed for him to rethink his decision about leaving.

WILFRIED ZAHA (25, forward) Crystal Palace: Impressed against Manchester United in their Carling Cup win, the England Under-19 man possesses all the qualities to be a top striker.

NICKY MAYNARD (25, forward) Bristol City: After refusing to sign a new contract, he has been told he can leave Ashton Gate. There won’t be any shortage of managers wanting him.

NIKA JELAVIC (26, forward) Rangers: Nears moved to Leicester in the summer, the Croatian will be looking to test himself in England and plenty of clubs will be lining up for him.

To be continued...

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**Yahoo names PayPal President Thompson as its CEO**

New York, 5 Jan—Yahoo Inc has named Scott Thompson, president of eBay Inc’s PayPal division, as its new CEO. The struggling Internet company, which announced its choice Wednesday, has been without a permanent CEO since early September. It fired Carol Bartz after losing patience with her attempts to turn around the company during her 2 ½ years on the job. Tim Morse, Yahoo’s chief financial officer, has been interim CEO since Bartz’s ouster. Thompson has served as president of PayPal, eBay’s online payment service, since January 2008. He previously served as PayPal’s senior vice-president and chief technology officer. Sunnyvale, Calif-based Yahoo said Thompson’s new job starts from 9 Jan. Morse will return to his CFO post. Yahoo chairman Roy Bostock said Thompson’s track record of building on existing resources “to reignite innovation and drive growth” is “precisely the formula we need at Yahoo.” —Internet

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**Focus Myanmar TV Programme**

**MYANMAR INTERNATIONAL**

(6-12 09:30 am ~ 7-12 09:30 am) MST

**MYANMAR TV**

(6-12 2010) (Friday)

7:00 am
1. Paritta by Hilly Region Missionary Sayadow
7:25 am
2. Dhamma Puja Song
8:00 am
3. Health Programme
8:30 am
4. Teleplay (Health)
8:40 am
5. International News
9:00 am
6. Martial Song
4:20 pm
7. Song of National Races
4:25 pm
8. Myanmar Language
5:15 pm
9. Songs for Upholding National Spirit
5:20 pm
10. Sport Highlight
5:30 pm
11. Documentary
7:00 pm
12. TV Drama Series
8:00 pm
13. News
9:20 pm
14. Traffic Song
10:30 pm
15. Just for Laughs
(Gags Asia)
11:00 pm
16. TV Drama Series
12:00 am
17. Song Lovers

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**Weather forecast for 6th January, 2012**

**Summary of Weather Situation**

**Tropical Influence**

Eastern Equatorial Indian Ocean

To be continued...

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**Weather Map of Myanmar and Neighbouring Areas**

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**Loans disbursed to pig breeders**

**YANGON, 5 Jan—Dagon Myothit (North) Township Information and Public Relations Department and Township Education Office jointly organized the middle and high school level extempe talks at Basic Education High School No. 2 in the township on 22 December.**

** efect of the program.**

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**Winners awarded in extempe talks**

**YANGON, 5 Jan—The Livestock Breeding and Meat and Fish Production Development Subcommitte disbursed loans for livestock breeding task, which is a point of Tamunhlay Region Rural Development and Poverty Alleviation Committee, at the 18thanniversary of Thanlwin Monastery in Thabyeshaung Village of Launglon Township on 22 December.**

**Departmental officials presented K 6.55 million to 29 members of two pig breeding groups on Thabyeshaung and Thakyeetaw villages.—Township IPRD**

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NAY PYI TAW, 5 Jan—President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Thein Sein received a goodwill delegation led by Chief of the Army Staff of the Indian Army General Vijay Kumar Singh of India at the Credentials Hall of the Presidential Residence, here, at 4 pm today.

Present on the occasion together with President U Thein Sein were Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services General Min Aung Hlaing, Union Minister for Home Affairs Lt-Gen Ko Ko, Union Minister for Defence Lt-Gen Hla Min, Union Minister for Foreign Affairs U Wunna Maung Lwin and departmental heads.

The Indian delegation led by the Chief of the Army Staff of the Indian Army was accompanied by Indian Ambassador to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Dr Villur Sundararajan Seshadri.

They cordially discussed matters on friendly relations and cooperation between the armed forces of the two countries.—MNA

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President U Thein Sein receives Chief of Army Staff of Indian Army and party

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