True patriotism

* It is very important for every one of the nation regardless of the place he lives to have strong Union Spirit.
* Only Union Spirit is the true patriotism all the nationalities will have to safeguard.

President U Thein Sein receives French Minister for Foreign Affairs and European Affairs

NAY PYI TAW, 16 Jan—President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Thein Sein received a delegation led by French Minister for Foreign Affairs and European Affairs Mr Alain Juppe at the Credentials Hall of the President Residence here at 3 pm today. Also present at the call together with President U Thein Sein were Union Minister for Foreign Affairs U Wunna Maung Lwin, Union Minister for Industry U Soe Thein, Union Minister at the President Office U Soe Maung and departmental heads.

The French Minister for Foreign Affairs and European Affairs was accompanied by French Ambassador to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Mr Thierry Mathou. They had a cordial discussion on political development in Myanmar, cooperation with the international community and cooperation between the two countries on a mutually beneficial basis.

Vice-President Thiha Thura U Tin Aung Myint Oo, wife Daw Khin Saw Hnin participate in Naga New Year Festival

NAY PYI TAW, 16 Jan—Vice-President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Thihla Thura U Tin Aung Myint Oo and wife Daw Khin Saw Hnin attended the Naga Traditional New Year Festival in Leshi of Naga Self-Administered Zone in Sagaing Region yesterday. Union Ministers, Sagaing Region Chief Minister and wife, the commander of North-West Command, deputy ministers, region ministers, representatives of Pyithu Hluttaw, Amyotha Hluttaw and Region Hluttaw of Sagaing Region, the Indian Ambassador to Myanmar, departmental officials, traditional cultural reps and traditional dance troupes of Naga Region, locals, and tourists participated in the festival as well.

Naga national damsels and chieftains extended warm welcome to the Vice-President and his wife on their arrival at the festival ground. The New Year festival was opened at 9 am with salute to the State Flag.

Vice-President Thiha Thura U Tin Aung Myint Oo presents cash assistance for Naga New Year Festival 2012 and fund for annual celebration of Naga New Year Festival.—MNA

MNA
Smokeless industry

Myanmar stood third place in choosing the best tourist destinations of the world for 2012, CNN broadcast on 28 December last year. Myanmar Tourism Association has also estimated that the year 2012 will see some 500,000 tourists as the number is likely to increase by 20 percent compared with the previous year.

Tourism is such a lucrative business for a country that it is known as smokeless industry. Unlike in the previous eras, today’s Myanmar has seen more progress in the tourism industry due to its significant political changes, State peace and stability, places of interest, the hospitality, culture and customs of the people.

For the emergence of a good smokeless industry in Myanmar, the government is taking all necessary measures for the convenience of tourists such as entry, transport, hotel standard, interest point, mobile phone services, taxi, border pass, package tour and tourism agency. To attract more tourists, however, we have to do more for continued development of the nation’s tourism. We need to take measures to prevent the historic sites and buildings from being spoilt, address tourism-related problems and consider any points to take lesson.

As a guest will come to us only when we show him our hospitality, we need to try our best in our respective fields to provide tourists good services. Surely, tourists will come en masse to Myanmar as they have seen remarkable changes and developments in the country.

Although about 500,000 tourists are estimated to visit Myanmar this year, the number is nothing compared with the neighbours – 14 million in Thailand, 4 million in Vietnam and 2 million each in Cambodia and Laos.

Anyhow, Myanmar will become a country of smokeless industry that appeals to more tourists than its neighbours as the international community has paid more attention to our country due to marked changes and development.

GSM extension project taking shape in Mon State

NAY PYI TAW, 16 Jan—As part of 30-million GSM mobile phones extension project, mobile communication infrastructure has been built in Mon State. Assistant General Manager U Moe Hsaung of Work and Inspection Department under Myanma Posts and Telecommunications inspected the work in progress in Mudon, Theinbyuzayat and Mawlamyine townships on 14 and 15 January.

Child and human rights educative measures workshop held

YANGON, 16 Jan—The Myanmar National Human Rights Commission with the sponsorship of UNICEF conducted a workshop on child and human rights educative measures at the Traders Hotel here today, attended by commission Chairman U Win Mya.

It is expected that officials of nine ministries, INGOs, NGO and social organizations, scholars and collaborators will read 10 resource papers till 18 January.

Publications and documentary photos published by the ministries, INGOs, NGOs and social organizations were put on display. The workshop is expected to adopt plans to effectively carry out child and human rights educative measures and collect information.
Fourteen still missing from Italian ship disaster

**Guam**, 16 Jan—Rescue workers searched the half-submerged hulk of a capsized Italian cruise ship for 14 people still missing Monday, more than 48 hours after the huge vessel capsized, killing at least six and injuring more than 60.

Three people, a South Korean honeymoon couple and a member of the ship’s crew, were rescued Sunday and police divers also recovered the bodies of two elderly men, still wearing emergency life jackets.

A sixth body, that of an adult male passenger, was found just before dawn Monday, according to Italian television.

Nine passengers, one of them a young child according to Italian media, and five crew members were still unaccounted for as the disaster off Italy’s west coast.

The captain of the 114,500 tonne Costa Concordia was arrested Saturday, accused of manslaughter and abandoning to Italian media, and five crew members were still unaccounted for just before dawn Monday, according to Italian television.

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The ship was carrying more than 4,200 passengers and crew when it ran aground early Saturday off the island of Giglio in Italy. British Foreign Secretary William Hague has said that all Britons aboard the luxury cruise ship had been accounted for.—INTERNET

**Two NATO service members die in Afghanistan**

KABUL, 16 Jan—Two NATO service members died in southern Afghanistan.

“Two International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) service members died as a result of a non-battle related injury in southern Afghanistan today,” ISAF said in a Press release.

The brief release did not provide details and the nationalities of the victims, saying “it is ISAF policy to defer casualty identification procedures to the relevant national authorities.”

Troops mainly from the US, Britain and Australia have stationed in the southern region to fight Taliban militants.

The latest casualties brings the number of foreign soldiers killed in Afghanistan to 13 this year.

A total of 566 NATO soldiers, with majority of them Americans, were killed in Afghanistan in 2011.

**Iran OPEC government warns Arab oil producers**

TEHRAN, 16 Jan—Iran’s Gulf Arab neighbours should not raise their production to replace Iranian oil if the European Union goes ahead with a ban on Iranian crude imports, Iran’s OPEC governor said on Sunday.

“arrested Saturday, accused of manslaughter and abandoning to Italian media, and five crew members were still unaccounted for just before dawn Monday, according to Italian television. The EU has agreed in principle to ban imports of Iranian oil, while the United States has pressured Asian buyers to reduce imports to starve Tehran of revenue for its disputed nuclear programme.

Asian leaders from some of Iran’s biggest oil sales markets are already touring the Middle East to secure supplies, as tension over Iran’s nuclear plans builds, while European buyers may rely more heavily on Arab oil producers if Iran is barred from the market.

Iran’s OPEC Governor Mohammad Ali Khataibi said Tehran would see any move to fill in for Iranian crude as Gulf Arab oil producers siding with Iran’s western opponents.

“if the oil producing Gulf states give the green light to replacing Iran’s oil these countries would be the main culprits for whatever happens in the region including the Strait of Hormuz,” Khataibi told the Sharg daily newspaper.

“Our Arab neighbour countries should not cooperate with these adventurers... These measures will not be perceived as friendly.”

EU countries have proposed “grace periods” on existing contracts of one to 12 months to allow companies to find alternative suppliers before implementing an embargo.

Khataibi, a key part of Iran’s OPEC negotiating team, said there was a good chance that the EU would not go through with its threat to ban Iranian crude imports if Gulf Arab producers refused to back it.

**Pakistan frees detained Iranian border guards**

TEHRAN, 16 Jan—A Pakistani court has released three Iranian border guards detained earlier this month for inadvertently crossing into southwestern Pakistan while chasing drug traffickers, Iranian satellite Press TV reported Sunday.

The three Iranian guards were freed on Saturday after Pakistani judge in Pakistan’s southwestern Balochistan Province ordered their release, said the report.

According to the report, the released guards shot dead Pakistani national Saeed Ahmed Rigi and injured his brother Salarim Rigi in an exchange of fire on 31 Dec, 2011 in the Mazan Sar Maskalik area of the Washuk District, situated 3 km inside Pakistan.

They were charged with murder after the father of the slain Pakistani man filed a case against them. The parents of the victim pardoned the three guards on Saturday on condition of blood money. The court further imposed a penalty of 9,000 rupees (about 99.67 US dollars) on each of the three Iranians for illegal entry into the Pakistani territory.

Iranian Border Police Commander Brigadier General Hossein Zolfaghari said 03 Jan that three Iranian border guards had been detained by Pakistani forces after mistakenly crossing into the Pakistani territory when chasing smugglers at night, according to Press TV.

Iran is located at the crossroad of international drug smuggling from its eastern neighbours, especially Afghanistan, to Europe.—Xinhua

**Malaria kills 98 Cambodians, down 35 percent in 2011**

PHNOM PENH, 16 Jan—Malaria has killed 98 Cambodians in 2011, a decline of 35 percent from 151 deaths in a year earlier, said a senior health official on Monday.

Last year, some 62,690 cases of malaria had been reported, said Chan Meng Chhou, the director of the National Centre for Malaria.

“We see our remarkable success in fighting malaria in the past year—despite the rise in malaria cases, the death toll has declined up to 35 percent,” he told Xinhua over telephone.

“This is thanks to people’s awareness about the symptoms of the disease and they have timely sought medical treatment.”

He said that with this good result, the country would definitely be able to completely eradicate the death of malaria by 2015.

“To achieve this target, we need the budget of 20 million US dollars a year in the next four years,” he said.

Malaria is a mosquito-borne infectious disease. In Cambodia, the disease is often found in rainy season and mostly happens in border provinces, forest and mountainous provinces such as Pursat, Rattanakiri, Mondulkiri, Kampong Cham, and Preah Vihear.

1/17/2012, 9:17 AM

**Pakistan frees detained Iranian border guards**

**Malaria kills 98 Cambodians, down 35 percent in 2011**

**Girl killed in Beirut building collapse**

BEIRUT, 16 Jan—A 15-year-old girl was killed and at least seven people were injured on Sunday when an old six-storey apartment block collapsed in the Lebanese Capital.

At least seven people were injured on Sunday when an old six-storey apartment block collapsed in the Lebanese Capital, least seven people were injured on Sunday when an old six-storey building that collapsed in Beirut’s Ashrafieh neighbourhood.

The news agency said an unknown number of people were buried under the rubble, and emergency services were scrambling to find survivors.

Authorities said dozens of people had lived in the building.

“They were buried under the rubble, and emergency services were scrambling to find survivors.”

Neighbours said dozens of people had lived in the building.

“Like it was an earthquake” when the block collapsed, one witness told the local MTV channel.

COMMON

**IRAN**
Australia experts call for energy drink warnings

PERTH, 16 Jan—Researchers in Australia called for health warnings on caffeine-loaded energy drinks following a spike in the number of people reporting medical problems after drinking them. Health professionals from the University’s Sydney Medical School and the New South Wales Poisons Information Centre said reports of adverse reactions to drinks like Red Bull and V jumped from just 12 in 2004 to 65 in 2010. Over the seven years to 2010, 297 calls for assistance were recorded with at least 128 people hospitalised with symptoms including heart palpitations, agitation and stomach upsets. Of these, 20 people had more serious issues, such as seizures and hallucinations.

The study, published in the Medical Journal of Australia on Monday, said the average person affected was 17 years old and that they often mixed energy drinks with alcohol. “Our study demonstrates the extent of the growing problem in Australia with energy drink consumption and toxicity, particularly among adolescents,” the study’s authors wrote.

“Given the clearest possible awareness of toxicity and the growing number of hospitalisations associated with consumption of energy drinks... health authorities should increase awareness of the problem, improve package labelling and regulate caffeine content,” they said. They recommended that “labelling and any marketing of these products should include appropriate health warnings and the national poisons hotline number”. A can of energy drink may contain up to 300 milligrams of caffeine—compared to an average 65-120mg for a cup of drip coffee—and Poisons Centre medical director Naren Gunja called for more thorough regulation.

Costs of removing faulty breast implants to be covered in Brazil

PETRO, 16 Jan—The Brazilian government said Friday that public and private healthcare systems will cover the costs of removal or replacement of faulty PIP and Rofil breast implants.

Health Minister Alexandre Padilha told reporters that there is no need for all patients who received PIP or Rofil breast implants to undergo the replacement surgery. Only those with ruptured implants will need to have them replaced.

“Women should head to the healthcare services to make an evaluation and find out if they need to undergo surgery,” he said.

Next week, Health Ministry will announce the full instructions which the patients who received PIP or Rofil implants need to follow to get checked by a doctor, but patients can already set up evaluations, via public or private healthcare systems.

“Meanwhile, National Health Surveillance Agency has established procedures to determine how to punish the importers of PIP and Rofil implants.—Xinhua

S Korea shipbuilder wins $22.6 bln deal for gas plant

This file illustration photo shows a part of an offshore natural gas platform. South Korean shipbuilder Samsung Heavy Industries said it had won a 2.6 trillion won ($22.6 billion) deal to build a gas processing plant in Australia for Japanese oil and gas producer Inpex.—INTERNET

TOYOLO, 16 Jan—Japanese shares fell on Monday on fears that mass sovereign debt rating cuts by Standard & Poor’s would further aggravate euro zone funding difficulties, threatening to derail progress in resolving the debt crisis. Worries that European financial troubles would drag down global growth and sap appetite for commodities weighed on industrial metals such as copper, while a shift to perceived safe haven assets boosted Japanese government bonds.

MSCI’s broadest index of Asia Pacific shares outside Japan fell 1.3 percent to its lowest in about one week, after reaching a one-month high on Friday. Japan’s Nikkei average shed 1.4 percent to a one-month low.

US markets fell Monday for the Martin Luther King holiday, but S&P 500 futures traded in Asia fell 0.5 percent.

Tracking the Asian trend, European shares were set for a decline, with financial spreader betting Britain’s FTSE 100, Germany’s DAX and France’s CAC-40 would open down around 0.4-0.5 percent.

Shares fall as euro zone downgrades rekindle fears

A customer is seen in a supermarket in Hangzhou, capital of east China’s Zhejiang Province, on 12 Jan, 2012.—Xinhua

China’s CPI to rise around 4 percent in 2012

BEIJING, 16 Jan—The overall price level in 2012 may see a downward trend, however, the consumer price index (CPI) is predicted to rise around 4 percent in China, according to the nation’s lead economists. Zhuang Jian, a senior economist with Asian Development Bank, anticipated that the overall CPI growth will stay around 4 percent, besides a certain degree of fluctuation in monthly figures.

As a result of diminishing carryover effects and the government’s prudent monetary policy direction, CPI in China has been declining over the past five months, but price control remains a dominant topic right now.

China’s CPI was up 5.4 percent in 2011 from the previous year, according to a statement issued by the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS). Although the figure is well above the government’s full-year control target of 4 percent, inflation has been slowing down in the second half of 2011 thanks to a series of government measures.

Internet

Too much or too little iron bad for brain

WASHINGTON, 16 Jan—Iron plays a vital role in the development of the brain — too little can result in cognitive problems, too much promotes degenerative diseases such as Alzheimer’s and Parkinson’s. Iron deficiency is the most common nutritional deficiency worldwide, causing poor cognitive achievement in school-aged children. Now it has been found to affect the brain’s physical structure as well.

Paul Thompson, professor of neurology at the University of California Los Angeles, and colleagues measured levels of transferrin, a protein that transports iron throughout the body and brain, in adolescents.

Since both a deficiency and an excess of iron can negatively impact brain function, the body’s regulation of iron transport to the brain is crucial, the journal Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences reports. When iron levels are low, the liver produces more transferrin for increased iron transport. The researchers wanted to know whether brain structure in healthy adults was also dependent on transferrin levels, according to a California statement.

“We found that healthy brain wiring in adults depended on having good iron levels in your teenage years,” said Thompson, member of California’s Lab of Neuro Imaging. “This connection was a lot stronger than we expected, especially as we were looking at people who were young and healthy — none of them would be considered iron-deficient.”

“We also found a connection with a gene that explains why this is so. The gene itself seems to affect brain wiring, which was a big surprise,” he said.

A trader looks at computer screens at Madrid’s bourse on 1 Nov, 2011.—INTERNET

Internet

Publication date: Tuesday, 17 January, 2012
**Russia's Mars probe crashes into Pacific**

He told Interfax news agency that Russia's space control network was monitoring the process of the falling which happened at 9:45 pm Moscow time (1745 GMT). Earlier, experts said the 14-ton spacecraft carrying 11 tons of rocket fuel might land somewhere in the southern Atlantic.

Most of the debris was expected to burn up in the atmosphere, but 20 to 30 chunks of charred debris, weighing about 200 kg, could make it to the surface, while the toxic fuel would burn in the atmosphere at a height of about 100 km, said Russia's Federal Space Agency Roscosmos earlier in a projection for the crash.

Phobos-Grunt, Russia's most ambitious planetary mission in decades, was launched on 9 Nov with the aim of exploring one of Mars' two moons, but it became stuck in Earth orbit due to a propulsion failure and radio contact was lost. —Yudha

**Saturn-like ringed planet found eclipsing sun-like star**

WASHINGTON, 16 Jan—A Saturn-like ringed planet in the constellation Centaurus has been discovered orbiting a sun-like star.

The scientists, led by Assistant Professor of Physics and Astronomy Eric Mamajek of Rochester and the Cerro Tololo Inter-American Observatory, used data from the international SuperWASP (Wide Angle Search for Planets) and All Sky Automated Survey (ASAS) project to study the light curves of young Sun-like stars in the Scorpius-Centaurus association—the nearest region of recent massive star formation to the Sun.

A light curve is a graph of light intensity over time, and one star in particular showed dramatic changes during a 54 day period in early 2007.

University of Rochester graduate student Marc Pecaut and Mamajek discovered the unusual eclipse in December 2010. When I first saw the light curve, I knew we had found something weird and unique object. After we ruled out the eclipse being due to a spherical star or a circumstellar disk passing in front of the star, I realized that the only plausible explanation was some sort of dust ring system orbiting a smaller companion—basically a Saturn on steroids,” said Mamajek.

If a spherical object merely passed in front of the star, the intensity of the light would gradually dim and reach a low point before gradually increasing. That was not the case with the star identified as 1SWASP J140747.93-394542.6. The Rochester team discovered a long, deep, and complex eclipse event with significant on-and-off dimming. At the deepest parts of the eclipse, at least 95 percent of the light from the star was being blocked by dust.

The shape of the light curve was very similar to that of a well-researched star (EE Cephei), suggesting similar traits even if it is not a binary star. "The shape of the light curve was very similar to that of a well-researched star (EE Cephei), suggesting similar traits even if it is not a binary star." —Xinhua

**Even birds can’t resist a good yawn**

Not just humans but birds also find yawns irresistible, say a researcher. Andrew Gallup at Binghampton University in New York found that budgies, the highly social birds, also make contagious yawns, New Scientist reported.

Many animals yawn, but only humans and a few other primates are known to trigger cascades of yawns around a group. For his finding Gallup watched 21 budgies over 15 days and counted their yawns—a wide-open beak and slightly closed eyes, followed by a brief stretch of the neck. He found each bird yawned one to three times an hour, but was more likely to do so if their neighbour had just yawned. Gallup says it’s the first good evidence for contagious yawning in a non-primate.

"Inflammatory content on internet cannot be accepted. It harms some people's sentiments, but this is no way to rectify that problem. Putting curbs on these websites will hamper our sense of liberty," said Jatin Panchi, an engineering student from Indraprastha University. Freelance writer Pooja Kapur told IANS: "Censoring content on social media sites is totally unjustified. How different would we be from China or Afghanisthan then?"

"Censoring social media curbs free speech, netizens say."

**Microsoft, Motorola most tweeted about brands during CES**

LAS VEGAS, 16 Jan.—Posts about Microsoft and Motorola’s announcements and products have dominated International Consumer Electronics Show (CES)-related buzz on microblogging site Twitter. Tweets about Microsoft and Motorola accounted for a total of 10 percent (5 percent each) of all tweets that included the #CES hashtag from January 10 to 13, said social media tracking company Simply Measured.

Microsoft CEO Steve Ballmer gave the opening keynote at CES (which was also Microsoft’s last) on 9 January, prompting a chorus of #CES-related tweets. Tweets about Microsoft hit a high of 12 percent on the eve of CES before falling to 4 percent the day after as additional companies took to the stage and stole the spotlight with ultra-thin laptops, powerful tablets, razor-thin phones and innovative new gadgets.

Tweets mentioning Motorola accounted for 2.4, 3.5 and 9 percent respectively on days 0 through 3 of the Consumer Electronics Show. However, the increase of #CES tweets over the three days was largely attributed to a content by media company (j)Nextsole, which was giving away a Motorola Xoom in exchange for tweets and followers.

**Baidu says to open new office in South China**

SHENZHEN, 16 Jan—Baidu Inc said on Monday it broke ground on a new building in the southern city of Shenzhen that would hold its mobile Internet research and development offices and south China and international headquarters.

"Mobile Internet and internationalization are the future important expansion drives for Baidu," Robin Li, Baidu’s chief executive, said in a statement.

Last year, Baidu launched its “Yi” mobile operating platform and partnered with Dell to offer a smartphone based on the system. The system will be completed by 2015.

**Censoring social media curbs free speech, netizens say.**

"Censoring content on social media sites is totally unjustified. How different would we be from China or Afghanisthan then?"

"Inflammatory content on internet cannot be accepted. It harms some people's sentiments, but this is no way to rectify that problem. Putting curbs on these websites will hamper our sense of liberty," said Jatin Panchi, an engineering student from Indraprastha University. Freelance writer Pooja Kapur told IANS: "Censoring content on social media sites is totally unjustified. How different would we be from China or Afghanisthan then?"

"Censoring content on social media sites is totally unjustified. How different would we be from China or Afghanisthan then?"

Others felt that there should be some control over the internet, but only to a certain extent. Vedika Nandan, a model, said: "I think censoring of the internet is good, but to a certain extent." —Internet
Drought threatens south of Mozambique

MAPUTO, 16 Jan—High temperatures and drought are threatening the agricultural production in two regions of Mozambique, according to the state radio on Sunday. Masanganja, which is in Gaza Province in the south of the country, has been rainless for months.

Crops are being killed, and the maize has started to dry. In the area of Homoine, things are going in the same way.

Authorities in the regions said the situation will be even worse if there will be no rain within a week.

Masanganza is one of the regions which have been seriously attacked by famine in Gaza since last year.

According to Radio Mozambique, farmers are in a disarray now since the drought has accelerated the hardship. On the contrary, the northern and central parts of the country are suffering the rains which are threatening to submerge the crops.—Xinhua

Sudanese President meets with senior CPC official

KHARTOUM, 16 Jan—Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir met with Li Yuanchao, a senior official of the Communist Party of China (CPC), on Sunday to discuss ways to promote relations between the two countries.

Li, a member of the Political Bureau of the CPC, said China and Sudan are “a model for the south-south cooperation.

Sudanese President highly appreciates the outcomes of the economic cooperation with China and is willing to enhance exchanges and cooperation to achieve the interests of the two peoples, al-Bashir added.

He reiterated willingness of the ruling CPC to consolidate and develop the friendship and cooperation with the CPC and learn from the successful experiences of the CPC.

Britain education secretary determined to push forward school reforms

LONDON, 16 Jan—Britain’s education secretary said on Sunday for British students to move up their rankings in the international community, the exams must be tougher, though the ambition could take a decade to achieve.

Speaking to the BBC Sunday Politics show, Education Secretary Michael Gove said the education system needed to be a top of the list of priorities.

He added that a top of the list of priorities was the number of A-level passes as the price for making the exams tougher. Grade inflation “discredits the integrity of our education system and the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE)”s A-levels and degrees must get “tougher”, Gove said.

“What hope we will see is our exams are once again trusted across the globe and our children are among the best in the world,” he added.

The British government is eager to improve the country’s position in the international education league tables, which in 2011 put Britain 17th for reading, 24th for mathematics in the world. The education secretary, meanwhile, said a 10-year period would be needed for Britain’s position in international education league tables to improve.

“We do need to climb up that league table, but I think it will take about 10 years before we can begin to see the fruits of all the reforms we’re making, which will lead to a turnaround in the league tables,” he said.

Gove also mentioned he would use a number of short-term measures to judge the success of his education policies. This includes more students taking rigorous subjects, more headteachers taking advantage of academy powers, and more independent schools choosing to join the state sector.—Xinhua

Thai king treated for digestive ailment

BANGKOK, 16 Jan—Thailand’s King Bhumibol Adulyadej, 84, who is widely revered, was diagnosed with diverticulitis, a condition that is relatively common among the elderly and can cause stomach pain.

His blood pressure, temperature and breathing were normal, the Royal Household Bureau said in a statement released late Sunday.

The king was admitted to hospital in September 2009 for treatment of a respiratory condition and has rarely left since then, aside from a few public appearances including a public speech in early December on his birthday.

Any discussion of the royal family is extremely sensitive in politically turbulent Thailand, where the palace has been silent over the graduation of the eventual succession.

Kazakh ruling party wins 80.74 percent in vote; early result

ASTANA, 16 Jan—The ruling party of Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev won 80.74 percent of the vote in snap elections, retaining its dominant grip on parliament, early results showed on Monday.

Nur Otan will be joined in parliament by the pro-business AK-Zhol (Bright Path) party, which polled 7.46 percent, and the Communist People’s Party of Kazakhstan, which collected 7.2 percent, the central election commission said.

Nonetheless, four parties contesting Sunday’s poll in the resource-rich Central Asian state broke through the seven-percent threshold, meaning they will remain out of parliament.

The only vehemently anti-government party—the All-National Social Democratic Party (OSDP)—won just 1.59 percent of the vote, Kazakh election chief Kuanysh Turankulov told reporters.

“This is our shared victory,” Nazarbayev told his supporters moments after the results were announced. “This means that the people of Kazakhstan will continue supporting our course of stability and unity.”

The snap polls had been called early to breathe new life into a system under which Nazarbayev, 71, put economic prosperity before political freedoms and in which his Nur Otan party has until now controlled all the seats in parliament.—Internet

Cambodia probes bodies in Frenchman’s car

PHNOM PENH, 16 Jan—Cambodian police were on Sunday investigating the deaths of five people — presumed to be a missing Frenchman and his four children — whose skeletal remains were found in a submerged car.

The white 4x4 vehicle owned by widower Laurent Vallier, 42, was retrieved from a pond behind his house in southern Kampong Speu Province on Saturday. The family was last seen on Saturday in September. “We still investigating the case,” said provincial police chief Ken Pisey.

An AFP reporter who visited the site saw at least four human skulls laid out on a white sheet next to the muddied vehicle, as well as an open suitcase.

Police officials and the French embassy in Phnom Penh told AFP that it was impossible to immediately identify the victims because of the badly decomposed state of their bodies.

But Chhay Sinarith, director of the interior ministry’s internal security department, said they were presumed to be Vallier and his children, aged two to 11, since four of the skulls appeared to be relatively small. “We are still waiting for the results from the experts,” he said.

“Now we are appealing for witnesses who may recognise the clothes and the shoes we found in the car. It’s most likely the remains belong to the missing French family,” Chhay Sinarith initially said the bodies of two children were found inside a suitcase, but a police officer close to the investigation told AFP that the case was broken and the bones might have drifted in there over time, as the car is thought to have lain submerged for weeks.—Internet
Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker-Thura U Shwe Mann received a goodwill delegation led by former Prime Minister of Japan Mr. Shinzo Abe at Zabuthiri Meeting Hall of Hluttaw Building here at 9 am yesterday where he inspected agricultural implements.

YANGON, 16 Jan—Union Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation U Myint Hlaing visited 100-acre Palethwe hybrid strain farm of Green Asia Co in Mechanized Farming Special Agriculture Zone No. 2 in Dagon Myothit (Seikkan) Township in Yangon Region yesterday where he inspected agricultural implements.

The Union minister then proceeded to Ngamoeyeik sluice gate construction project site in Dagon Myothit (East) Township where he gave necessary instructions after hearing reports.

Afterwards, he went to 500-acre mechanized farm of Dagon International Co situated in 10000-acre mechanized farm. The Union minister viewed thriving paddy fields.

French Minister of Foreign Affairs and European Affairs Mr. Alain Juppe gives an interview to local and foreign correspondents at Nay Pyi Taw International Airport. —MNA

At the briefing hall of the company, the Union minister briefed UMFCCI President U Win Aung and officials on making concerted efforts for long-lasting advanced mechanized farming system of the State. The Union minister also inspected paddy growing process at 300-acre seedling farm jointly established by International Sun Moon Star Co and Agriculture Hitech seeding company of the Philippines.

At Myint Zeya Kyaw Family Co, the Union minister called on the UMFCCI president, entrepreneurs and agriculturists of Philippine Agriculture Hitech Co to strive for production of quality paddy so as to penetrate global paddy market.

The Union minister met with local and foreign correspondents to clarify about his trip to Myanmar and replied to queries raised by the correspondents.

They had a cordial discussion on further cementing friendly ties already in place between the two countries, mutual cooperation between the two parliaments and investment opportunities.

Also present on the occasion together with the Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw were chairmen of Pyithu Hluttaw committees and officials.

A delegation led by French Minister of Foreign Affairs and European Affairs Mr. Alain Juppe left here by air at 4 pm today. They were seen off at the airport, the French minister met with local and foreign correspondents to clarify about his trip to Myanmar and replied to queries raised by the correspondents.

In Rakhine State and to build schools and clinics, nine construction companies handed over responsibility to Pipeline Co Ltd (SEAOP) and nine companies in progress—"MNA"

South-East Asia Crude Oil Pipeline Co Ltd (SEAOP) and nine companies in progress—"MNA"

Nine companies handed over socio-economic development plans—"MNA"

Agreement-signing ceremony between South-East Asia Crude Oil Pipeline Co Ltd (SEAOP) and nine companies in progress—"MNA"
Vice-President Thiha Thura U Tin Aung Myint Oo...

(From page 1)

Speaking on the occasion, chairman of the ceremony Naga national U Ba Cho gave an account of the festival that Naga Traditional New Year Festival dates back to the time of their forefathers, which was celebrated after the harvest in December and January in villages of respective tribes separately. Since 1992, it has been celebrated at the gathering and it has reached its 20th Anniversary this year.

He expressed his thanks to the former Tatmadaw government and incumbent government for all of their endeavours for sector-wise development of Naga Region which was once lagged behind in all aspects. According to the constitution ratified by the people on 10 May, 2008, Leshi, Lahe and Nanyun townships in Sagaing Region were constituted to form Naga Self-Administered Zone. In addition, the government has formed township-level administrative organs for Pansaung, Donhee, Huanpakwe and Moepai sub-townships to enable them effectively make development endeavours.

He then gave an account of government’s efforts for development of Naga Region, noting that a total of 212 miles long road such as Hkamti (Sinthay)-Lahe road, Lahe- Yankone road, Lahe-Kuyan road, Lahe-Sawlaw-Ponenyo road and so on has been constructed along with 98 miles and one furlong long Lahe-Nanyun motor road which was opened during Naga Festival 2011. The government spent K 13189.31 million in 2011-2012 fiscal year for smooth transportation in the region.

The government has built a large number of suspension bridges and Nansalein motor road-cum-suspension bridge across Hkamti (Sinthay)-Lahe road was inaugurated during Naga Festival 2009. Smooth transportation was once admired by the entire Naga nationals who are now witnessing the efforts for smooth transportation in the time of incumbent government.

As for health care services, three 25-bedded township hospitals, four 16-bedded sub-township hospitals, three operation theatres, three labs, two X-ray rooms, two station hospitals, 11 rural healthcare centres, and 44 rural healthcare centres (branch) have increased compared to 1988. Public healthcare services have been more effective thanks to government’s provision of necessary medicines and medical funds.

Before 1988, there were only one Basic Education High School, four Basic Education Middle Schools and 127 Basic Education Primary Schools in Leshi, Lahe and Nanyun townships but the government’s articulation of "Access to education for all school-age children" and "Literacy for All" is taking shape in the region as well apart from increase in number of monastic schools, youth development schools and women’s domestic science training schools. Under the management of the region government, schools were upgraded and K 8.24 million was provided for face-lift of old schools in addition to K 2.5 million funded by Zeya Padetha Foundation for education sector of the region.

Locals have matriculated, stepping forward to higher education. Educated Naga nationals have emerged in large numbers who are now serving the nation both in military and civil fields. Naga nationals are benefitting from the government’s efforts for promotion of education standard in accord with the motto “Higher education standard, better socio-economic status.” There are six re-transmission stations in the region, enabling the locals to keep in touch with the world and the other parts of the country. Mobile communication has been launched in Nanyun Township and Pansaung Sub-township will soon have access to it.

Under the aegis of the region chief minister and ministers, eight-point rural development and poverty alleviation scheme has come into operation in Naga Self-Administered Zone. In conclusion, he urged Naga nationals to march towards new democratic nation hand in hand with other national brethren upholding the national policy which is Our Three Main National Causes—non-disintegration of the Union, non-disintegration of national solidarity and perpetuation of sovereignty and sticking to the policies of the Union government and region government.

In his greetings, Sagaing Region Chief Minister U Tha Aye said once Naga New Year Festival was celebrated separately in villages and now it is celebrated collaboratively in towns of Naga Region in rotation.

Naga Self-Administered Zone was established with Leshi, Lahe and Nanyun townships in Sagaing Region, providing the never-before-chances for smoothing the path to effective regional administration and development following the formation of Naga Self-Administered Zone Leading Body.

In order to effectively implement regional development tasks in remote areas and establish regular administrative mechanism, the government has been setting up sub-townships and it has opened offices in Donhee, Huanpakwe and Moepai sub-townships, aiding the development of education, health, social and other sectors.

The government has carried out upgrading schemes for ensuring smooth transportation, the primary need for regional development year by year and locals now can witness better transportation within Naga region.

Rural Development and Poverty Alleviation Central Committee, Region/State subcommittees and district and township subcommittees have been working on the ground to bring down the poverty rate of rural people and improve their living standard.

Previously, the region had only about 20000 acres of farmland and has now increased by over 27000 acres. Such high yield paddy strains as Shweyinaye, Sin Eikri (3) could be distributed to farmers and such strains are expected to yield over 70 to 80 baskets of rice per acre.

(See Page 9)
Consider the progress made in the development of rural areas and poverty alleviation efforts. (from page 16)

Chairman U Ru San Kyu of Naga Self-Administered Zone Leading Body submitted a report on the inspection of boundary posts in the zone, plans to ensure local food security, and prospects for earning about 3 million kyats from growing cardamom on a one-acre farmland, measures for smooth transport, reclamation of terrain farmland and healthcare services.

Afterwards, Lahe Township Pyithu Hluttaw representative U Hsa Mu reported on the needs for Lahe township development. Then, Region Chief Minister U Tha Aye reported on plans for speeding up agricultural and livestock breeding tasks to help develop the economy of the township and Wetlet Township Pyithu Hluttaw representative Thura U Aye Myint on emergence of the Pyithu Hluttaw, Amyotha Hluttaw, Pyidaungsu Hluttaw and Region/State Hluttaw in accord with the constitution and Hluttaw affairs.

The Union Ministers and deputy ministers who accompanied the tour of the Vice-President presented reports on the tasks of their respective ministries. Then, after making coordination with the departments concerned, the Vice-President fulfilled the requirements such as upgrading of self-help schools, upgrading of Yankone middle school, enabling the matriculated students to join Teacher Training College, construction of staff quarters for the township enabling the matriculated students to join Teacher Training College, construction of staff quarters for the township.

The region lacked development due to climate condition and poor transport. But today, Naga Self-Administered Zone Leading Body is taking close supervisory measures for regional development. The government on its part is providing assistance for development of road transport, important for regional development.

The Vice-President continued to say that the government’s implementation of rural development and poverty alleviation tasks will facilitate the progress of the whole Naga region. The food sufficiency for the whole region is a priority and the goal will be achieved through... (See page 10)

Vice-President Thiha Thura U Tin Aung Myint Oo... (from page 8)

Sagai Region government, to implement rural development and poverty alleviation scheme in effectiveness, has founded Zeya Padetha Foundation which provided capitals for different industries—K 128.8 million for development and poverty alleviation scheme in effective manner. Lahe—K 183.4 million for microfinance farming development, encouraging establishment of live-agricultural development and K 94.1 million for livestock provided capitals for different industries—K 128.8 million for development and poverty alleviation scheme in effective manner. Lahe—K 183.4 million for microfinance farming development, encouraging establishment of live-agricultural development and K 94.1 million for livestock provided capitals for different industries—K 128.8 million for development and poverty alleviation scheme in effective manner. Lahe—K 183.4 million for microfinance farming development, encouraging establishment of live-agricultural development and K 94.1 million for livestock provided capitals for different industries—K 128.8 million for development and poverty alleviation scheme in effective manner. Lahe—K 183.4 million for microfinance farming development, encouraging establishment of live-agricultural development and K 94.1 million for livestock

The Vice-President then provided cash assistance for observing Naga New Year festival and raised a fund for annual celebration of Naga New Year festival. Deputy Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and resettlement U Phone Swe presented cash assistance and utensils donated by the Border Affairs Ministry to Naga New Year Festival 2012 to the members of the leading body of Naga Self-Administered Zone. Next, the Union ministers, the region chief minister, deputy ministers, Pyithu Hluttaw Representative Thura U Aye Myint presented clothing, household goods, food-stuffs, farm implements, school uniforms, note books, uniforms for firefighters and Red Cross members, medicines, paddy and vegetable seeds, computers, publications and periodicals, sports gear and solar panels for the region.

For education, health and social works and implementing rural development and poverty alleviation scheme in Naga region, Union Solidarity and Development Party provided K 100 million, Max Myanmar Co, IGE Co, Shwe Thanlwin Co, Kanbawza Bank Ltd, Eden Co, Asia World Co, Shwe tung Co, A 1 Co, IBTC Co presented K 400 million through the leading body chairman. Next, the leading body chairman awarded outstanding students, followed by lucky-draw programme in which 10 wards and villages won DTH Sky Net receivers, TV, portable generators and solar panels and 14 wards and villages won clothing. In addition, a lucky-draw programme for free study trip to Nay Pyi Taw, Yangon and Mandalay was organized for Naga nationals.

After the ceremony, the Vice-President and wife cordially greeted foreign tourists, traditional cultural reps, and local Naga nationals present at the event.

The Vice-President, wife and party enjoyed the campfire festivity in the evening. Chairman of the leading body opened the festivity during which different tribes entertained with their traditional music and dances. The Vice-President, wife and party presented awards to the dance troupes. They then cordially greeted the performers.—MNA
Government’s implementation of rural development and poverty alleviation tasks...

(from page 9)

...cultivation of quality paddy strains with necessary inputs such as natural fertilizers and per-acre high-yield of paddy. At this point, correct agricultural data are necessary, the Vice-President noted.

He then called for systematic breeding of myshunas and goats, cultivation of cardamom with correct methods, seeking market and making coordination with the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation to get a deserving price, supervision for construction of small-scale power stations as the region is blessed with resources for generating electricity on a manageable scale. The Vice-President promised annual plans for upgrading Hsinbyau-Lahe road, Lahe-Leshi road and Nanyn-Phauhawng road to be all-weather ones. A fund will be set up by forming a foundation for regional health and education development, rural development and poverty alleviation, added the Vice-President.

Then, Union Minister for Border Affairs and Development Lt-Gen Thein Htay provided exercise books and school uniforms; Deputy Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement U Phone Swe blankets, clothes and uniforms; Deputy Minister for Home Affairs Brig-Gen Kyaw Zan Myint solar lanterns; Shwe Thanlwin Co Chairman U Kyaw Win DTH Sky Net receiver, TV portable generator; and Max Myanmar Co Ltd Chairman U Zaw Zaw and IGE Co Chairman U Nay Aung cash for the funds of Lahe Township Hospital and Hinthawgyaw Station Hospital.

The Vice-President then inspected the shops and stores in Lahe and greeted the local nationals. The Vice-President and party visited the set standard.

Later, the Vice-President and party left Lahe by helicopter and arrived in Leshi of Naga Self-Administered Zone where they were welcomed by departmental officials, members of social organizations, townelders and locals.
Bullfighting thriving in Himalayas

KATHMANDU, 16 Jan — A half-tonne bull enters the ring, snorting and rearing, before running at full pelt towards a section of spectators, drawing screams of fear and delight from the frenzied crowd.

It could be a scene from any Spanish arena but this is bullfighting Nepal-style, with thousands trekking deep into the Himalayan foothills to watch a centuries-old spectacle whose popularity is growing even as its appeal wanes in Europe.

Every year thousands of Nepalis come to see the animals fight at a festival marking Maghe Sankranti, the first day of the tenth month in the nation’s calendar when villagers celebrate an end to winter and usher in warmer weather.

Unlike its European cousin, there are no matadors — the bulls take on each other — and buffalos are preferred to traditional bulls, which are sacred in the Hindu-majority country. “Bull fights have been happening all around here for a long time. My grandfather used to say they have been going on for more than 200 years,” said Janak Raj Dhungana, whose organization organizes the fiesta in the village of Taruka, 80 kilometres (50 miles) north of the capital Kathmandu.

“The fights used to happen in different places around Nuwakot District. But six years ago we brought them all together for one big fight here.”

Seven pairs of bulls did battle in a ring overlooking the spectacular terraced hillsides, fertile valleys and terracotta tiled roofs of Nuwakot in front of a crowd of 5,000 perched on grass banks and muddy slopes on Sunday.

This was not as lucrative as the Spanish circuit, with winning owners receiving prize money of 1,000 rupees ($12) from the village authorities and the losers getting half that.

The buffalo are selected when they are calves and trained only to fight at the annual fiesta, being spared the ploughing duties their less tenacious siblings are reared for.

Civilian injured in KIA (Kachin) mine blast

NAY PYI TAW, 16 Jan— A half-tonne bull enters the ring, snorting and rearing, before running at full pelt towards a section of spectators, drawing screams of fear and delight from the frenzied crowd.

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NAY PYI TAW, 16 Jan—The Union Election Commission issued Notification No. 5/2012 dated 16-1-2012.

The translation of the notification is as follows:

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Union Election Commission
Nay Pyi Taw
Notification No. 5/2012
8th Waning of Pyatho, 1373 ME
16 January, 2012

The 88-Forces of People’s Party, headquartered at No. 78, ZaZa-15 at the corner of Khaing Shwe Wah Street in 46th Street, Htondon Ward in Chanmyathazi Township of Mandalay Region was allowed to register in accord with Political Parties Registration Law Section 9 as of 16 January 2012.

The registration number of 88-Forces of People’s Party is 48.

Sd/
Win Ko
Secretary
Union Election Commission

Khamaungdway Village Primary School in Pauktaw

Tsp gets new building

NAY PYI TAW, 16 Jan — Rakhine State Chief Minister U Hla Maung Tin attended a ceremony to open a new building of Khamaungdway Village Primary School in Pauktaw Township on 13 January morning.

The state chief minister, ministers and education officer formally opened the new school building. The building was constructed as one of rehabilitation tasks in post Giri storm. — MNA

Basic diplomatic skills course opened

YANGON, 16 Jan — The Foreign Affairs Ministry held an opening ceremony of the basic diplomatic skills course No. 27/2012 at Winzirimin Yaza Hall of the ministry here this morning, with an address of Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs Dr Myo Myint.

The course will deal with current international affairs, holding international conferences, negotiation, international laws, international business relation, international social ethic, diplomatic and office letter writing, and communication arts work.

The 12-week course is being attended by a total of 181 trainees. — MNA

Australia’s unemployment rate forecast to rise in 2012

SYDNEY, 16 Jan — Australia is expected to have a higher jobless rate in 2012, the nation’s major bank ANZ Bank said on Monday. The total number of job advertisements in Australia on the Internet and in newspapers dropped 0.9 percent in December compared with the previous month, contributing to a 2.6 percent annual fall, ANZ said.

"Indeed, the current trend rate of employment growth is unlikely to be fast enough to absorb the forecast growth in the labor force in the short term," Dean said. — Xinhua

People watch a bullfight during the Maghe Sankranti festival at Nepal’s Taruka village on 13 January. — INTERNET
China basketball star Yao Ming enters politics

Shanghai, 16 Jan—Not content with owning a basketball team, studying business and making wine, China’s former NBA superstar Yao Ming has now become the youngest—and tallest—legislative advisor in Shanghai.

The 31-year-old was formally accepted as a member of an advisory body to Shanghai’s legislature at the weekend—a position that entities him to make proposals for possible new laws—the official China Daily reported.

A photograph printed by the newspaper shows the 2.28-metre (7-foot, 6-inch) Yao towering above other newly selected members of the advisory body—who late venture since he formally retired from the Houston Rockets in July.

“Raising proposals in very serious business and I don’t want to be hasty,” Yao was quoted as saying.

Since July, Yao’s busy schedule has involved him going back to school for a university degree in business management and helping manage the Shanghai Sharks, a Chinese basketball team.

In November, he set up a company to sell his own brand of wine using grapes from California’s famed Napa Valley, and his new role in politics has sparked concern Yao may be taking on too much. But Zhang Chi, a spokesman for the Shanghai Sharks, dismissed these worries.

Carbon dioxide affecting fish brains

Melbourne, 16 Jan—Rising human carbon dioxide emissions may be affecting the brains and central nervous systems of sea fish, with serious consequences for their survival, according to new research.

Carbon dioxide concentrations predicted to occur in the ocean by the end of this century will interfere with fish’s ability to hear, smell, turn and evade predators, the research found.

The Australian Research Council’s Centre of Excellence for Coral Reef Studies said it had been testing the performance of baby coral fish in sea water containing higher levels of dissolved CO2 for several years. “And it is now pretty clear that they sustain significant disruption to their central nervous system, which is likely to impair their chances of survival,” said Phillip Munday, a professor who reported the findings.

In a paper published in the journal Nature Climate Change, Munday and his colleagues also detail what they say is world-first evidence that high CO2 levels in sea water disrupts a key brain receptor in fish.

This causes marked changes in their behaviour and sensory abilities. “We’ve found that elevated CO2 in the oceans can directly interfere with fish neurotransmitter functions, which poses a direct and previously unknown threat to sea life,” said Munday. The team began by studying how baby clown and damsel fishes performed alongside their predators in CO2-enriched water.

Bodies of snowmobilers pulled from Minnesota lake

Minneapolis, 16 Jan—Divers recovered the bodies of two men Sunday whose snowmobile sank after hitting open water on a lake near the Twin Cities, the first-thin-ice related deaths reported in Minnesota in a mild winter that has left ice unreliable across the state.

Dozens of people have fallen into frigid waters around Minnesota this winter as unseasonably warm temperatures have weakened ice and in some cases left patches of open water such as those on Lake Charlotte northwest of Minneapolis.

“IT was a single snowmobile and it appears to have just run right into open water,” said Captain Greg Howell of the Wright County Sheriff’s Office. “It’s been a bad year for ice.” Howell said divers recovered the bodies of two young adult men Sunday afternoon and were withholding their names pending a positive identification and notification of family members.

The two-year-old man from Buffalo, Minnesota, riding an all-terrain vehicle had reported seeing a snowmobile drop into the lake on Saturday night, went to investigate and was rescued by a neighbor when his ATV also sank into the water, Howell said.

ROK, Oman to cooperate to stabilize oil supply to Seoul

Seoul, 16 Jan—South Korea and Oman have agreed to cooperate to ensure stable oil and gas supply to Seoul while the country seeks a waiver of toughened US sanctions on Iran and weighs up options, including reducing crude imports from Teheran.

South Korea, the world’s fifth-largest importer of crude, buys 10 percent of its oil from Iran and 2 percent from Oman. Prime Minister Lee Myung-bak and Kim Kwan-sik, vice president of the oil company over the weekend before heading to the United Arab Emirates for oil supply talks. “Both sides have agreed to closely cooperate to continue stable energy supplies, including liquefied natural gas and crude oil in the face of instability in the international crude oil markets,” the Prime Minister’s Office said in a statement, referring to the meetings between Oman and South Korea. —MFA/Reuters
British man has passport tattooed on back

A British man had his passport tattooed on his back and even used the image as an ID to take money out of the bank, he said.

Richard Ashton, 27, told The Sun he had his passport inked on his back while backpacking in Australia in 2006.

"I wanted something to remember my holiday by, but also wanted something patriotic," he said. "My girlfriend at the time thought it was a bit daft, but eventually she found it hilarious. That seems to be the general reaction."

The London personal trainer said when he ran out of cash on his trip to Australia, he took off his shirt at a bank to use as ID.

"The cashier gave me a strange look. She typed in my name and details after reading my passport and allowed me $50," Ashton said, who was born in Sydney and holds dual citizenship, said he keeps his tattoo covered up most of the time.

"I don’t walk around with my top off." British officials said Ashton couldn’t use the tattoo as ID to go abroad or enter Britain.

Mafia villa to be police barracks

A luxury villa used as a hideout by a boss in the Sicilian Mafia is being converted into a police barracks, Italian officials said.

The conversion is expected to take a year, the Italian news agency ANSA reported.

The house, in Sicily where Toto Riina, known as "The Beast," lived for more than two decades as a fugitive, hosts a swimming pool.

He was arrested in 1993.

Toto, the provincial commander of the Carabinieri, called the police takeover of the building, which began Friday, a "highly symbolic act." Riina’s victims including his daughter, were included at least two magistrates.

Town’s patience with wild boars wears out

An Italian resort town overrun with wild boars has granted residents the right to shoot them on sight, local officials said.

Spokesman for the Town of Allassio, Paolo Ripamonti, told the ANSA news agency the boars have worn out their quick caches by digging up and ruining gardens, causing traffic accidents and striking fear into children and adults.

The town is in the Liguria Region on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea near the French border and has a strong tourism industry, which the boars were threatening, Ripamonti said. "The population was exhausted," he said.

Culling the boars has a bonus for the hunters — the antlers, originally shed by pigs, are considered a delicacy in Italy, ANSA said.

‘Contraband’ swipes No 1 spot at box office

LOS ANGELES, 16 Jan — “Contraband” managed to steal the top slot away from competitors at the weekend box office.

The Universal action drama starring Mark Wahlberg as a reformed smuggler debuted at expectations above No 1 with $24 million, while Disney’s 3-D re-release of “Beauty and the Beast” walked into the No 2 position with $18.5 million, according to studio estimates Sunday. Both films helped boost Hollywood’s business after a sluggish holiday season.

French librarians encourage copying

A group of French librarians is urging patrons to make copies of books and DVDs they check out despite the government crackdown on piracy.

The effort is led by a librarian-blogger who argues the new law against illegal downloads does not apply to material found at public libraries.

“What is the first objective of a library? It’s to distribute books and works of art,” the blogger, identified as Silvace, wrote recently. The Local said Silvace has been encouraging library patrons to organize copies to complete with computers and cameras to record the content of books, CDs and DVDs.

France enacted restrictions in 2009 that allow authorities to cut off Internet service to users who repeatedly downloaded protected material.

Two Calif children promote indie film

BURBANK, 16 Jan — Two young California girls say they were so inspired by the indie film “The First Grader” they’ve started a campaign to get it considered for an Oscar.

The movie, based on the true story of an 84-year-old Kenyan man willing to sit in an elementary classroom with 6-year-olds to exercise his right to a free education, was a hit at this year’s Sundance Film Festival but failed to find an audience in its theatrical release, the Burbank (Calif) Leader reported on Saturday.

But when sisters Allie and Olivia Shea, ages 11 and 8, saw the movie, its inspirational message hit home and they asked their father to help them launch the Shea Family Foundation to promote the film.

“I must admit I was not really aware of how important the whole awards season can be,” said Darin Shea, an information technology entrepreneur who moved his family from Arkansas to Burbank two years ago to support his children’s acting ambitions.

“Iron Lady” locks up $5.4 million over weekend


LOS ANGELES, 16 Jan — “The Iron Lady,” the Weinstein Company’s biopic of Margaret Thatcher, entered its first week of wide release as the No 1 movie in America — the only specialty film in the top 10. Last week’s No. 9 film, Focus Features’ “Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy,” dropped out of the top 10 this week.

“The Iron Lady” — like the specialty films “The Artist,” “My Week With Marilyn,” “The Descendants,” “Shame,” “We Need to Talk About Kevin” and “Carnage” — could get a boost from Sunday night’s Golden Globe Awards.

“Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy” received no nominations. Meryl Streep was nominated for her portrayal of the former prime minister of Britain in “The Iron Lady,” which took in $5.4 million in 802 locations in 141 markets this weekend. “It didn’t really well in a lot of commercial theaters,” Erik Losim, the Weinstein Company’s distribution president, told TheWrap on Sunday morning. “It did really well in art theaters, as well.”

This is “Iron Lady’s” third week in release, but last week, it was in only five locations.

With the wider release, its per-location average increased from an unsustainable high $34,420 to a very strong $6,716.

Michelle Williams, Madonna among early winners at Golden Globes

LOS ANGELES, 16 Jan — Michelle Williams, who started in “My Week With Marilyn,” and Madonna are the early winners at the 69th Golden Globe Awards held Sunday evening at the Beverly Hilton Hotel, Los Angeles.

Williams won the Best Actress award in a Motion Picture (Musical or Comedy) category for her portrayal of Marilyn Monroe in “My Week with Marilyn.” She dedicated her award to Mattilda Ledger, her six-year-old daughter.

"I consider myself a mother first, and an actress second. The person I most want to thank is my daughter, my little girl, whose bravery and exuberance is the example that I take with me in my work and in my life," Williams said during her acceptance speech.

Kate Winslet won Best Performance by an Actress in a TV miniseries/movie for her role in HBO’s “ Mildred Pierce.” The actress, who is also an Emmy Award winner, also received a Golden Globe nod for “Carnage,” Roman Polanski’s latest production.

Madonna won the Golden Globe award for Best Original Song in a motion picture for WE’s “Masterpiece.” “This is a surprise,” she said during her acceptance speech. The evening’s first award, the Best Supporting Actor in a feature film, went to Christopher Plummer for “Beginners.”

A poster of “The Adventure of Toitu” — Increasing ‘Artist,’ ‘Descendants’ take top Globes

LOS ANGELES, 16 Jan — “The Descendants” and “The Artist” won the top film prizes at the Golden Globe Awards ceremony in Los Angeles on Sunday night.

The Hawaii-set family drama “The Descendants” won the Best Dramatic Film, while its star, George Clooney, was named Best Actor in a Drama.

We had an extraordinary ensemble cast of younger and older actors, veterans and newcomers, but our quarterback was George Clooney. Aside from a career best performance in my mind, he was a generous actor who helped everyone do their very best. Thanks, George, “Descendants” producer Jim Taylor said as he accepted the Best Film award.

“The Artist” was named Best Foreign Language Film.

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Kim Clijsters opens title defence in style, joins Na Li in Australian Open 2nd round

MELBOURNE, 16 Jan—Belgian superstar Kim Clijsters made an impactful start to her title defence at the 2012 Australian Open with a 7-6 6-2 7-6 6-3 thrashing of Portuguese qualifier Maria Joao Koehler and joined 2011 finalist Na Li in the second round. Defending champion Kim Clijsters defeated.

American Wagner wins Sony Open by two shots

HAWAII, 16 Jan—American Johnson Wagner, ice-cool until the very last hole, won his third PGA Tour title by two shots after shaking off a tightly-bunched pack of pursuers at the Sony Open in Hawaii Sunday.

Two strokes off the pace going into the final round at a breezy Waialae Country Club, Wagner played error-free golf over the back nine holes of the day and carded a 2-under 66 to finish at 14-under 270. The 31-year-old Texan recorded two birdies after the turn to post a 13-under total of 267 in the PGA Tour’s first full-field event of the season. His only moment of concern came at the par-five 16th where he hit his third shot from a green side bunker to 10 feet, lagged his approach putt 8 inches short and then wobbled his par putt into the cup via the right edge. “It was a little shaky,” a smiling Wagner said.

“Leaving that birdie putt short was pretty pathetic really, but knowing that I had four from there sure made it easier.”

Janet Evans qualifies for 800m Olympic swim trials

AUSTIN, 16 Jan—Janet Evans qualified for the Olympic trials in the 800-meter freestyle preliminary race at the Austin Grand Prix swimming meet on 15 Jan, 2012, in Austin, Texas.—Internet

Inter down Milan to reignite Serie A title race

MILAN, 16 Jan—Inter Milan coach Claudio Ranieri refused to discuss the Serie A title after his side earn a crucial 1-0 win away to champions AC Milan to squeeze the top of the table. Inter’s win, coupled with Juventus’s 1-1 draw at home to Cagliari, means the top five are now separated by just six points.

Ranieri freely admitted that his side were back in the frame but refused to discuss the title. “I’ve said it day one, I won’t talk about (the title) due to modesty and superstition,” he said. “The first thing for us was that it wasn’t important to get into the Europa League zone and we’ve done that.” Next up is the Champions League zone.

Roger Federer storms into Australian Open 2nd round, Del Potro wins too

MELBOURNE, 16 Jan—Where four time champion Roger Federer opened his quest for a record seventh Australian Open crown with a comfortable win over Alexandre Kudryavtsev, Juan Martin Del Potro was made to struggle in his Melbourne opener.

Nine-time champion Roger Federer, who has made a whopping 14 aces and 43 winners in the entire match to 21 from Kudryavtsev and capitavised on the 42nd unforced errors committed by the Russian. World No.3 Roger Federer made a superb start to the Australian Open title campaign with a straight sets win over Russian Alexandre Kudryavtsev in the first round match being played here at the Melbourne Park, venue to the year’s first major in Melbourne, Australia. Federer hit more winners (8 to 2) and fewer unforced errors committed by the Russian.

Belgian number one Kim Clijsters.

International Sports

Henry and Hughes make losing returns

LODZ, 16 Jan—Swansea City turned on the style to beat Arsenal 3-2 and deny Thierry Henry a magical return to the Premier League and Mark Hughes made a losing start as manager of struggling Queens Park Rangers on Sunday. Arsenal stayed fifth in the table, four points behind Chelsea and 12 adrift of leaders Manchester City who have a game in hand.

The league’s top scorer Robin van Persie put the Gunners ahead in the fifth minute but the Londoners’ hopes of closing the gap between them and the Champions League places suffered a setback when Scott Sinclair equalised from the penalty spot 11 minutes later. Nathan Dyer fired the Welsh side in front 57 minutes at a chilly Liberty Stadium, Theo Walcott came good with an equaliser in the 69th but Danny Graham hit back straight from the re-start.

American Johnson Wagner of the US drives off the first tee during the final round of the Sony Open golf tournament at the Waialae Country Club in Honolulu, Hawaii on 15 January, 2012.—Reuters

Thierry Henry (R) of Arsenal dribbles the ball past Angel Rangel of Swansea City during their English Premier League soccer match at the Liberty Stadium in Swansea, South Wales, on 15 January, 2012.—Reuters

American Johnson Wagner of the US drives off the first tee during the final round of the Sony Open golf tournament at the Waialae Country Club in Honolulu, Hawaii on 15 January, 2012.—Reuters

Janet Evans swims in the women’s 800-meter freestyle preliminary race at the Austin Grand Prix swimming meet on 15 Jan, 2012, in Austin, Texas.—Internet

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Roger Federer wins Sony Open by two shots

HAWAII, 16 Jan—American Johnson Wagner, ice-cool until the very last hole, won his third PGA Tour title by two shots after shaking off a tightly-bunched pack of pursuers at the Sony Open in Hawaii Sunday.

Two strokes off the pace going into the final round at a breezy Waialae Country Club, Wagner played error-free golf over the back nine holes of the day and carded a 2-under 66 to finish at 14-under 270. The 31-year-old Texan recorded two birdies after the turn to post a 13-under total of 267 in the PGA Tour’s first full-field event of the season. His only moment of concern came at the par-five 16th where he hit his third shot from a green side bunker to 10 feet, lagged his approach putt 8 inches short and then wobbled his par putt into the cup via the right edge. “It was a little shaky,” a smiling Wagner said.

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Barcelona battle to cut Real lead to five points

Barcelona, 16 Jan—Barcelona squandered a two-goal lead before seeing off 10-man Real Betis 4-2 to cut Real Madrid's lead at the top of La Liga back to five points on Sunday.

Two goals from Lionel Messi and a goal each from Xavi and Alexis Sanchez fired them to the victory after Ruben Castro and Roque Santa Cruz had levelled. Betis had Mario Vazquez sent off with the score at 2-2 with 20 minutes remaining and Barca never looked back.

The focus is turned to the Spanish Cup on Wednesday when the two giants face each other in the first leg of a quarter-final tie. Real Madrid had came from behind on Saturday to win 2-1 at Mallorca with late goals from Gonzalo Higuain and Jose Antonio Reyes.

"It's always the same, we go out to attack. We were eight points behind Madrid and Betis made it difficult for us because they wanted the ball," said Xavi.

"We have no doubts about our play, although we know we can play better or worse than tonight. Our philosophy is always the same, we go out to attack. We were eight points behind Madrid and Betis made it difficult for us because they wanted the ball."

"It's always good to go into a game on the back of a win, but we know who we are up against and we'll try to play the best game we can," Betis started the better team in the Camp Nou and tested Victor Valdes twice in the opening minutes. This only served to wake up the home team when Xavi, playing his 400th league game for the club, gave them the lead on 10 minutes, following up after a Cesc Fabregas shot had hit the post. Two minutes later and Barca were two goals ahead when Messi steered the ball home after good work on the left from Sanchez.

Barcelona’s Argentinian forward Lionel Messi (R) celebrates after scoring a goal during a Spanish Cup football match against Real Betis at the Camp Nou stadium in Barcelona. Barcelona squandered a two-goal lead before seeing off 10-man Real Betis 4-2 to cut Real Madrid’s lead at the top of La Liga back to five points on Sunday.—INTERNET

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### News

#### CCTV Sports Personality of the Year 2011

**Beijing, 16 Jan**—Though both absent from the 2011 CCTV (China Central Television) Sports Personality Awarding Ceremony, China’s leading women tennis ace Li Na and swimming world champion Sun Yang dominated the Best Athlete Awards at the National Stadium here on Sunday.

#### Focus Myanmar TV Programme

**MYANMAR TV**

(17-1-12 09:30 am - 18-1-12 09:30 am) MST

**MYANMAR INTERNATIONAL**

• News
• Emerging Evidence of Iron Age
• News
• “Secret Places for Yummy Food” (Episode-3) Rakthie Noodle
• News
• Festive Mood & Festival Food
• News
• Let’s Talk About VCD Album
• Straw Embossed Painting
• News
• A Shining Music Star
• News
• Fad and Fashion of Myanmar Cotton Ware
• Music Gallery
• News
• National Literary Award Presenting Ceremony
• News
• Sightseeing Around Taunggyi, Inlay (Part - I)
• News
• Master of Flowers

**Weather forecast for 17th January, 2012**

- Generally fair weather in the remaining Regions and States. Night temperatures were (3°C) below January average temperatures in Upper Sagaing Region, (5°C) below January average temperatures in Mandalay, Magway, Sagaing and Mon Regions, (6°C) below January average temperatures in Rakhine, (7°C) below January average temperatures in Meiktila and (9°C) below January average temperatures in Yangon. The significant night temperature were Hakha (-2°C), Loilem (-1°C), Namsam and Pinlaung (0°C) each, Heho (1°C), Putao and Lashio (2°C) each. The noteworthy amounts of rain were (20 mm) above January average rainfall in Chin, (10 mm) above January average rainfall in Dala, (15 mm) above January average rainfall in Mawlamyine, (20 mm) above January average rainfall in Meiktila, (25 mm) above January average rainfall in Sagaing and (40 mm) above January average rainfall in Rakhine. The significant rainfall were (30 mm) above January average rainfall in Meiktila and (50 mm) above January average rainfall in Sagaing.

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#### Cash and kind donated to Parahita School

**DaxU, 16 Jan**—KanU Basic Education High School’s Education Foundation of DaxU opened the basic tailoring course No. 2 at the school in DaxU on 8 January. Altogether 40 trainees from wards and villages are attending the one-month course. Dau Yi Yi Hla ad family of Yangon and other wellwishers donated 10 sewing machines to the tailoring course.—Kyemon

**Mandaly, 16 Jan**—To mark the 6th anniversary celebration, Seikha Thshka Parahita Youth Association donated cash and kind to Yangon rural youth Development Parahita School in Meiktila on 4 January.

Over 30 members of the association donated 51 bags of rice, two bags of meal, K 100,000, stationery, K 1000 each to 125 students from KG to university level students.—Kyemon

#### District News

**Basic tailoring course opened**

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Over 30 members of the association donated 51 bags of rice, two bags of meal, K 100,000, stationery, K 1000 each and snack to 126 students.

The school, located near Uyin Village of Meiktila Township, admits 125 students from KG to university level students.—Kyemon

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Government’s implementation of rural development and poverty alleviation tasks will facilitate progress of whole Naga region

NAY PYI TAW, 16 Jan – Vice-President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Thiha Thura U Tin Aung Myint Oo, accompanied by Union Ministers, the Sagaing Region Chief Minister, the Commander of North-West Command, deputy ministers, the Indian Ambassador, the chairman of Naga Self-Administered Zone Leading Body and responsible people, left Hkamti for Lahe of Naga Self-Administered Zone by helicopter on 14 January morning.

They were welcomed there by departmental officials, members of social organizations, townswelders, students and local nationals.

Next, the Vice-President went to Lahe People’s Hospital where he met the acting medical superintendent, doctors and nurses and inquired about condition of medical treatment. He then gave an instruction on choosing of a site for upgrading the hospital into a 50-bed one and making coordination with the region chief minister and officials in providing effective health care. After comforting the patients, the Vice-President looked round the operation theatre and medical store and the site for upgrading the hospital.

Deputy Minister for Health Dr Win Myint presented medical equipment to the acting medical superintendent.

The Vice-President then proceeded to the office of Naga Self-Administered Zone Leading Body, inspected the guesthouse and office buildings and left necessary instructions.

Then, the Vice-President and party attended a meeting with township level departmental officials, members of social organizations and townswelders at the township hall. Lahe Township administrator reported on data of the township, management, education, health, economic and social matters, implementation of rural development tasks and requirements.

Significant night temperature

(16-1-2012)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Temperature</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Haka</td>
<td>(-2°C)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Loilem</td>
<td>(-1°C)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Namsang</td>
<td>(0°C)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pinlaung</td>
<td>(0°C)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Heho</td>
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Amyotha Hluttaw speaker receives French Minister

Union Foreign Affairs Minister meets French counterpart

Nadal joins Tomic in the 2012 Australian Open 2nd round