Nay Pyi Taw Mayor’s Maha Thingyan Pandal opened

NAY PYI TAW, 12 April—
The opening ceremony of
1373 ME Nay Pyi Taw Mayor’s Maha Thingyan Pandal was held in front of Nay Pyi Taw City Hall this evening.

It was attended by Nay Pyi Taw Council Chairman Mayor U Thein Nyunt, Union ministers, deputy ministers, departmental heads, officials, choral dancers from ministries, Nay Pyi Taw Command and hotels in Nay Pyi Taw Hotel Zone, artists, and guests.

Nay Pyi Taw Council Chairman Nay Pyi Taw Mayor U Thein Nyunt said in his address: Today’s ceremony was to open third Myanmar Traditional Cultural Maha Thingyan Festival in Nay Pyi Taw in transition from 1373 ME to a new year.

Handed down by ancestors, it is the significant festival of the entire nation. Staff families of each ministry, families of hotels and companies and residents will participate in the festival of the administrative city.

Water is poured in Thingyan festival to cool down summer’s scorching heat and to wash off the dirt of the previous year. It is the festival where mistakes, misdeeds and retaliations are also wash off.

The traditional customs should be preserved in the festival, avoiding indecent dresses, dirty jokes, rudely pouring water and drinking.

It is the festival the entire people seek merits from paying respect to the older persons, releasing animals, and preserving Sabbath.

On first day of the new year, people of each ward and road auditioned Parrittas and share merits.

The Central Pandal will be opened in Nay Pyi Taw City Hall and four others in Nay Pyi Taw Hotel Zones. Choral dancers and songsters will entertain the capital’s revelers at entertainment pandals.

Moreover, Nay Pyi Taw Fountain Garden, National Herbal Garden, Nay Pyi Taw Zoological Garden, Safari Garden, National Landmarks Garden will also be kept open.

Nay Chi and Phone Khant and choral dancers to the accompaniment of the orchestra of the Ministry of Culture entertained those present at the ceremony.

Opening ceremony of Nay Pyi Taw Mayor’s Maha Thingyan Pandal in progress in front of Nay Pyi Taw City Hall this evening.—MNA

Revellers urged not to splash water on postmen in uniform

NAY PYI TAW, 12 April —
Postmen of Myanmar Posts and Telecommunications of the Ministry of Communications, Posts and Telegraphs will be on duty to deliver letters and telegraphs on 15 April (Sunday) and new year holiday on 20 April (Friday) without off on those days.

The express mail service of the ministry will also be run on the new year holidays.

MPT has urged water festival goers not to throw water to the postmen in uniform during the water festival days.—MNA
Private sector contribution

When compared with our neighbours, there is a big difference between our rice export volume and theirs despite the small difference in sown acreage. In fact, their cultivation methods and strains are much more advanced than us and that is the source of this big difference.

As we are still an agricultural country, we are trying for successful cultivation of paddy as well as other crops boosting crop output for domestic consumption and export. In the endeavour, the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation has been taking coordinating measures to acquire necessary techniques, methods, strains and cooperation wherever possible including from international organizations and international community. The ministry is also seeking cooperation from countries enjoying higher agro technology. As the technique to grow Palethwe hybrid paddy strains is the best for the time being, the ministry is educating farmers all across the country to grow the hybrid strain.

As for the developed countries, they are focusing on industrial development and engaging in agricultural tasks with the use of modern machinery. For Myanmar which relies on agriculture for fulfilling people’s basic needs, she too needs to introduce mechanized farming for agricultural sector development.

Farmers on their part must work hard accepting advice of experts to be successful in their agricultural business.

The State will be able to assist the agro sector only if it is economically strong. This is why the private sector contribution is also necessary. With the assistance of the State, the private sector should set up agricultural cartels for large-scale mechanized farming. These business organizations should also help farmers apply modern methods, fertilizers and high-yield strains. They should also disburse low-interest loans to farmers. In this way we all must find means that will help narrow the rice export gap between our country and her neighbours.

MWAF emphasizes social welfare tasks in Chin State

NAY PYI TAW, 12 April —A ceremony to donate cash to the fund for free eye surgical operation in Chin State by Myanmar Women’s Affairs Federation was held at Haka General Hospital on 5 April morning.

President of Myanmar Women’s Affairs Federation Dr Daw Thet Thet Zin presented K 3.15 million to Medical Superintendent Dr Bha Maung. The president gave gifts to three eye specialists and surgical team members. Later, she donated K 500,000 to the fund of the General Hospital and cash assistance to the patients.

Patrons of the federation Daw Ni Ni Win and Daw Mya Theinji visited the summer women’s tailoring course and donated books to Chin State WAO’s Pyinnya Alin Library.

Chairperson of Chin State WAO Daw Aye Aye Myint and chairpersons of District WAO reported on their works. The patrons of the federation presented K 500,000 to the organizations.

At Vethala Home for the Aged in Haka, the president and patrons presented K 148600 and gifts to the aged.

On 6 April, they viewed traditional cotton ware industries and swim farm of local people and donated K 800,000 to Kyun-Kyon Parahita Development School and K 6.1 million to Parahita School, monasteries and nunneries.

On 7 April, they donated K 300,000 to Lakhru Youth Development Parahita School in Haka and K 250,000 to the fund of Tawya monastery. They donated K 750,000 to Nazzay Youth Development Parahita Home in Falam. While in Falam, they donated K 350,000 to the nunnery.

On 9 April, they presented prizes to the winners in the culture course at Aye Yeik Mon-4 Home for the Girls’ Orphanage in Chanmy Aungsi Ward of Kalay.

In Inthyetbin Ward, they viewed successful production of Phytoreasted lablab industry with the use of micro-credit loans. They presented K 300,000 to WAO’s of three townships from Kalay District. —MNA
Spanish national kidnapped in Nigeria

Gunmen who took him to an
unknown location, police
spokesman Ebere Amaraeze
told AFP, adding that the
kidnapping occurred on 4
April.

“We don’t want to reveal
details of our operation so
as not to jeopardize efforts
to free him from his captors,”
Amaraeze declined to say if a
ransom demand had been
made. Earlier, Spain’s Foreign
Minister Jose Manuel Garcia-
Margallo said in Madrid that
the man was believed to have
been abducted and that his
disappearance “has all the
characteristics of a kidnapping
for economic reasons.”

Spanish media reported
that the 58-year-old doctor
works for a clinic belonging
to a foundation financially
supported by Catholic
institution Opus Dei in
Nigeria. “The organization
he works for has asked for
total discretion,” the foreign
minister added as he arrived
in parliament. “It is in the
south of the country, not in
the north, so there are no
political implications of any
type.” Spain’s embassy in
Nigeria was working with the
local authorities to resolve
the case and the foreign
ministry was in “permanent
contact” with the man’s
family, a ministry spokesman
said. — AFP

Salford plane crash: ‘Aircraft had fuel supply
problem’

The plane came to a rest in a driveway between the
two homes.— Internet

US-Afghan talks face tough hurdle over
troops

WASHINGTON, 12 April —
Washington and Kabul have
handed breakthroughs towards
signing a treaty on relations
after 2014 — but it will not
cover the crucial issue of the
status of any US troops
remaining in Afghanistan. — AFP

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US grabs lead over China in clean energy race

The US has regained the lead in the
clean energy race, investing $48 billion last
year to surpass China, which held the world’s
top spending since 2009, said a study on
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Strong quake shakes Mexico, no major damage

MEXICO CITY, 12 April —
A strong earthquake hit western Mexico on
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The US Geological
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state of Michoacan at a depth
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Mexico City. The USGS earlier
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**Wal-Mart previews ‘Disc to Digital’ movie service**

**ROSEMONT, 12 April —** Wal-Mart Stores Inc previewed its “Disc to Digital” service for converting DVDs into an online library on Wednesday. Based on my experience, I give it a six out of 10.

That’s the number of discs I was able to convert from an unscientific, unscientific sampling of my personal DVD library. The new service allows you to walk into any Walmart, where they can present their old DVDs and get permanent access to an online version of each movie that can be streamed from a home computer or a mobile device. The DVDs are stamped with a special ink and cannot be removed.

Three of my four failed conversions were no surprise — two were obscure documentaries, and one was a film from The Walt Disney Co, which is not participating in the service. One was a bit puzzling: “Water for Elephants,” out this week, is a fairly successful romance released last year by 20th Century Fox, one of the studios that is partnering with Wal-Mart. Wal-Mart’s category director for movies, Louis Greth, said the retailer hasn’t yet cleared the rights for all of the titles actors and directors have not signed to digital rights to movies they took part in. In the case of director George Lucas, that includes all six “Star Wars” movies.

**Apple develops tool to ‘detect and remove’ Flashback Trojan**

WASHINGTON, 12 April — Apple has said it is developing a tool to “detect and remove” a Trojan that is said to have infected more than half a million Mac computers. It is its first attempt to expose computers to control by hackers. It is Apple’s first statement on the threat. It issued patches to prevent the malware’s installation last week.

The two security updates were released eight weeks after Java’s developer Oracle issued a fix for other computer systems. In a message posted on Apple’s website’s support section, the company said it had fixed a “Java security flaw for systems running OS X v10.7 and Mac OS X v10.6.” It suggested users of Macs running earlier versions of system software should disable Java in their web browser preferences. In addition, Apple said it was working with ISPs to shut down networks of servers hosted by the malware authors, which the code — known as Flashback — is known on “to perform many of its critical functions.”

**Odd duck’ Indonesia quake surprises scientists**

**LOS ANGELES, 12 April —** The massive earthquake off Indonesia surprised scientists: Usually this type of jolt isn’t this powerful. The biggest earthquakes tend to occur in subduction zones where one plate of the Earth’s crust dives under another. This grind produced the 2004 magnitude-9.1 Indian Ocean disaster and the magnitude-9 Japan quake last year. Wednesday’s magnitude-8.6 followed along a strike-slip fault line similar to California’s San Andreas Fault. Scientists say it’s rare for strike-slip earthquakes, in which blocks of rocks slide horizontally past each other, to be this large.

“It’s clearly a bit of an odd duck,” said seismologist Susan Hough of the US Geological Survey in Pasadena, Calif. At the most seismically active places, Indonesia is located on the Pacific “Ring of Fire,” an arc of volcanos and fault lines encircling the Pacific Basin. Pressure builds up on the rocks over time and is eventually released in an earthquake. Wednesday’s quake was followed by a magnitude-8.2 aftershock. Both were strike-slip quakes. “A week ago, we wouldn’t have thought we could have a strike-slip earthquake of this size. This is very, very large,” said Kevin Furlong, a professor of geosciences at Penn State University.

So large, in fact, that the main shock went into the history books. Record-keeping by the USGS National Earthquake Information Centre ranks Wednesday’s shaker as the 11th largest since 1900. It’s probably the largest strike-slip event though there’s debate about whether a similar-sized Tibet quake in 1950 was the same kind.

**Environment Agency warns of flash flood risk in drought**

**LONDON, 12 April —** Drought conditions affecting much of England could increase the risk of flash flooding in heavy rain, the Environment Agency has warned. Hosepipe barrs were introduced in parts of southern and eastern England on 5 April after one of the driest two-year periods on record. But the agency said “dry, compacted soils” absorbed water less easily and future storms could cause flash floods.

It is encouraging people to use its new Facebook FloodAlerts application. Head of flood incident management Craig Woolhouse said drought conditions meant that flooding “may be far from people’s minds” but that the risk could not be ignored. “Being prepared is vital to help reduce the risk of flooding,” he said. “We are urging communities to use the new application, alongside our existing Floodline Hotline and website updates, to keep one step ahead of future floods.”

**Bug hits new Nokia Lumia 900 smartphone**

**LONDON, 12 April —** A software bug in the latest Nokia smartphone is causing some handsets in the US to occasionally lose their data connection, the company has said. The Finnish manufacturer said it had identified a software issue,” the company wrote. “In short, a ‘memory management issue” would be issued on 16 April. In the meantime, affected customers are being offered $100 (£63) in call credits. Analysts say the setback could hit Nokia’s hopes of regaining market share from rivals Apple and Google. Nokia is still the world’s largest mobile manufacturer, but is losing out significantly in the smartphone market. The Lumia 900, which was released in the US on Sunday, runs Microsoft’s latest Windows Phone software. The phone is expected to launch in the UK by the end of the month.

In a blog post, Nokia said the phone had enjoyed a “positive response” since its release, but that problems soon emerged. “After this flagship device began selling, we identified a software issue,” the company wrote. “In short, a memory management issue was discovered that could, in some cases, lead to loss of data connectivity. “This issue is purely in the phone software, and is not related to either phone hardware or the network itself.”

As a proactive and prudent measure, we decided to take immediate action.” The company said that users who wanted the update immediately could find it in their handsets for a model already running the software fix. — INTERNET

**Studying ocean CO2 for oyster declines**

LOUISIANA, 12 April — Scientists are blaming slightly higher levels of carbon dioxide in Pacific Ocean waters linked to global warming for the failure of oyster larvae to survive in an Oregon hatchery. They say higher acidity of the water that comes with more carbon dioxide makes it harder for young oysters to form their shells, dooming them in a matter of days, even if they are moved to more favourable environments.

“A lot of studies talk about the year 2050 when ocean acidification becomes a problem,” said lead author Alan Barton, production manager at the Whiskey Creek Shellfish Hatchery on Netarts Bay. “It showed up five years ago for us,” and almost put the hatchery out of business.

The study appeared on Tuesday in the online edition of the journal Limnology and Oceanography. “The predicted rise of atmospheric CO2 in the next two to three decades may push oyster larval growth past the break-even point in terms of production,” study co-author Burke Hales, professor of biogeochemical oceanography at Oregon State University, said in a statement.

The study represents some of the first research taking the issue out of the laboratory and putting it into the natural environment, said Annaliise Hettinger, a doctoral candidate at the University of California at Davis Bodega Lab, who did not take part in the study.

**Apple has said it is developing a tool to ‘detect and remove’ a Trojan that is said to have infected more than half a million Mac computers. It is its first attempt to expose computers to control by hackers. It is Apple’s first statement on the threat. It issued patches to prevent the malware’s installation last week.**

**The detection and removal tool will be available for Mac users running OS X v10.7 and Mac OS X v10.6.**

**Apple products have previously been regarded as less susceptible to viruses than Windows PCs.**

**‘Walmart Entertainment’ stamp in indelible ink has been placed on a disc, preventing any further conversion, but allowing it to still be played, at a Wal-Mart store in Rosemead, Calif, on 11 April, 2012.**

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**Seaweed linked to post-menopausal cancer risk**

**TORONTO, 12 April** — A Japanese study on Wednesday said regular seaweed consumption among post-menopausal women heightened their risk of developing thyroid cancer, linking it to iodine in the macrobiotic food.

A 14-year national survey of nearly 53,000 Japanese women, aged between 40 and 69, found that the group reported 134 thyroid cancer cases, including 113 cases of papillary carcinoma, a common type of the illness.

Those who ate seaweed daily were 1.7 times more likely to develop cancer than those who ate it no more than twice a week, the study said. The risk more than doubled among post-menopausal women who were about 1.8 times more likely to develop the cancer than those who limited their consumption of seaweed, a popular food in Japan, the study said. "Seaweed consumption was clearly associated with an increased risk of papillary carcinoma," said the study led by the National Cancer Centre and National Institute for Environmental Studies.

**Stocks make a U-turn, rising after big decline**

**NEW YORK, 12 April** — Investors on Wednesday all but forgot the previous day's burdens and sent stocks soaring. It was a stark turnaround from the day before, when they'd pushed the market into a free-fall on worries about European debt and corporate earnings in the US.

The Dow Jones industrial average climbed as much as 129 points in early trading before settling at 12,805.39 up 89.46 points. The previous day, it had lost 214 points, the cap to its biggest and longest losing streak this year. European markets rose, too. Stocks climbed roughly 1 percent in major capitals, excluding Greece, after losing 2 to 3 percent the day before. Treasury prices fell, signaling that investors are more willing to place money in stocks. Other US indices also erased much of the previous day's losses. The Standard & Poor's 500 rode 10.12 points to 1,368.7 after losing 24 points the day before. The Nasdaq

**BMW sees record sales thanks to China demand**

**BERLIN, 12 April** — German luxury carmaker BMW has posted record quarterly sales for the first three months of the year, a period in which it sold more cars in China than in the US for the first time. Overall sales hit 425,528 vehicles, a rise of 11.2% on a year earlier, with the BMW, Rolls-Royce and Mini brands all reporting record sales.

The company sold 80,014 cars in China, 37% more than a year ago. BMW said it expected record sales to continue throughout this 2x2 year. "The BMW Group achieved an all-time high in sales last month and the best quarter in its history," said sales boss Ian Robertson.

The carmaker is due to publish its first quarter financial results on 3 May. In 2011, BMW profits jumped by 51% to 4.96 euros (56.4b; £4b.). On Tuesday, rival Audi, which is owned by Volkswagen, said it had sold 346,100 cars in the first quarter, an increase of 10.8% on a year earlier.---Internet

**Shift workers ‘risking’ diabetes and obesity**

**WASHINGTON, 12 April** — Jim Yong Kim, the US nominee to head the World Bank, on Wednesday told the bank’s board of directors that he would not hesitate to question the status quo and do his best to help the world’s poorest. In a two and a half page address made public by

**Darmouth College president Jim Yong Kim, US President Barack Obama’s nominee to president of the World Bank, reaches out to shake hands as he arrives for meetings at the bank’s headquarters on 11 April, 2012.**

"You would find in me someone who asks hard questions about the status quo and is not afraid to challenge existing orthodoxies," Kim said. "I bring rigor, objectivity and a focus on data that help all of us define and achieve our shared vision of securing strong economic growth and delivering greater opportunity for the world’s poor."

Kim was expected to undergo a round of questioning from bank directors as the two other contenders for the job — Nigerian Finance Minister Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala and former Colombian Finance Minister Jose Antonio Ocampo — already have done. A decision on Zoellick’s successor is to be made public by the time the bank’s sister institution, the International Monetary Fund, hold semi-annual meetings in Washington 20 to 22 April. Kim has been on a world tour that has taken him to Asia and Latin America to meet finance leaders and try to drum up support for his US-backed bid.

---Internet

**Doubts over insect-bite treatment**

**LONDON, 12 April** — People should consider using a cold wet cloth to treat insect bites instead of turning to over-the-counter remedies, experts say. An investigation has concluded that there is little evidence that creams, painkillers and anti-inflammatoryss often used for bites actually work.

In any case, said Drug and Therapeutics Bulletin researchers, the reactions got better by themselves in most cases. Midges, mosquitoes, flies, fleas and bed-bugs account for most bites. A variety of remedies are sold over the counter in pharmacies to relieve the itching, pain and swelling.

Researchers from the journal reviewed a host of data and found evidence published in insect-bite tests. It concluded in many cases treatments for insect bites had not actually been tested for such purposes. It said medical help should clearly be sought if serious symptoms, such as infections or anaphylactic shock, developed.

But it said for simple bites a flannel or cloth soaked in cold water often worked best — despite advice from official bodies, such as NHS Choices, suggesting treatments should be used. Dr David Phizackerley, the deputy editor of the journal, said: “Potentially they are using these treatments so they should know there is no evidence they work. [Most] bites will get better on their own.”---Internet

**Night working has been linked to poorer health.**

**LONDON, 12 April** — Shift workers getting too little sleep at the wrong time of day may be increasing their risk of diabetes and obesity, according to researchers. The team is calling for more measures to reduce the impact of shift working following the results of its study. Researchers controlled the lives of 21 people, including meal and bedtimes. The results,
Choral dancers perform dances at Nay Pyi Taw Mayor’s Maha Thingyan Pandal opening ceremony on 12 April. —TIN SOE

Revellers and throwers at NAIN Group Pandal in Kaba Aye Pagoda Road in Yangon on Maha Thingyan Akyo Day. —TIN SOE

Photos capturing images of Myanmar Traditional Maha Thingyan Akyo Day

Kyeegon Station Pandal packed with revellers in Kalay on Maha Thingyan Akyo Day. (MIN THAN WAI-KALAY SUB-PRINTING HOUSE)

Pakokku Central Pandal on Myoma Road in Pakokku packed with merry-makers on Maha Thingyan Akyo Day. —MYANMA ALIN

Decorated floats at Yangon Mayor’s Maha Thingyan Pandal on Kandawgyi Ringroad. —MNA

Pandal of General Administration Department of Yangon West District packed with merry-makers. —MYANMA ALIN

Opening ceremony of Toungoo Thingyan Festival in progress. —MYANMA ALIN

Pandas on ring road of Kandawgyi Lake in Yangon Region teeming with revellers on Maha Thingyan Akyo Day. —TIN SOE

A decorated float of Myanmar Traditional Maha Thingyan Festival in Mandalay. —MNA

Decorated floats at Yangon Mayor’s Maha Thingyan Pandal on Kandawgyi Ringroad. —MNA

Revellers and throwers at NAIN Group Pandal in Kaba Aye Pagoda Road in Yangon on Maha Thingyan Akyo Day. —TIN SOE

Kyeegon Station Pandal packed with revellers in Kalay on Maha Thingyan Akyo Day. (MIN THAN WAI-KALAY SUB-PRINTING HOUSE)
What we call it Thingyan: Beyond the bottle
by Nathan

New Year Water Festival, better known as Thingyan Festival, kicks off today. It derives from Pali word, “Saka Dina”, which means the transit of the sun from Pisces to Aries. It is the most significant event of festive Myanmar. The dates of celebration are calculated by lunar calendar. Other Theravada Buddhist countries in Southeast Asia—Laos, Cambodia and Thailand—have their own versions of Thingyan despite common celebration style.

However it is called Thingyan or Songkran or something, throwing water has the only meaning. It conveys the message that dirt of the preceding year is washed off by Thingyan water. Hit the road under scorching summer in blazing hot midsummer, clean and clean Thingyan water freshen the world.

There is also a myth about Thingyan that Sakra, King of Celestial Abode, descends to earth in the first full moon period and closely monitors how the people are behaving. The later half of 5000 Saka years is said to be the Sakra’s Sama, meaning the King of Devas defends the religion founded by the Lord Buddha.

Since a couple of months before the festival, Thingyan melodies have been occupying the air and the soul of Myanmar people. Padauk is the essential ingredient in Thingyan songs. The yellow Padauk flower, Angkana, comes out around the festival period only once a year, making it the crowning icon of faith and loyalty.

Another significant feature of Thingyan is catudaiva, free snacks offered to anyone from all directions, the east, the west, the south and the north. Mont-loi-ye-paw, floating rice ball with the nucleus of jaggery sweet, is the most famous and loved snack catudaiva pandal offer. Chili is the alternative to jaggery sweet in some rice balls, used to jolly the unlucky eater into unkind spiciness.

The whole nation thrills to the festival which is also the garreted holiday. Each people will have their own ways to spend the 10-night holiday. Some move into the shade of Dhamma, observing Sabbath and meditating at meditation centres. Some opt to take a vacation. The majority choose to mingle with the crowd, playing water.

As all other festivals, Thingyan has adverse consequences. Traffic accidents are on the increase during in festival. According to police source, 69 revelers injured in 32 accidents during the last year’s celebration in Yangon alone. Wet and slippery roads and especially drink—driving are to blame for road accidents. Another sad thing is that most victims killed in those accidents are the young people on whom the country’s future depends. Drivers should not hold the wheel with excess alcohol especially in the festival when most merry-makers are drunk. Drunken and illegal cases are also common among young revellers during the festival.

The joy for a moment should not lead to the tragedy. And drinking never pays. There are still many other ways to enjoy Thingyan without booze.

Kawlin plans to organize Traditional Maha Thingyan Festival on grander scale
KAWLIN, 12 April—A coordination meeting on organizing the Kawlin Township Myanmar Traditional Maha Thingyan Festival was held at Zartimian Hall of Township General Administration Department on 9 April. At the meeting, Township Administrator U Myo Naung instructed officials to hold the festival on a grand scale like that of previous year and manage dancing and entertainment programmes, security and water supply tasks.

Daw Kyaw Yin Win of Township Development Affairs Committee reported on supply of water. Head of Township Fire Services Department U Htay Myint, Deputy Commanding Officer U Kyaw Tint of Township Auxiliary Fire Battalion and ward administrators on security measures and holding of the festival. Station Superintendent (Upper Class) U Tin Shein of Myanma Railways reported on arrangements for entertainments. Deputy Head of department U Kyaw Htoo submitted reports on plan to pay respects to the aged of above-85 years old on the New Year Day.

Myanmar Traditional Maha Thingyan Festival will be held in Kawlin on a grand scale.—Myanma Alin

Thuta Yadana Library opened in Thongwa Township
YANGON, 12 April—The opening ceremony of Thuta Yadana Library was held in Patokkyi Village of Bagantaung Village-tract in Thongwa Township of Yangon South District on 7 April morning.

Thongwa Township Administrator U Kyaw Thaung, Head of Township Information and Public Relations Department Daw Tin Tin Ei, Administrator of Bagantaung Village-tract U Kyaw Myint and Library Committee Chairperson U Tin Aung Nyin formally opened the building of library.

After that, the Township Administrator donated 100 books, Township IPRD 100 books, the chairperson of Township Women’s Affairs Organization Daw Ma Nyo 100 books, well-wisher U Naing Oo Daw San San Win and family land plot for the library, U Zaw Win Daw Ohn Hary and family K 70,000 for the building and books, U Kyaw Mar Mar Sein and family one clock, four feet fluorescence lamp and books. Officials accepted the cash and kind donation.

The building of the library was constructed at the cost of K 1,150,000 and K 500,000 by the local people. The facility is 24 feet long, 14 feet wide and 12 feet high one storey building.

Taxation over salary clarified
YANGON, 12 April—Yangon Region Internal Revenue Department organized a talk on taxation over salary at the hall of State Lottery Department of Internal Revenue Department, here, on 9 April.

Assistant Director Daw Phyu Pyar of Yangon Region Internal Revenue Department explained calculation for levying income tax from salary and work procedures and replied to queries raised by those present.—IRD

Strong winds, heavy rains hit Sagaing
SAAGAI, 12 April—The strong winds hit Sagaing Region in addition to heavy rains at 8.15 pm on 7 April.

Due to blow of strong winds, a lamp post broke and a Banyan tree fell down on the road.

Under the supervision of the Township Administrator, the Township Electrical Officer and workers, ward administrator and party, members of fire brigade cleared debris from the road as much as possible and carried out supply of electricityusal to the local people.—Kyemon
Yangon Region Chief Minister attends Yangon Mayor’s Maha Thingyan Pandal opening ceremony

Yangon, 12 April—The opening ceremony of Yangon Mayor’s Maha Thingyan Pandal was held at the pandal this morning. The ceremony was attended by Region Chief Minister U Myint Swe and wife Daw Khin Thet Htay, Region Hluttaw Speaker U Sein Tin Win, Chief/Justice of Region High Court U Win Swe, the Region Hluttaw deputy speaker, region ministers, the region advocate-general, the region auditor-general, their wives, diplomats in Yangon and their families, departmental officials, choral dance troupes and guests. Yangon Mayor Region Development Affairs Minister U Hla Myint formally opened the ceremony.

After enjoying performances of dancers, the region chief minister and wife, the region Hluttaw speaker and the Yangon mayor presented cash awards to choral dance troupes. Then the chief minister cordially greeted diplomats and their families.

The staff of Yangon City Development Committee sprinkled water on the region chief minister and guests with Thabyay branches. The pandal will be kept opened till 16 April from 8 am to 5 pm. The region chief minister and wife, and party also attended the opening ceremony of ninth Rakhine traditional Thingyan Festival (Yangon) organized by Rakhine Literature and Culture Group (Yangon) under the leadership of Rakhine National Race Affairs Ministry in Yangon Region. Rakhine National Race Affairs Minister U Zaw Aye Maung extended greetings at the ceremony.

Region Chief Minister U Myint Swe, wife Daw Khin Thet Htay and guests and members of township associations in Rakhine State poured scented water on Buddha Images. Rakhine traditional cultural troupes entertained the guests and the Region Chief Minister and party played water with Rakhine nationals. —MNA

Central Pandal of Yangon South District seen with opening ceremony for Myanmar Traditional Maha Thingyan Festival 1373 ME of Yangon South District. —MNA

Over 150 Maha Thingyan...
(from page 16)
Social Affairs Minister Dr Myint Thein launched the fountain. Choral dance troupes performed dances and songs. A total of 11 pandals were opened in the district.
Region Planning and Economy Minister U Than Myint extended greetings at opening ceremony of Yangon North District Pandal which was formally opened by Region Ministers Daw San San Nwe, U Soe Min and U Than Myint and District Administrator U Nay Lin. A total of 15 pandals were opened in the district.
Region Planning and Economy Minister U Than Myint extended greetings at opening ceremony of Hlaingthaya Township Central Pandal and Industrial Zone Ward (5) Pandal.
Pandals in Yangon were packed with revellers and pagodas and monasteries with those who did meritorious deeds. —MNA

Myanmar Traditional Maha Thingyan Festival 1373 ME observed in Nay Pyi Taw, Yangon, Mandalay on Maha Thingyan Akyo Day

Yein Troupes perform their dance at Nay Pyi Taw Mayor’s Maha Thingyan Pandal’s opening ceremony. —MNA

Thingyan lovers play with water at Sky Net and Shwe FM happily. —MNA

Golden Triangle Family Thingyan Pandal joyfully participates in Water Festival. —MNA

8 THE NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR Friday, 13 April, 2012

P8(13).pmd 4/13/2012, 3:17 AM
Kachin State Chief Minister tees off golf tourney, inspects water throwing pandals in Myitkyina

**NAY PYI TAW, 12 April**—A golf tournament was held to mark Myanmar Traditional Cultural Maha Thingyan Festival for 1374 ME, at Northern Star Golf Club in Myitkyina in Kachin State yesterday.

Chief Minister of Kachin State U La John Ngan Hsai teed off to open the tournament. Afterwards, the Chief Minister visited water throwing pandals of ministries and companies.

At 7 pm, the Chief Minister attended a presentation ceremony for the tournament and dinner hosted to mark the tournament at the City Hall in Myitkyina.—**MNA**

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Water throwing pandals in Nay Pyi Taw Hotel Zone opened

**NAY PYI TAW, 12 April**—Water throwing pandals at Nay Pyi Taw Hotel Zone were opened today to mark the Maha Thingyan festival.

The water throwing pandals of the Golden Guest Hotel and Shwe Thanlwin Company outside the Golden Guest Hotel was opened this morning by Deputy Minister for Hotels and Tourism U Htay Aung, member of Nay Pyi Taw Council U Kan Chun and patron of Shwe Thanlwin Company Agga Maha Thiri Thadhamma Theingi Daw Ni.

Artistes and dance troupes entertained the visitors with song and traditional dances.

Shwe Thanlwin Company is donating charity food and snacks to visitors during the festival.

Similarly, the water throwing pandal of Max Myanmar Group of Companies outside Royal Kumudra Hotel was opened by Deputy Minister U Htay Aung, Member of Nay Pyi Taw Council U Kan Chun and Chairman of Theim Group Co Ltd U Thein Aung.

The water throwing pandal of Nay Pyi Taw FC outside Oasis Hotel was opened by Deputy Minister U Htay Aung, Member of Nay Pyi Taw Council U Kan Chun and CEO of Nay Pyi Taw FCU Kyaw Oo.

Artiste and dancers performed traditional dances at the opening ceremonies of the pandals.

Artistes and vocalists including Yan Aung, Nay Aung, Ye Aung, Kyaw Ye Aung, Zin Waing, Min Maw, Kun, Pho Thaik Kyar, Hat Kat, Ringo, Bo Phyu, Naw Naw, Thar Soe, Chan Chin, Jenny, Rebeca Win, Nilar Aung, May Thu and Twetar and traditional dancers will entertain the visitors with songs and dances during the festival.

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Union A&I Minister inspects plantations at Shwedaung agricultural research farm

**NAY PYI TAW, 12 April**—Union Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation U Myint Hlaing yesterday afternoon viewed pollination at 100-acre Palethwe hybrid paddy seed production farm of Shwedaung Agricultural Research Farm in Wundwin Township.

Indian agriculturist Mr. Mohamad CD Siddqui and Myanmar agriculturist U Naing Kyi Win reported on success in paddy seed production farm.

Officials also reported on pollination at 100-acre Surya Kiran hybrid sunflower strain plantation. The Union Minister also viewed thriving of 100-acre Ngwechi long staple cotton farm and 100-acre Myanmar Palethwe hybrid paddy plantation.

In meeting with officials, the Union Minister stressed the need to produce quality seeds that grants cent per cent sprouting of plants for the farmers.

Scholars are to strive for production of quality seeds with cost effectiveness for the farmers. Only when quality seeds are to be used, will crops of Myanmar have stable market in the world. Studying modern agriculture technology, experiences from scholars are to be compiled as research paper.

The Union Minister presented cash assistance as New Year gift and footwear to the scholars and workers of the farms.—**MNA**

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Shwelinban Industrial Zone fire put out 50 minutes later

**NAY PYI TAW, 12 April**—Fire which broke out at YC Cork factory in Shwelinban Industrial Zone in Hlinethaya Township in Yangon Region at 2.50 pm today was put out 50 minutes later.

Making holes at cork containers with electricity started the fire. Thirty fire engines and five administration vehicles rushed to the scene and extinguished the fire in minutes. A Mark II car, one RC factory building with corrugated-iron sheet roof, machines in the factory and raw materials were lost in the fire.

A series of fire outbreaks around the country in every year not only led to losses for victims but undermined urban and rural development and national development.

As now is hot season which is more likely to start a fire, TV, radio, dailies and journals are constantly warning the people to take fire preventive measures. Fire bridges in towns and villages are giving educative talks, demonstrating fire drills and conducting surprise checks whether the fire is used systematically.

The authorities concerned are trying to raise public awareness of the risks of negligence fire—ambers, high temperature in electronic equipment and wires, and cigarette which is not completely extinguished.—**MNA**

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Two categories for English set for National Literary Awards

**NAY PYI TAW, 12 April**—National Literary Award scrutinizing committee has announced that it has set two categories for the National Literary Award for books in English as fiction and non-fiction genres as from 2011.

The literary award for English genre was added to the literary awards for books in Myanmar last year after it was suggested at the first meeting of the National literary award scrutinizing committee which has been organized for 2010 and 2011.

The committee selected the book whether it was fiction or non-fiction written in English by a Myanmar citizen last year.

The committee has increased the categories into two: fiction and non-fiction; this year with the aim of encouraging English language learning in Myanmar, propagating Mynnarhistory, culture and arts and assisting the Myanmar literary world and writers.

Similarly, one award for book in English would be included in the Sarpay Beikman manuscript awards for 2011.—**MNA**
Mawlamyinegyun, 12 April—Farmers of Mawlamyinegyun Township observed cultivation pattern of thriving Palethwe hybrid paddy plantation of farmer U Aye Naing in Gyongyonkya Village in South Okkalapa Township of Yangon Region on 7 April morning. The observation was supervised by Head of Township Agriculture Department U Kyaw Huy and staff.

The head of Township Agriculture Department, Deputy Heads of Department Daw Thein Win and Daw Moh Moh Than, Assistant Head of Department U Myint Soe explained nurturing of Palethwe hybrid paddy plant, method of cultivation and 14-point good agriculture patterns in detail.—Myanma Alin

MLF invites books, cash donations

Myanmar Libraries Foundation is giving encouragement to broadening the horizon of the people and developing self-reliant libraries across the nation. Those wishing to donate cash and books to the libraries may contact Myanmar Libraries Foundation at No. 228 on Theinbyu Street in Botataung Township, Yangon, Tel: 01-371342, 01-201936 and 01-396766.

Title recipient Sayadaws honoured in Hsipaw

HSIPAW, 12 April—A ceremony to honour members of the Sangha offered religious titles by the State was held at Namlan Myo Monastery in Hsipaw Township on 5 April. At the ceremony, departmental personnel, members of social organizations and local people paid homage to Bawkyo Phayagy Monastery Sayadaw and Saddhanna Jotikadaja title recipient Namlan Myo Monastery Bhaddanta Nanobhasa.—Myanma Alin

Rural Library opened in Machanbaw Township

MACHANBAW, 12 April—A ceremony to open new building of Sheinthi Library was held in Deinchet Village in Machanbaw Township of Putao District in Kachin State on 29 March morning. At the ceremony, Head of Township Information and Public Relations Department U Nan Zae Phon and Village administrator U Nan Sho Hin cut the ribbon to open the building. At first, the village administrator made a speech. The head of Township Information and Public Relations Department explained durability of the library. After that, the chairman of the Library Committee accepted the documentary video on Ayaykyonyin Kyemon Shide donate by Myanmar Libraries Foundation and 200 books and publications by Township Information and Public Relations Department.—Township IPRD

MES Vice-Chairman leaves for Japan

YANGON, 12 April—A team comprising CEC members U Hla Khang, U Tin Maung Win, U Po Aye and Work Committee member U Aung Naing Thu led by Vice-Chairman of Myanmar Engineering Society U Linn left here by air for Japan on 9 April evening to attend the Asian Welding Federation Meeting and the International Welding Technological Show to be held in Osaka of Japan from 11 to 13 April. They were seen off at Yangon International Airport by Joint General Secretary U Ohn Myint of Myanmar Engineering Society. On completion of the meeting, they will visit JFE workshops to meet Myanmar trainees who are learning welding courses of JFE Engineering Co Ltd of Japan.—MES

Call centre kept open in Maha Thingyan Festival period

YANGON, 12 April—The call centre will be kept open to give 24-hour services of replying to any questions during the period of Maha Thingyan Festival.

“Twenty-four-hour services will be provided to the users during the period of Maha Thingyan Festival. Call rate will be set K 30 per minute as original price of Myanmar Posts and Telecommunications. Services will cover the existing five sectors,” explained an official of the call centre. As information desk of the call centre will be opened during the Thingyan holidays, the people are interested in its services.

Call centre can give services for businesses on incoming and outgoing telephone calls of companies, offers of commodities and other business services. Anyone may dial 1876 for communication and other information, and general matters urgently during the period of Maha Thingyan Festival.

MES
The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago.
The second best time is now.
**Four charged over bin fire murder**

LONDON, 12 April — Three men and a woman have been charged with the murder of a man who was burned to death in an industrial bin in Southampton. The body of Jamie Dack, 22, was found on Sunday after fire crews were called to the Emmes Road Industrial Estate. Ryan Ian Woodmansey, 31, Andrew William Christopher Dryer-Skeats, 25, Lee Matthew Nicholls, 28, and Donna Louise Chalk, 20, face murder charges.

They remain in custody and are due to appear at Southampton Magistrates' Court on Thursday. All four also face charges of false imprisonment and conspiracy to rob Mr Dack. Mr Woodmansey, of no fixed abode, Mr Dryer-Skeats, of Earls Road, Southampton, and Mr Nicholls, of Southampton Street, Southampton, were also charged with causing grievous bodily harm to Jamie Dack. Ms Chalk’s address was given as Earls Road, Southampton. The body of Mr Dack, from Millbrook, was found by fire crews who were called to Dukes Road on the industrial estate at about 03:10 BST on Sunday. Hampshire Police said they were still asking for witnesses to recontact them. Ms Chalk had been living at Patrick House, a homeless for households people in Millbrook. Southampton in the weeks before his death. — Internet

**German drivers offered free public transport**

BERLIN, 12 April — Motorists in the German city of Leipzig are to be offered free public transport this week in bid to cut congestion. The authorites’ decision comes amid concerns over commuting times and lengthening traffic jams. The hope is that motorists will be persuaded to leave their cars at home permanently. They will be introduced vehicle or driving licences. Families and groups can also travel together on a single document. Rising fuel prices in Germany have led to recent tax on petrol to be cut, although commuters are said to offset the journey’s cost by working against income tax. — Internet

**UK can extradite five terror suspects to US**

PARIS, 12 April — Europe’s human rights court ruled Tuesday that Britain can send a radical Muslim cleric and four other suspects to the United States to face terrorism charges in a case that has been closely watched as an indicator of whether tough US prisons could influence the Guantanamo Bay prison. The court said Britain would not violate the European Convention on Human Rights if it were to extradite the suspects, who could face prison conditions that would be “a form of torture or inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment” in breach of the European human rights code.

The European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg, France, rejected those claims, saying in its ruling Tuesday that “detection conditions and length of sentences of five alleged terrorists would not amount to ill-treatment if they were extradited to the United States.” However, the court said the five should not be extradited until its ruling becomes final — a move that could take months — or until a possible appeals process ends. — Internet

**Medical emergency delays Titanic memorial cruise**

LONDON, 12 April — A cruise ship retracing the route of the Titanic had to interrupt its journey on Tuesday because of a medical emergency on board, organizers said. The Titanic Memorial Cruise — on its way to the North Atlantic site where the Titanic hit an iceberg and sank 100 years ago — had to turn back briefly to the Irish coast so that a sick passenger could be airlifted to a hospital.

Organizers did not identify the passenger or describe the ailment, but the BBC reported that one of its crewmen, Tim Rex, was airlifted by rescue helicopter “as a medical precaution.” The 12-night memorial cruise aboard the MS Balmoral left the Irish town of Cobh late Monday to cross the Atlantic, tracing the route of the doomed liner’s maiden voyage in April 1912. Like the Titanic, it began its journey Sunday at southern England’s Southampton. After Tuesday’s brief delay, the ship resumed its itinerary and is expected to call in Halifax, Canada, on 16 April and in New York on 19 April.

The ship, which is carrying 1,309 passengers — including relatives of some of the more than 1,500 Titanic passengers who died — seeks to recreate the Titanic’s experience, minus the disaster.

Many passengers, crew members and stewards are dressing in period costumes. Passengers are eating meals from the Titanic’s menu, while a live band plays songs from the era. Two special memorial services are to take place over the weekend. The first is on Monday to noon on 14 April, when the Titanic hit the iceberg, and the second on early 15 April, when the ship sank. The Balmoral is operated by Fred Olsen Cruise Lines. — Reuters

**Heart test could predict future attacks in elderly**

NEW YORK, 12 April — A test to measure the heart’s electrical activity could help predict future heart attacks in otherwise healthy adults aged 70-79, said a US study on Tuesday. Researchers followed 1,922 healthy adults aged 70-79 for a period of eight years, according to the study published in the Journal of the American Medical Association. The subjects started the study by getting an electrocardiogram, often called an EKG or ECG, which measures the heart’s electrical activity. People who showed abnormalities in their EKGs saw a higher risk of heart disease over the course of the study than people whose EKGs were normal, even when researchers adjusted for risk factors like diabetes and high cholesterol. Those with minor abnormalities showed up on their first test had a 35 percent higher risk of heart attack, while those with major abnormalities had a 51 percent increased risk, said the findings. “This research is taking the information from an EKG and adding it to other traditional risk factors to better predict who is going to have a heart attack,” said co-author Douglas Braker, professor of Medicine at the University of California San Francisco Division of General Internal Medicine Research. — Reuters

**Boy, 5, brings 50 packets of heroin to school for show and tell**

BRIDGEPORT, 12 April — Police say a five-year-old Connecticut boy brought 50 packets of heroin to school for show and tell. Police say he wasmotivated to show the packets to his teacher because it’s show and tell day and the teacher confiscates the drugs and told the principal, who then contacted police. The boy was put in state custody until other relatives could be located.

**Boomers aim to replicate tough 1963 Everest climb**

KATHMANDU, 12 April — A flood of US climbers is taking aim at Mount Everest this spring as the 50th anniversary of the first US conquest of the famous peak nears, with one team set to try and replicate the historic ascent along a difficult and rarely used route. Five US mountaineers climbed the 8,850-metre (29,035 feet) Everest, the world’s highest peak, in May 1963. Two went along the untested West Ridge route and three along the traditional South East Ridge, also known as the South Col route.

This year, two climbers in particular teased by Cory Richards will climb the difficult West Ridge route, while the others will go along the South East Ridge, pioneered by New Zealander Sir Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay in 1953. Conrad Anker, 49, a member of the team and a two-time Everest climber, said that if weather and physical abilities allowed, both groups would try and meet at the summit. “That will be the plan,” Anker told Reuters before leaving for the mountain in March.

Another American team consisting of four climbers led by James Rynie Norton will also be on the West Ridge route, Nepal’s Tourism Ministry said. These two expeditions are trying to replicate what the US team in 1963 did on Everest, said Elizabeth Hawley, Kathmandu-based historian and an unofficial authority on Everest explorer Sir Edward Hillary, 88, unofficial arbiter of climbing related disputes and chronicler of Everest’s climes, considers the 1963 American ascent to be the biggest Everest milestone after the pioneering feat of Hillary and Norgay because the route is long and so difficult it is rarely used today. — Reuters

**People watch police investigate the scene where three people were shot and killed at an in-home day care in Brooklyn Park, Minn. on 9 April, 2012. No arrests were immediately made.**

**The body of Jamie Dack was found in an industrial bin on Sunday.**

**In this file photo of an artist rendering released by Lucas Films, a drawing of the proposed "Star Wars Light & Magic" studio is shown. Lucasfilm Ltd, the force behind the Star Wars movies, said it has abandoned plans to build a big digital production studio on historic farmland in northern California, citing opposition from neighbours worried about the environmental impact.**

**Climbers aim to replicate tough 1963 Everest climb**

American mountaineers planning to climb Everest in May, 1963.
**Thailand’s Phuket Airport reopens after Tsunami threat**

**BANGKOK, 12 April — Services at Phuket Airport resumed Thursday after being shut down during a Tsunami warning in six coastal provinces sparked by a 8.6-magnitude earthquake off Indonesia, an official said.**

The airport was reopened Wednesday night soon after Tsunami watch was lifted by the National Disaster Warning Centre, said Bangsurtat Shinaprayang, director of the Tourism Authority of Thailand. The centre on Wednesday afternoon issued a Tsunami warning to six provinces along the Andaman Sea – Krabi, Phuket, Phang Nga, Ranong, Satun and Trang; however, it later revoked the warning at about 8 pm local time when it was clear the earthquake off Indonesia did not generate disastrous Tsunami.

Phuket International Airport was closed for several hours during the disaster scare, with more than 15 flights delayed.

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**First int’l digital photo and sign show opens in Vietnam**

**HANOI, 12 April — The International Digital Photo & Sign Show 2012, the first of this kind held in Vietnam, opened in southern Ho Chi Minh City on Thursday, attracting many domestic and world leading companies in the field from the United States, Japan, South Korea and Malaysia.**

Organized by the Exporum Company and Eifec Com Ltd, the exhibition had more than 100 booths displaying the newest products of various brands, including Tamron, Benro, Mefoto, Pentax, Recoh, Nokon, Olympus, Panasonic, Fuji and Samsung, according to the Vietnam News Agency. Products of new technologies were also on display, such as LED screen, LED electronic boards, Lumi Letter made by Daikan (Japan), Star Media Group and Vnacom.

The show was also seen as a playing ground for those interested in digital camera and sign board advertisement, with various sideline events held during the three-day show, including a market for camera and equipment, seminar for camera and sign board advertisement, a photo exhibition of the city photographers’ club, and a photo contest titled “Digital photos accompany you” and “Brightening Vietnamese beauty”.

The show will be open through 14 April.

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**US SEC sues AutoChina for alleged stock manipulation**

**WASHINGTON, 12 April — The US Securities and Exchange Commission(SEC) has sued AutoChina International and 11 investors over alleged stock manipulation. They have been accused of unlawfully buying and selling shares in a bid to artificially inflate trading figures so the company could gain “favourable loan terms”. AutoChina says it is the country’s biggest commercial vehicle sales and leasing firm. The company has denied the charges. It said that the SEC’s allegations were “without merit”. The company intends to defend against the claims vigorously and believes that all of the evidence it is aware of contradicts the SEC’s allegations,” the firm said in a statement. In its complaint, the SEC has alleged that the defendants and others deposited $60m (£38m) into US-based brokerage accounts starting from October 2010. It said the average daily trading volume of the company’s shares jumped to more than 139,000 shares between 1 November 2010 and 31 January 2011, compared with just 18,000 in the three months prior to the brokerage accounts being opened.**

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**India Maoists release Italian hostage Paolo Bosusco**

**NEW DELHI, 12 April — Italian hostage Paolo Bosusco has been freed by India’s Maoist rebels after nearly a month in captivity. Mr Bosusco, 54, was abducted on 14 March, along with fellow Italian Claudio Colangelo, 61, while trekking in a tribal area of Orissa state. Mr Colangelo was released on 25 March.**

The exact terms of the release are not known but on Tuesday a court freed the wife of Maoist leader Babasuya Panda. She was one of several jailed rebels whose release the Maoists had demanded. State legislator Jhina Hikaka, who was seized on 23 March by another group of Maoists, remains in custody.

After his release, Mr Bosusco told a local television channel in the state capital, Bhubaneswar, that he had been treated well by the rebels. “I’m in good health. There’s nothing to worry about. I love Orissa and its people,” he said. Mr Bosusco, who has lived in the state for over a dozen years, said he had visited the area where he was held many times in the past. “But going to there as a tourist is different from going there as a hostage,” he said. Earlier, the rebels handed over Mr Bosusco to Dandapani Mohanty, one of the mediators, who brought him to Bhubaneswar.

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**Car mounts pavement in Kyoto, injuring 12**

**OSAKA, 12 April — A car mounted a pavement in central Kyoto in western Japan Thursday, injuring 12 people, including 6 in critical condition, local press reported. The accident happened at around 1 pm local time when a driver drove the car on the sidewalk and hit pedestrians nearby in Gion, one of the historic districts of Kyoto City. The cause of the accident is still unknown.**

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The show will be open through 14 April.
Archaeologists working in Jerusalem claim that a discovery they made inside a burial tomb, dating back to the time of Jesus Christ, could shed new light on the origins of Christianity. Biblical historian James Tabor, professor and chair of religious studies at the University of North Carolina in Charlotte, is working with the team, led by controversial filmmaker Simcha Jacobovici. Using a camera mounted on a robotic arm, the team found a 2,000-year-old engraving, which they claim depicts Jesus’ resurrection, on an ossuary — a small stone box that contains human bones — in a first-century tomb. Their exploration of ancient life in the holy land is told in a new documentary for the Discovery Channel called “The Resurrection Tomb Mystery,” which premieres on 12 April at 10 ET/PT. “It’s almost like a moonscape feeling of something eerie, something kind of silent — a reverent feeling really,” Tabor said. “Because these people died 2,000 years ago and now we are investigating their last memories, how they bury their dead, what they left behind, and then the excitement of, ‘Well there will be something we’ll find or will we find just another Jewish tomb?’” But the team thinks they found something much more than that. Tabor believes the contents of the tomb suggest the ossuary depicts the Biblical story of Jonah, who was swallowed by a whole whale in the Book of Jonah.

Lady Gaga confirms Born This Way Ball world tour dates

LONDON, 12 April — Lady Gaga has confirmed details of her European leg of the leg of her Born This Way Ball world tour, including shows in London and Manchester. The singer will play Twickenham Stadium on Saturday 8 September and Manchester Arena on Tuesday 11 September. Gaga confirmed a series of shows in Germany, Russia and Switzerland, beginning in Sofia, Bulgaria on 14 August. Tickets for the UK gig go on sale on Friday 13 April. The Born This Way Ball begins in Seoul, South Korea on 27 April, before coming to Europe later in the summer.

Lady Gaga

In a statement the singer described the production as “spectacular.” She added: “The Born This Way Ball is an Electro-Metal Pop-Opera; the tale of the beginning, the genesis of the Kingdom of Fame. How we were born and how we will die celebrating.” Lady Gaga released her most recent album Born This Way in 2011. She has now sold more than 15 million albums around the world. It’s been announced that reformed rockers The Darkness will support Gaga for the European gigs.

Lead singer Justin Hawkins told Newsbeat: “I don’t expect it to be plain sailing, but then it isn’t supposed to be. “I’m surprised that we’re considering headlining events like this. I think she likes a lot of stuff that’s more extreme than what we do. Obviously, I’m delighted.”

Lady Gaga

Chinese giant porcelain jar breaks world record

A colossal porcelain jar produced in the eastern city of Jingdezhen, China’s porcelain hub, was certified as the world’s largest porcelain jar and unveiled to the public Wednesday after receiving certification from the Guinness World Records. “On behalf of the Guinness World Records, now announced the jar in Jiangxi was filled with 368 liters of liquor, it’s a new Guinness World Record,” Cheng Dong, Guinness Certification Officer of China announced.

The Guinness World Records are published annually as a book, covering a collection of world records, both human achievements and the extremes of the natural world. The on-site certification was issued at the foot of the Sanqing Mountains in eastern Jiangxi Province. Known for its unique landscapes, the mountains were added to the World Heritage List in 2006 and the jar will sit there permanently.

The jar stands at 2.1 meters high and weighs 1.56 metric tons at its diameter, at a gross weight of about 2,200 kg. It went on display after being fired for 16 days in a charred kiln in Jingdezhen, achieving new heights which boasts a 1,700-year history of producing fine pottery.

“Technique used in the firing and accounting process also open a new chapter in the history of China’s contemporary porcelain,” Cheng said. “The art combines the essence of traditional porcelain while exploring it from a contemporary perspective. “The kiln can reach a temperature of 1,320 degrees,” said Wang Zhanghong, in charge of the application for the Guinness World Record everyday.

William Boyd takes James Bond back to 1960s in new 007 novel

LONDON, 12 April — Booker-nominated author William Boyd is taking on the mission to write a new James Bond novel. The as-yetuntitled book will appear in 2013, the 60th anniversary of the super-spy’s first literary outing, in Ian Fleming’s Casino Royale. Boyd has revealed that his story will mark a return to “classic Bond” and will be set in the late 1960s. He is the third author in recent years to be invited by the Ian Fleming estate to write an official Bond novel. Before him came American thrillerwriter Jeffrey Deaver, who penned Carte Blanche in 2011, and Sebastian Faulks, whose Devil May Care was published to mark Ian Fleming’s centenary.

Deaver’s book, released in May last year, is set in the present day and portrayed Bond as a Royal Naval Reserve veteran whose service included a tour of Afghanistan. It has sold over 160,000 copies to date and is out in paperback next month.

Sales of Carte Blanche in its opening week were about a third of those achieved by Faulks’ book in the same period. Boyd, who was approached for a movie based on the legendary Dhyran Chand’s life in 2004, is already working on a project with superstar Shah Rukh Khan being one of the characters to play the sporting hero on big screen.

SRK confirms: “Yes, I have been approached for a movie based on the legendary Dhyran Chand’s life. As a sport, it’s new to me since I have been associated throughout my school and college life, and I have played a lot of hockey. “Not many may know that SRK, during his school days at St. Columba’s, Delhi captained the football and hockey teams besides playing cricket at the zonal and national levels.

Shah Rukh Khan to play Dhyran Chand?

MUMBAI, 12 April — For some time now, hockey legend Dhyran Chand has been in the news over some Bharat Ratna speculation. The Indian government takes a final call on conferring him with the highest civilian honour, Bollywood has woken up to the wizard’s magic. Apparently, multiple biopics on the story of hockey in India on the pipeline with superstar Shah Rukh Khan being one of the choosers to play the sporting hero on big screen.

SRK confirms: “Yes, I have been approached for a movie based on the legendary Dhyran Chand’s life. As a sport, it’s new to me since I have been associated throughout my school and college life, and I have played a lot of hockey. “Not many may know that SRK, during his school days at St. Columba’s, Delhi captained the football and hockey teams besides playing cricket at the zonal and national levels.

Of course, the actor has already had a brush with hockey in his film Chak De! India (2007), in which he played the coach of the women’s national hockey team. Although details of SRK’s project are currently unknown, a couple of other biopics on Chand are underway. Sources close to Chand’s family reveal that Mammootty Shetty (of the 1950s after her father died, played the coach in the Royal Ballet when she was just 16 years old. By the age of 20, she had been given the lead role in Kenneth MacMillan’s new version of Stravinsky’s The Rite of Spring; and in 1968 she was promoted to principal dancer.

In the 1970s, she took on some of ballet’s most famous roles — including Odette / Odile in Swan Lake, Manon and Romeo and Juliet. Her performance in Summer in The Four Seasons and the Midwife in Rituals.
Premier League to launch 20 Seasons Awards
Greatest players, managers and moments in last 20 years will be honoured

LONDON, 12 April — This season is the 20th campaign of the Premier League and to celebrate the landmark, accolades will be awarded to the incredible people and the memorable moments that have helped make the competition a regular highlight watched in the world.

The shortlists will be announced next week, and you can get involved with the Premier League's 20 20 Categories, five of which will be determined by a public vote and six by a panel of leading football figures, journalists and commentators.

The panel will decide on:
- Best Player
- Best Manager
- Best Team
- Best Season
- Most Memorable Quote
- The public vote will recognise:
  - Best Goal
  - Best Match
  - Best Save
  - Best Celebration

As well as reviewing the category shortlists, the Premier League 20 Seasons website will have videos of all the nominations so that fans can live the shortlisted goals, matches, saves and celebrations to help make their selections. And the public can also select an ultimate Premier League Fantasy Team from a shortlist of the greatest players from the last 20 years. Fans can pick a goalkeeper, two centre-backs, one left-back, one right-back, two central midfielders, one right midfielder, one left midfielder and two forwards for an all-time XI. There are 10 shortlisted players in each position. The shortlist for all the categories have been created by nominations submitted by all UK national newspapers as well as the Premier League's five live Broadcast Partners in the UK. A number of the winners will be honoured at a special presentation ceremony on Tuesday 15th May.

Wigan stun United to give City hope

LONDON, 12 April — Struggling Wigan breathed life into the Premier League title race with a stunning 1-0 upset of Manchester United on Wednesday as Manchester City romped to a 4-0 win over West Bromwich Albion.

Just days after United looked to have assured themselves of a 20th league crown by opening up an eight-point lead over City, Shaun Maloney’s 50th-minute winner for Wigan suggested the title race may yet have more twists in store. City’s emphatic win over West Brom at Eastlands reduced United’s lead at the top to five points with five games remaining, meaning Sir Alex Ferguson’s side have little margin for error in their remaining fixtures.

United — who must travel to City on 30 April — looked sluggish throughout as Wigan claimed a precious three points that lift them out of the relegation zone at the expense of Bolton.

United were fortunate not to fall behind after Wigan appeared to have taken the lead through Victor Moses midway through the first half, only for the goal to be ruled out for a foul on United goalkeeper David de Gea. But United were not so fortunate on 50 minutes when Wigan took the lead with a magical strike from Maloney, curling a superb shot beyond De Gea after a clever short corner routine.

“We were a disappointing night for us, we were second to every ball in the first half and we were completely dominated by Wigan,” Ferguson said. “It was one of those off nights that you sometimes get in football.”

The United manager was also critical of referee Phil Dowd but added: “That doesn’t take away from the fact that Wigan were the better team and deserved to win.”

Ferguson added: “It’s important to win our home games now. We’ll improve from this performance, I’m sure of that.”

Bayern Munich’s goalkeeper Manuel Neuer reacts after Dortmund scored during the German first division Bundesliga football match Borussia Dortmund vs FC Bayern Munich in the western German city of Dortmund.

Dortmund cool title talk, despite beating Bayern

Dortmund, 12 April — Borussia Dortmund coach Jurgen Klopp has insisted his team have won nothing yet, even though their 1-0 win over Bayern Munich has left them six points clear at the top of the German league.

Dortmund are on course to win a second consecutive Bundesliga title after Poland striker Robert Lewandowski’s second-half strike on Wednesday left second-placed Bayern six points behind with four games left.

“We remain in the lead, but we won’t be celebrating in any case,” insisted Klopp, whose team face Schalke, Moenchengladbach, bottom side Kaiserslautern and Freiburg on their league run in Bayern face Mainz, Bremen, Stuttgart and Cologne in their last four league games and three-pointed Munich chairman Karl-Heinz Rummenigge wore a red-white flag.

“I am 99 percent sure that Dortmund will be German champions,” he admitted.

Barcelona’s midfielder Sergio Busquets (L) kicks a ball during the Spanish league match against Getafe CF on 10 April, 2012 in Barcelona.

Big debts lie behind Spanish football glory

MADEIRA, 12 April — Spanish football may be enjoying one of its most successful eras, powered by Barcelona and Real Madrid’s charge through the Champions League, but the glittering success on the pitch hides a darker story. As Real and Barca are through to the elite Champions League semi-finals and three Spanish clubs are into the Europa League last four, a survey of the accounts of the country’s top clubs reveals a tale of crippling debts and tax arrears.

Real Madrid lead Barcelona by four points at the top of La Liga, but the two global superstars also rival each other in the depth of their debts — Real have accumulated 589 million euros ($772 million) to Barcelona’s 578 million euros. The archrivals’ debts eclipse their revenues, which climb to 479 million euros for Real Madrid and 450 million euros for Barcelona.

European League semi-finals Valencia and Atletico Madrid are also both awash with red ink, to the tune of 382 and 514 million euros respectively.

But the latest figure to hit the headlines in Spain is the 752 million euros that Spain’s elite clubs owe to the tax man at a time when more than five million are unemployed and the government is asking citizens for more sacrifices. The sports ministry announced a plan to ensure that football pays for its own debts. But for the moment it is unclear how they will do so.

Donald seeks to bounce back at the Heritage

AUGUSTA, 12 April — World number one Luke Donald is trying to put another fruitless major campaign behind him this week as he heads the field for the US PGA Tour’s Heritage tournament.

68, Donald had already shot himself out of the Masters with rounds of 75, 73 and 75, finishing tied for 32nd.

“I didn’t hit the ball particularly well with my irons the first couple of rounds,” Donald said. “I didn’t hole as many putts as I would have liked, three or four three-putts during the week. “Some positives, though,” he added. “Ditto a lot of fairways last week, 80 percent of fairways, which is a good start for me.”

Barcelona’s midfielder Sergio Busquets (L) kicks a ball during the Spanish league match against Getafe CF on 10 April, 2012 in Barcelona.
Danish navy frees 12 hostages, holds 16 Somali pirates

COPENHAGEN, 12 April—The Danish navy said Thursday it had stopped a pirate ship off the Somali coast, rescuing 12 trained Palestinian hostages and arresting their 16 captors.

“The Danish warship Absalon yesterday (Wednesday) stopped a pirate mother-ship. Sixteen suspected pirates have been arrested. Twelve hostages from Pakistan and Iran have been rescued,” the navy said in a statement.

“No one was injured during the operation,” navy spokesman Mikael Bill told AFP, adding that nine of the hostages were Pakistani and three were Iranian and that they had been held by the suspected pirates for about a month.

“They were being held on their own boat,” a fishing vessel, which the pirates had hijacked and used to attack other ships, Bill explained.

The operation took place Tuesday afternoon and was quickly over, he said, pointing out that the Absalon, a joint press conference after meeting with Cameroon at his residence in the federal administrative centre of Patrjaya.

“In trade and investment, our ambition is simple, it is to do a step change in business and investment that is why I came with a strong delegation,” Cameron said.

Boca Juniors beats Fluminense 2-0 in Copa Libertadores

RIODEJANEIRO, 12 April—Argentina’s Boca Juniors beat Brazil’s Fluminense 2-0 in the Copa Libertadores group stage on Wednesday.

Fluminense still have a two-point lead over Boca in group 4 with one match remaining, but the team lost its top-ranked status in the competition to Argentina’s Velez-Sarsfield, which defeated Oviedo 2-0 in Mexico, also on Wednesday night.

In front of near-capacity 36,000 crowd at Rio’s Engenhao stadium, Juan Sanchez Mino and Dario Cvitanich both capitalized on defensive errors to score either side of the break for the Argentinians.

Fluminense had the chance to reduce the deficit to a goal with five minutes remaining when referee Dario Ubriaco pointed to the penalty spot after Wellington Nem was brought down by Rolando Schiavi when clear on goal.
YANGON, 12 April—Today is 1373 ME Maha Thingyan Akyo Day. The opening ceremonies of over 150 pandals, big and small, in Yangon were held this morning. Yangon Mayor’s Maha Thingyan Pandal was opened at 7.30 am and choral dance troupes performed dances at the pandal till the evening.

Region Forestry and Energy Minister U Kyaw Soe, Deputy Commissioner U Hlaing Soe Thant and Township Administrator U San Min attended opening of Maha Thingyan Pandal of Yangon East District in Thakayta Township. A total of 59 pandals were opened in Yangon East District.

Region Transportation and Communications Minister U Aung Khin, Region Electricity and Industry Minister U Nyan Tun Oo and Deputy Commissioner U Kyaw Thu Zaw formally opened the pandal of Yangon West District in Ahlon Township. A total of 79 pandals were opened in townships of Yangon West District.

Deputy Commissioner U Sai Thaw Win extended greetings at opening ceremony Yangon South District Maha Thingyan Pandal in Thanlyin Township this morning. The township administrator, the chief of Township Police Force, the executive officers of township development affairs committee, a townselder formally opened the pandal. Region (See page 8)

Over 150 Maha Thingyan Pandals opened in Yangon

Mandalay Mayor’s Maha Thingyan Pandal opened

The Region chief minister and wife, the commander and party poured water on those present at the ceremony. Choral dancers then performed dances. Decorated floats headed by Myoma Silver Swan float passed thorough the pandal, performing dances and songs. Film stars, songsters and artists performed songs and dances at the pandal. A total of 37 pandals were opened and 10 decorated floats will participate in decorated float contest. Mandalay celebrated Maha Thingyan overwhelmingly.—MNA

Mandalay, 12 April—Sky Net TV and Mandalay FM will broadcast live entertainment of Mandalay Mayor’s Maha Thingyan Pandal 1373 ME. At the Mayor’s Pandal, Myanmarpyi Thet Taw, Zaw Paing, Matriza, Ye Lay, Khin Maung Htoo, Than Myat Soe, Kyi Tha (Pwe Kyaik Khin), L. Seng Xi, Chit Thu Wai, Yadana Mai, Nan Hsu Yati Soe, comedians and the mom group of film artistes will perform entertainment to the accompaniment of Metal Zone Band of Yangon.

Thiha Ko Ko (Mandalay)

Sky Net, Mandalay FM to broadcast live entertainment

MANDALAY, 12 April—Sky Net TV and Mandalay FM will broadcast live entertainment of Mandalay Mayor’s Maha Thingyan Pandal 1373 ME. At the Mayor’s Pandal, Myanmarpyi Thet Taw, Zaw Paing, Matriza, Ye Lay, Khin Maung Htoo, Than Myat Soe, Kyi Tha (Pwe Kyaik Khin), L. Seng Xi, Chit Thu Wai, Yadana Mai, Nan Hsu Yati Soe, comedians and the mom group of film artistes will perform entertainment to the accompaniment of Metal Zone Band of Yangon.

Thiha Ko Ko (Mandalay)

Noteworthy amounts of rainfall (12-4-2012)

Kawthoung (1.30) inches
Cocogyun (0.32) inch
Ye (0.20) inch

US aerobatic pilots show their fantastic skills in this collection of photos.

In this file photo of an artist rendering released by Lucas Films, a drawing of the proposed Industry Light & Magic campus, is shown.

Dortmund cool title talk, despite beating Bayern

Shah Rukh Khan to play Dhyan Chand?

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