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.

Government implementing human resources development plans to change natural resources economy into knowledge-based economy

Vice-President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Dr Sai Mauk Kham meets officials concerned at Technological University (Yatanarpon Cyber City).

NAY PYI TAW, 4 Feb—Vice-President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Dr Sai Mauk Kham, accompanied by Union Minister for Border Affairs and for Myanmar Industrial Development Lt-Gen Thein Htay, Union Minister for Construction U Khin Maung Myint, Union Minister for Science and Technology U Aye Myint, Union Minister for Hotels and Tourism and for Sports U Tint Hsan, Union Minister for Education Dr Mya Aye, deputy ministers and departmental heads, left here by air at 9 am yesterday and arrived in Mandalay.

Accompanied by Chief Minister of Mandalay Region U Ye Myint and region ministers, the Vice-President and party went to Technological University (Yatanarpon Cyber City) in PyinOoLwin Township.

At the meeting hall, Principal Dr Aung Win briefed the Vice-President and party on opening of the university, aims and conducting the courses. The Union Minister for Science and Technology gave a supplementary report.

In his speech, the Vice-President said that the university was named Technological University (See page 8)

Iran dismisses Western sanctions, warns against US war threats

US recommends routine HPV vaccination for boys

Surveillance drone crashes in Somali capital

Significant night temperatures

(4-2-2012)

Namhsan (2°C)
Pinlaung (2°C)
Haka (2°C)
Loilem (3°C)
A burden no democratic society can tolerate

When we say reforms it includes institutional changes both the government and the private sectors are undergoing. As for the government sector, normally, the departments will have to rely on the budget allocations of the Union as they are not money-making bodies.

They are just the institutions combating crime, enforcing the rule of law, conserving the environment, collecting revenues for the Union, taking care of public health and education, facilitating public communication and transport or rendering assistance to disaster-hit areas at Union’s expense.

In fact, they are financial outflows of a nation, but on the other hand they are essential tools for efficient government machinery.

Currently, government departments in our country will be trying to adapt themselves more to the changing trend, while conducting staff capacity-building programmes as every government-provided penny they are spending on their functions is precious and should serve the people’s interest best in one way or another.

In some cases, government departments are overstaffed, low in competence and they also lack of enthusiasm.

But that can be changed. They can assess their present structure, find their faults and weaknesses, modify staff welfare and training programmes, cut unnecessary procedures where loopholes occur and later introduce means to become actually helpful tools of the government spending less and doing more for the people and the country.

What’s more, good governance and clean government is the most important and reliable force behind all measures to curb corruption the worst enemy of all institutions trying to improve their image.

We believe no department will be left behind in this reform drive as failure will turn it into a burden a democratic society cannot tolerate.

Measure for transportation of the new government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar (Nay Pyi Taw Airport)

* Constructed on 7 April, 2009 in Nay Pyi Taw, the new capital of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, Nay Pyi Taw International Airport was commissioned into service on 19 December, 2011.
* The airport building measures 660,347 square feet. The airport has 12000x200 feet runway, 1200x900 feet concrete apron and two 350x150 feet taxiways. The runway is 26 inches in thickness and can withstand 873,000 pounds. VIP Hall measuring 195x130 feet plus lounge measuring 96x60 feet is included in the airport.
* It can handle 2 million domestic passengers and 3 foreign passengers, totaling 5 million per year. The airport is equipped with 10 passenger boarding bridges, where from 50,000 to 60,000 airplanes can make landing a year.
* The airport was built with a view to aiding the national economy through air transportation by utilizing the every inch of the air territory of the nation. It is also aimed to make it possible for any aircraft of international airlines land in, stop over in and cross over Myanmar, providing services for refueling and technical failures.
* The airport is also intended for speedy air transportation as well as coping with consequentially increasing number of international travelers following the increasingly forwarded economic, social and diplomatic relations with the global countries. Built in the administrative hub of the country, it is aimed to grease the wheel of administrative mechanism, making it swift travel possible to regions and states.

Translation: TKK
Iran dismisses Western sanctions, warns against US war threats

TEHRAN, 4 Feb—Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei dismissed on Friday Western sanctions and warned against the US war threats against the Islamic Republic. Khamenei said that Iran benefits from Western sanctions. He made the remarks in Tehran when delivering the Friday prayer that was broadcast live by the state TV. In response to Western sanctions on the country, including the recent US and EU embargo on Iran’s oil exports, Khamenei said that the sanctions have helped the potentials within the country bloom and prompted the country to grow domestically.

He said that in face of Western sanctions Iran has proved that it “turns to the internal potentials and grows domestically.” In January, the EU imposed further sanctions against Iran’s oil exports as well as its central bank in a bid to ramp up pressure over Iran’s disputed nuclear programme. Major EU importers of Iran’s oil, such as Greece, Italy and Spain, have to find alternative oil suppliers before 1 July, when the embargo comes into force. On Friday, Khamenei referred to the military advancements and nuclear enrichment progress of the country and said that such achievements were made as the Islamic republic came under diverse sanction pressures from Western countries. Also, Khamenei warned against any war threats on the country saying that the United States will suffer from any war threat or potential war against the Islamic Republic. — Xinhua

Surveillance drone crashes in Somali capital

MOGADISHU, 4 Feb—Witnesses say a surveillance drone has crashed into a refugee camp in the Somali capital. Drones have been used by the US to attack or observe al-Qaeda-linked militants in the Horn of Africa nation. Refugees and soldiers in Mogadishu’s Baddado camp say they watched the drone crash on Friday into a hut made of sticks, corrugated cans and plastic bags. Sadicky Sheikh Moham, a refugee at the camp, says the drone was shaped like a small plane. A similar drone crashed into a house in Mogadishu last year. — Reuters

Afghan civilian deaths in war hit 5-year high

KABUL, 4 Feb—A UN report says last year was the deadliest on record for Afghan civilians, with 3,021 killed in the war. That was an 8 percent increase from 2,776 civilian deaths in 2010. It was also the fifth year in a row that the civilian toll has become steeper.

The report issued on Saturday says armed groups killed more than three-quarters of the civilians who died, with a steep rise in people killed in suicide bombings. It says roadside bombs were the single biggest killer of civilians, accounting for nearly one in three deaths. NATO and Afghan security forces were responsible for 410 civilian deaths—about 14 percent of the total. The report notes that NATO begins to work weekends, as in 2010, and its 30,000 troops have to find alternative ways to hand over 29 Chinese workers held in the border state of South Sudan, and had been urging the rebels through “various channels” to release the workers, beginning with two women and rebels allied with the newly independent and oil-rich South Sudan.

According to media reports, Leon Panetta has said that the United States hopes to end its combat mission in Afghanistan by the middle of 2013, a year earlier than NATO had planned for, and that it will focus instead on training, advising and assisting the Afghan military. It was the first time that the US defense secretary hinted at an early pullout of his soldiers from Afghanistan amid increasing Taliban-led insurgency.

Cuba’s Raúl Castro visits Venezuela’s Chavez

CARACAS, 4 Feb—Cuban President Raul Castro on Friday attended a meeting with other allies of Venezuela’s Hugo Chavez, who was at the airport for the arrival. Neither man spoke to reporters, and it was unclear what they planned to discuss. Castro is joining other national leaders of the Bolivarian Alliance, or ALBA, at the Sunday summit, including the presidents of Nicaragua and Bolivia.

Haitian President Michel Martelly also arrived ahead of Sunday’s meeting, at which he will have observer status. He said he hopes to discuss the status of Haitian migrants in ALBA countries and will seek aid for Haiti’s school food programme. Martelly met with Chavez at the presidential palace on Friday night and was accompanied by actor Sean Penn, who earlier this week was named ambassador at large for Haiti in recognition of his humanitarian work since the country’s 2010 earthquake.

President Chavez welcomed several times in recent years, and the Venezuelan leader has praised the American actor for his critical stance toward US foreign policy. Chavez’s allies arrived in time for celebrations Saturday marking the 20th anniversary of a failed coup that Chavez led when he was a military officer. The government plans a military parade and other events for the anniversary. — Internet

Afghan analyst warns US early pullout would fuel militancy

KABUL, 4 Feb—The surprise decision announced by US Defence Secretary Leon Panetta saying the United States will end combat operations in 2013 would stimulate the Taliban and associated armed groups to intensify activities in Afghanistan, an Afghan analyst warned on Friday.

“The surprise decision announced by the US defense secretary to end combat mission in Afghanistan would benefit Taliban and eventually lead to war in militancy,” Faizullah Jalal, a professor at Kabul University, told Xinhua in an interview. According to media reports, Leon Panetta has said that the United States hopes to end its combat mission in Afghanistan by the middle of 2013, a year earlier than NATO had planned for, and that it will focus instead on training, advising and assistance role. It was the first time that the US defense secretary hinted at an early pullout of his soldiers from Afghanistan amid increasing Taliban-led insurgency.

Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei speaks during Friday prayers in Teheran, Iran, on 3 Feb, 2012. Khamenei dismissed on Friday Western sanctions and warned against the US war threats against the Islamic Republic. He said that Iran benefits from Western sanctions. — Xinhua

Hackers intercept confidential FBI conference call

SAN FRANCISCO, 4 Feb—Hacker group Anonymous Saturday released a recording of a confidential conference call between the US Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and British law enforcement officers on cybercrime investigations. According to the 17-minute conversation posted on YouTube, the US and British law enforcement officers discussed ongoing investigations into some hackers being tracked and their plans for legal action. Some of the real names have been bleeped out while the online pseudonyms of suspects are kept in the recording. Anonymous also published an email from the FBI, entitled “Anon. Luke International Coordination Call.” The email was sent to over 40 law enforcement officers in the US, Britain, Ireland, Netherlands, France and Sweden, inviting them to discuss investigations related to Anonymous, Lazarus, AntiSec and other hackers groups. The recording showed that officers from London, Los Angeles and Washington attended the conference call on 17 January. — MNA/Xinhua

Chinese workers who escaped after being abducted sit after arriving at Khartoum Airport on 30 Jan, 2012. — Internet

Somali soldiers patrol inside the Baddado refugee camp in Mogadishu, Somalia on 3 Feb, 2012. — Internet

Internet
US recommends routine HPV vaccination for boys

WASHINGTON, 4 Feb—US health authorities on Friday urged all boys age 11-12 to get a routine vaccination against the most common sexually transmitted disease, human papillomavirus, or HPV. Other changes as part of an annual update to US immunization schedules included a recommended hepatitis B vaccine to the protect the livers of adults up to age 60 who have diabetes and a vaccine against whooping cough for pregnant women.

The updates, agreed upon by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), were published in the CDC’s Morbidity and Mortality Weekly report of 3 February. The HPV vaccine has been approved for girls since 2006 but the CDC had not expressly urged it for boys, though boys were included among those who could receive it to prevent certain cancers and genital warts.

Health experts have expressed hope that if pre-teen boys and girls are both encouraged to get the vaccine, the rate of infection will decrease in the general population. About half of all sexually active adolescents will get HPV in their lifetime. There are more than 100 types of HPV, and most clear the body on their own, but some strains can linger and lead to cervical, anal, or oral cancer.

Surgical procedure repairs severed nerves

WASHINGTON, 4 Feb—A revolutionary surgical procedure could repair severed nerves within minutes and set the patient firmly on the road to recovery within mere days or weeks, reveals a study.

The study, led by researcher George Bittner, professor at University of Texas, used a cellular mechanism similar to that of many invertebrates to repair damage. Bittner and his team identified a protein by which the nerve cell that chases with other nerve cells or with muscles.

“We have developed a procedure which can repair severed nerves within minutes so that the behaviour they control can be partially restored within days and often largely restored within two to four weeks,” said Bittner, the Journal of Neuroscience Research reported.

“If further developed in clinical trials this approach would be a great advance on current procedures that usually imperfectly restore function after months or even years.”

Factory orders up, business spending rises

WASHINGTON, 4 Feb—New orders for US factory-made products posted a second straight monthly rise in December and business capital spending also picked up, a government report on Friday showed. The Commerce Department said orders for manufactured goods increased 1.1 percent, slightly below Wall Street economist’s forecast for a 1.5 percent gain.

But November’s gain was revised up to 2.2 percent from a previously reported 1.8 percent and showed in the report of a firmer pace of overall factory activity.

During the full year 2011, factory orders gained 12.1 percent after a 12.9 percent rise in 2010. Orders for non-defence capital goods excluding aircraft—closely watched category because it is taken as a sign of businesses’ future spending plans—climbed a solid 3.4 percent in December. That followed declines of 1.5 percent in November and 0.5 percent in October.

Shipments for this category also increased by 3.1 percent in December after matching decreases of 0.9 percent in each of the two prior months.

Business spending had been a driver of the recovery since the 2008-2009 financial crisis, which pushed the US economy into a deep recession.

US job market still on long path to recovery

WASHINGTON, 4 Feb—The US labour market teed off the new year with a nice surprise as the country’s unemployment rate dropped to near three-year low of 8.3 percent in January, but experts believe that the jobs growth was insufficient to cure the lingeringly sick labor market in the short run.

UNEMPLOYMENT THREE-YEAR LOW

Payroll growth last month was matched with a decrease of the unemployment rate for the fifth consecutive month, adding to a recent string of positive economic data pointing to a stronger economic recovery.

The US unemployment rate edged down to 8.3 percent last month from 8.5 percent in December, near three-year low since February 2009, as total US nonfarm payroll employment rose by 243,000 in January, beating economists’ expectations of about 150,000, the Labour Department reported on Friday.

Private-sector employment grew by 257,000 last month, but governments at all levels continued to trim 14,000 jobs against the backdrop of slashing government outlays.

“The latest payroll survey confirms a strengthening labor market,” said Gary Burtless, a senior fellow with the Brookings Institution, adding that after the worrying drop of first half of last year the jobless rate has now fallen 0.8 percentage point since last August.

WIDESPREAD JOB GROWTH

Across-the-board jobs growth in professional and business, leisure and hospitality, health care services, as well as upward revisions of earlier data contributed to the decline of the unemployment rate.

The number of newly created jobs for November 2011 was upwardly revised from 100,000 to 157,000, and for December 2011 was revised from 200,000 to 203,000.

The latest job figures gave a boost to US President Barack Obama who has geared up his reelection bid.

“The unemployment rate came down because more people found work. And altogether, we’ve added 3.7 million new jobs over the last 23 months,” Obama said Friday in a speech after the release of the report when visiting a fire station in Virginia, urging Congress to take more steps to bolster the economic recovery and create jobs.

With the nation’s shaky property market reversing the freefall decline trend started in the end of last year, employment in construction increased by 21,000 in January, following a gain of 31,000 in the previous month.

Active kids more likely to avoid heart disease

SYDNEY, 4 Feb—Physically active children are more likely to keep diabetes and heart disease at bay, a new study reveals.

The study, led by researchers Glenn McConell and Mary Wlodek from Victoria and Melbourne Universities, tested whether exercise could re-programme rates predisposed to diabetes and heart disease owing to their lower birth weight.

“Those born small are programmed for a higher chance of disease later in life because of their underdeveloped heart and pancreas, but we think you can re-programme yourself by exercising early in life,” said McConnell, the American Journal of Physiology-Endocrinology and Metabolism reported.

In the trials on rats born small, those exposed from five to nine weeks of age showed a small improvement in organ function at the end of that month, but remarkably, six months later their organs were the same as the healthy control group, a university statement said.

Another group of born small rats were not exercised and showed no improvement. McConnell said a nine-week old rat correlated roughly with a five-year-old child and a six-month-old rat with a young adult person.

“We think this means more activity for children and more physical education in school could really help set them up for a healthier life later in life and even help those predisposed to diabetes and heart disease to re-programme themselves in time to avoid it,” added McConnell.
New Vega rocket sets for inaugural flight

PARIS, 4 Feb—The European Space Agency (ESA) announced on Friday that it would use the rocket Vega to launch nine satellites into orbit in mid February, in the very first mission of the lightweight rocket.

The first mission, designated VV01, is scheduled for lift-off from Europe’s spaceport in Kourou, French Guiana, during a two-hour launch window during 1000-1200 GMT on 13 Feb.

If successful, Vega’s virgin launch would mark the culmination of nine years of development by the ESA and its partners, the Italian space agency (ASI) and ELV SpA, the prime contractor for developing the vehicle, the ESA said in a statement.

Seven ESA member states including Belgium, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland support the programme.

Named after the second brightest star in the northern hemisphere, the Vega development officially started in 1998. Its main objective is to provide Europe with a safe, reliable and competitive capacity to carry science and Earth observation satellites into orbit, and of complement the heavyweight Ariane 5 and medium Soyuz rockets.

Iran launches observation satellite: media

TEHERAN, 4 Feb—Iran on Friday launched an observation satellite into orbit above Earth, its third since 2009, the official IRNA news agency reported.

“The Navid satellite was launched successfully... It will be placed into an orbit (at an altitude) between 250 and 370 kilometers,” IRNA quoted the head of Iran’s Space Organisation, Hamid Faeeli, as saying. The launch comes as Iran is marking the anniversary of its 1979 Islamic revolution — and as tensions are heating up over Iran’s nuclear programme.

The 50-kilogram (110-pound) satellite is meant to stay in orbit for 18 months, sending back images to Iran. Its orbit completes a revolution of Earth every 90 minutes. It was unveiled two years ago and its launch had long been expected. President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad led the launch ceremony, media said. It’s the beginning of an immense labour... which holds the promise of friendship for all mankind,” Ahmadinejad was quoted as saying.

Iran’s defence minister, Ahmad Vahidi, said the Navid satellite would beam its images to several ground stations across the country, according to media. “The telemetry and command stations give and receive data and control the satellite,” Vahidi said.

It was the third domestically made satellite Iran has put above the planet using its Safir rockets. The other two observation platforms, launched in February 2009 and July 2011, stayed in orbit for two to three months.

Three in four people use mobile phone while in toilet

LONDON, 3 Feb—In a study of mobile phone habits, about 75 per cent of those questioned admitted to surfing the web, using apps, emailing and texting while in the toilet with more than 90 per cent saying they had even returned calls.

One in five men said they had participated in conference calls while sitting on the loo,” according to the website Wtop.com.

And did they seemingly unfazed by the prospect of accidentally activating the iPhone FaceTime video feature or the potential for people to hear dubious noises coming from the cubicle, the Daily Mail reported. The research, who surveyed 1,000 people, also revealed that cubicle activities would be determined by the type of Smartphone you owned.

It found that Android owners were more likely than those who like to multi-task by doing a number of things while using a range of apps.

While Blackberry users tended to take and make calls, those with iPhones were more likely to be playing with apps.

Samsung and LG’s OLED transparent displays.

SEOUL, 4 Feb—Though we’ve covered a lot of CES news throughout this week, it’s surprising to find out that OLED TVs are going the same success thus far. Looks like both companies have only had limited success thus far. Looks like OLED TVs are going the same way. True, both products aren’t in the production stage, but they’re apparently slated for a late 2012 release, and no, I wasn’t joking about anything.

Dolphins take up residence in Japan bay

KAGOSHIMA, 4 Feb—Wildlife experts in Japan say Indo-Pacific bottlenose dolphins appear to have taken up permanent residence in Kagoshima Bay on the south coast of Kyushu. Experts at Kagoshima City Aquarium said several years of field studies have confirmed two schools of some 50 dolphins are residing in the bay, Kyodo News reported.

There are young dolphins in both schools, meaning the animals are probably reproducing in the bay off Japan’s southernmost island, they said. It’s rare for dolphins to be observable year-round so close to a city, aquarium official Nobutaka Kubo said.

The rich marine resources in the bay present the perfect environment for dolphins, he said. —Internet

An Indo-Pacific bottlenose dolphin is seen in Kagoshima Bay last September, with Mount Sakurajima, an active volcano, in the background. —Kyodo

New app tells who ‘unfriend’ you on Facebook

LONDON, 4 Feb— A new tool on Facebook now allows users to see if someone on their friends list has ‘unfriended’ them, or has ignored their friend request.

The software ‘Unfriend Finder’, which can be installed in almost any Internet browser, has been a huge hit worldwide and has been downloaded nearly 44 million times.

After downloading this new tool, users see a red counter in their menu bar which comes up: ‘1’ the second someone unfriends them, a dig at Facebook’s logo for adding friends, which is a ‘+1’.

Till now, Facebook itself did not alert people when somebody clicked to ‘unfriend’ someone. According to The Daily Mail, ‘Unfriend Finder’ page said, ‘Unfriends are people who were previously your friend but have either deactivated their account or have removed you from their friend list.’

‘Unfriend Finder makes identifying unfriends easy by displaying a red counter in the menu bar with the amount of unfriended you have. Unfriend Finder will also tell you people you have requested friendship with and who has declined your friend request,” the site said.

‘Unfriend Finder makes identifying unfriends easy by displaying a red counter in the menu bar with the amount of unfriends you have,’ it added. The script works in browsers such as Chrome, Firefox and Internet Explorer, and can be downloaded for free from the official site. —Internet
Two kidnapped American tourists freed

CAIRO, 4 Feb — Two American tourists who were seized in Egypt’s Sinai earlier Friday, had been released after talks between the kidnappers and Sinai security forces, said Sinai security chief Mohamed Naguib told Xinhua on Friday. The two kidnapped American tourists had been in a “super-drought” that could not exist on the surface of Mars, he said.

LONDON, 4 Feb— Life on Mars has been too dry for too long to support life, British researchers said.

Scientists at Imperial College London said they based that assertion on analysis of data on Martian soil transmitted back to Earth from the 2008 NASA Phoenix mission.

Their three-year analysis suggests the Martian surface has been dry for such a long time any possible life would have to be deep underground. The Daily Telegraph reported on Friday.

Mars surface too dry for life

The surface of Mars has been too dry for too long to support life, British researchers said.

JUBA, 4 Feb — A shoot-out among South Sudanese security forces using truck-mounted machineguns killed 37 people and injured a United Nations police officer Wednesday, UN and government officials said on Friday.

The shooting broke out during a peace agreement that ended decades of civil war— is struggling to assert control in a country awash with weapons and whose army is made up of former rival militias.

At least three people are confirmed dead while more others are feared killed and over 50 were injured in a train mishap near Gauhati Friday. — XINHUA

Euro crisis shows signs of easing but far from over

BRUSSELS, 4 Feb — The eurozone debt crisis is showing signs of easing but far from over that the European Central Bank has injected cheap money into the economy and the European Union has agreed on a new fiscal accord.

As borrowing costs for eurozone countries declined, Portugal returned to the government bond market with a better response than expected for the first time this year.

The yield rate of Italian 10-year bonds dropped from peaks at around 8 percent to 6.5 percent in January, while Spanish 10-year bonds fell below 5 percent. International rating agencies Standard & Poor’s and Fitch downgraded the credit ratings of some eurozone countries, including Greece and Italy, but without having a huge impact on the European market. ECB chief Mario Draghi said last Friday that financial market have revived since the central bank injected nearly 580 billion euros (613.3 billion US dollars) into eurozone banks since late December.

“We know for sure that we have avoided a major credit crunch, a major funding crisis,” Draghi said at the recent World Economic Forum in Davos. A total of 523 European banks applied for the 3-year loans, which come with a low interest rate of 1 percent.

According to a recent Morgan Stanley report, Italian banks were the biggest users of the ECB fund, receiving 50 billion euros (65.55 billion US dollars), which covered more than 90 percent of their funding requirements for 2012.

“Pine Island Glacier is losing ice very quickly, about 523 square miles in area. It will probably float a little bit to wind down the US combat mission in Afghanistan. The unusual message kicked off a debate within the administration about whether it was truly authored by the mysterious one-eyed preacher believed to be directing the Taleban from Pakistan — and its meaning for US efforts to forge a negotiated end to America’s longest war.

Amid peace bid, US got purported letter from Taleban

WASHINGTON, 4 Feb — The White House received a letter last year purported to come directly from Mullah Omar, the reclusive leader of the Taleban, asking the United States to deliver the militants prisoners whose transfer is now at the heart of the Obama administration’s bid to broker peace talks in Afghanistan. The unusual message kicked off a debate within the administration about whether it was truly authored by the mysterious one-eyed preacher believed to be directing the Taleban from Pakistan — and its meaning for US efforts to forge a negotiated end to America’s longest war.

“As we have engaged various interlocutors as part of the reconciliation process, we have received a variety of messages that were represented as being from senior members of the militant prisoners whose transfer is now at the heart of the Obama administration’s bid to broker peace talks in Afghanistan. The unusual message kicked off a debate within the administration about whether it was truly authored by the mysterious one-eyed preacher believed to be directing the Taleban from Pakistan — and its meaning for US efforts to forge a negotiated end to America’s longest war.”

South Sudan shoot-out kills 37, wounds UN policeman

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The shooting broke out during a peace agreement that ended decades of civil war— is struggling to assert control in a country awash with weapons and whose army is made up of former rival militias.

At least three people are confirmed dead while more others are feared killed and over 50 were injured in a train mishap near Gauhati Friday. — XINHUA

Dancers wearing colorful bird-themed costumes perform during the fifth Ibong- Ebon (Bird-Egg) Festival in Pampanga, the Philippines. — XINHUA

18-mile crack seen by NASA in Antarctic glacier

NEW YORK, 4 Feb — Antarctica is so vast that the pictures give you no sense of scale. The pencil-thin line across the satellite image of Pine Island Glacier (above) is actually more than 18 miles long, 800 feet across in places, and 180 feet deep. And it’s growing. In the next few months, scientists expect the glacier to create an iceberg about 350 square miles in area. It will probably float northward, melting as it goes.

“Pine Island Glacier is losing ice very quickly, about 523 square miles in area. It will probably float a little bit to wind down the US combat mission in Afghanistan. The unusual message kicked off a debate within the administration about whether it was truly authored by the mysterious one-eyed preacher believed to be directing the Taleban from Pakistan — and its meaning for US efforts to forge a negotiated end to America’s longest war.”

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Since the emergence of civilizations the Earth has been the provider of both food and shelter for the humans. In return festivals are celebrated annually to thank and return the favours of Mother Earth for the bountiful harvests. These festivals and celebrations are held in many forms by various communities and clans on earth mostly after harvest times.

One of these is the New Year Festival held annually in January by our Naga cousins who live on the high mountain peaks of northwestern Myanmar. Many Naga clans live on these high mountains, scattered in small villages and hamlets but they always come together at New Year time to celebrate their New Year at a designated town in the Naga Hills.

The Naga New Year Festival normally falls in January, specifically between January 14 and 15. The Festival also alternates between the principal towns in the Naga Hills area in the northwestern region of Myanmar between India and Myanmar.

By January 14 almost all Naga clans had arrived at the Festival venue. Early morning, while the mist still blankets the mountain tops, they congregate at the main ceremonial grounds. Dressed in their colourful costumes clad in traditional blouses and longyis. But some girls have tassels hanging down their sarongs as decorations. A chant wells up and the ceremonial bamboo pole is carried into the grounds and erected. At the same time the ceremonial drum, actually it is a hollowed out trunk of a huge tree, is beaten by a group of Naga youths and the ceremony is on its way.

All day long the various Naga clans dance, each in their own distinctive costumes. As there are a number of sub-clans of Nagas living inside Myanmar territory it is quite a spectacle. However, modernity had also caught up with our cousins. But thankfully, they focus their creativity on their native dresses and textiles designs and did not imitate their sisters in the west!

January 15 is normally an “official day”. Government officials and the Naga chiefs give speeches and exchange gifts between themselves. The visitors, both local and foreigners alike, are given traditional food packets of sticky rice and pork curry. But be careful of the curry. The chilli is so hot that it could double as rocket fuel and propel you to the moon.

January 15 night is also a memorable one. As dusk gathers a huge bonfire is lit in the middle of the Festival grounds. Huge logs are stacked high and lit as all festival comers—the officials, Naga elders, ordinary Naga villagers and the foreign tourists—join in a conga line and dance around the roaring bonfire. And in the hearts of the revelers is sadness as all men are in thick blankets with fangs of wild boars and tiger claws hanging on their neck. Skull caps are of cane stuck with feathers of hornbills and monkey furs.

The women are more modest though. During ancient times there were photographs of them going about topless but now all are know that tomorrow they must part. But tonight the warmth in their hearts conquers even the hot flames leaping from the bonfire and the cold night wind howling over the high peaks.

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Thai Foreign Minister visits Myanmar-Thai Friendship Bridge, trade zone

NAY PYI TAW, 4 Feb—Thai Foreign Minister Mr Surapong Tovichakchaikul and party visited Myanmar-Thai Friendship Bridge and trade zone in Myawady in Kayin State yesterday.

The Thai Foreign Minister and party were conducted round by State Chief Minister U Zaw Min, state ministers and Chairperson of the Myawady Traders Association Daw Thin Thin Mya and others.

The Thai Foreign Minister and party had discussions with the state minister for Finance and Revenue, the state minister for Planning and Economy, the state minister for Transport, members of OSS, departmental personnel and the chairperson of Myawady Traders Association at the meeting hall of Myawady Trade Zone.

Thai Foreign Minister Mr Surapong Tovichakchaikul and party viewed the import and export process at the Myawady Trade Zone.

Thai Foreign Minister
Mr Surapong Tovichakchaikul
being greeted by State Chief
Minister U Zaw Min in
Myawady.—MNA

Article: Hpone Thant;
Photos: Sonny Nyein

Naga couple

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***********
Government implementing human resources...

(Yatanarpon Cyber City) with the aim of taking a leading role in information and communication technology across the nation.

He praised the university for its arrangements to carry out academic matters by linking international technological universities to be able to meet the aim for establishment of the international level technological university so as to conduct advanced research tasks.

Moreover, he said that the university entrance system has been adopted systematically and is being implemented for providing ICT technologies to the students through effective academic system. As the applicants were scrutinized through the writing and oral test in line with the university entrance system to become eligible ones for raising the standard of the university, a total of 50 per cent of the total applicants passed the entrance test last year and 25 per cent this year, he said.

It can be seen that aims are being realized to shape the university to conduct advanced research tasks and to be an electronic learning hub, he said. In fact, he said that research tasks are very beneficial to the organization. Moreover, the research work is a drive for bringing the own organization to the goal and it can contribute towards establishment of the firm education, he said.

He noted that students are pursuing technological learning by overcoming various tests with the confidence that they would effectively apply the technological knowledge and experiences provided by the university in the fields of State service personnel, private services and own businesses. Thus, he said that faculty members must continuously uplift the proficiencies themselves to win the confidence and reliance of the students.

(Daw Nan Shwe Hmon attends work coord meeting of PyinOoLwin Township MCWA and WAO

Nay Pyi Taw, 4 Feb — Daw Nan Shwe Hmon, wife of Vice-President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Dr Sai Mauk Kham, attended the work coordination meeting of members of PyinOoLwin Township Maternal and Child Welfare Association and Child Welfare Association and Central Women’s Affairs Organization held at District General Administration Department in PyinOoLwin Township, Mandalay Region yesterday.

On the occasion, Daw Nan Shwe Hmon said that she was there to meet the members of MCWA and WAO and witness measures and capabilities of the members.

Taking part in maternal and child welfare activities proves noble and profound and so does in women’s affairs works as they concerned with social and economic matters of all women.

She urged the members to candidly discuss if there are difficulties and problems in work environment. She vowed she would attend to the needs by holding discussion with Central Maternal and Child Welfare Association and Central Women’s Affairs Federation when she is back in Nay Pyi Taw. She said she took great pride to witness all executives and members doing philanthropic works to the best of their ability, adding that majority of women society would give their claps to the association and the organization.

Patron Daw Myat Ngwe of Mandalay Region Maternal and Child Welfare Supervisory Committee and Women’s Affairs Organization expounded on role of the association and organization in contributing to social, health, education and poverty alleviation measures driven by the State in the region, populations of the association and organization, and undertakings. The members set out sector-wise tasks and discussed general matters.

The Vice-President’s wife donated K one million each to PyinOoLwin Township Maternal and Child Welfare Association and Township Women’s Affairs Organization.

She viewed female trainees knitting wool at the knitting training school opened by Mandalay Region MCWA (branch).

She proceeded to Mitta Panngon nursery school opened by PyinOoLwin Township MCWA (branch) and viewed demonstration by the children. At delivery room of the township MCWA, Daw Nan Shwe Hmon encouraged pregnant women, viewed healthcare treatments to babies and provided cash assistance. — MNA
He urged the faculty members to conduct student-centred approach system instead of spoon feeding in teaching the students. He stressed the need to train the students, who will be graduates in 2014-2015, to have personal initiative in the ASEAN Community in 2015.

Only when the faculty members comprehensively know the advances of the education era with capability to join the developing world, will they be on a par with development of ASEAN and Asian regions, he said. He pointed out that everybody must be aware of the fact that today’s knowledge may be out of date tomorrow. Only when the technicians keep in touch with international academic field as much as possible, will they be highly-qualified scholars, he said. If the academic matter at university level sets the academic goal for ordinary students, who will be graduates in the near future, then will scientific evidence be realized and can it be long-term confidence and sustainability of these efforts be achieved?

He said that the government has adopted and is implementing the human resources development plan to change natural resources-economy of the State into knowledge-based economy in the future.

Nowadays, he noted that human resources and technology are in connectivity with economic development. He said that if Myanmar, blessed with plenty of natural resources, has capability to systematically apply the natural resources, human resources and technology, it will be a developed nation quickly.

In conclusion, he urged the faculty members and students to vigorously pour out harmonious efforts to be able to emerge a technological university that can turn out qualified technicians and intellectuals and apply ICT technologies in the nation effectively.

Next, the Union Minister for Sports presented sports gear, Shwe Thanwin Co Ltd two sets of Sky Net TV receivers, Chairman of IGE Co U Nay Aung, UKyaw Kyaw Win of New Star Light Co, U Aung Zaw Naing of Shwetaung Co, U Aung Min Thein of Shwe Than Lwin, U Myat Cho Win of Asia World Co, U Nay Win Kyaw of Thanwar Win Co and U Soe Naing of Aye Aye Khaing K 10 million to the fund of the university.

He said that the government will fulfill the requirements for the town and will easy the task as much as possible. He said that the President has given guidance to establish an industrial zone in Muse. He noted that it is necessary to connect connectivity tasks of undertaking ICT between Muse and Yatanarpon Myothit. The State will encourage CMF works as creation of job opportunities for the people though it cannot bring too much benefit to the nation.

After hearing the reports, the Vice-President said that he came there to seek the answer in delay of construction tasks for Yatanarpon Myothit established as ICT City in last 2-3 years. He said that the government will fulfill the requirements for the town and will easy task as much as possible. He said that the President has given guidance to establish an industrial zone in Muse. He noted that it is necessary to connect connectivity tasks of undertaking ICT between Muse and Yatanarpon Myothit. The State will encourage CMF works as creation of job opportunities for the people though it cannot bring too much benefit to the nation.

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Union Minister
U Kyaw Hsan,…

(from page 16)

fifth estate of the nation. Therefore, the three pillars need to interact with the fourth estate so that the people can give a correct decision, noted the Union Minister.

He then suggested five principles that the Fourth Estate, the distributor of knowledge is assumed to focus on in the future which are non-media bias; all-angle presentation, in informing a piece of news to the public in order that the public can see and consider rightly; freedom and responsibility, and freedom and reasoning in news presentation; reflection of unity and democracy although democracy permits freedom to have different opinions; and consideration of national interests.

He continued that the media law is being drafted, which is aimed to build real Fourth Estate but not to prevent and ban. They are writing the media law by studying the every media law within the reach including those of global countries and ASEAN fellows.

Next, Patron of Tun Foundation Literary Award Committee Chairman of Tun Foundation Bank said that it had been the sixth time Tun Foundation had presented literary awards with a view to development of Myanmar literature, emergence of great works of literature and increased number of readers.

MPT to introduce more GSM/UMTS release in March

Member of Tun Foundation Literary Award Selection Committee Patron of MWJA U Myint Kywe presented remarks of the committee in brief.

Union Minister U Kyaw Hsan presented gifts to lifetime achievement literary award winner retired ambassador Win Tun, Dr Toe Hla, Prof Nay Win (medical), U Thein Kyaw (bank), Mya Han, U Soe Win, Tun Yi (archaeologist), Daw Aye Aye Kun on behalf of Thakihin Hla Tun, Ko Pho Aye (Myanmar Radio), Dr Myo Myint, Tain Oo, U Kyaw Swe Oo and Shwe Myaung Pyone Le’ Maw.

Agreement signing ceremony for second-phase implementation of GSM/UMTS mobiles extension project in progress.—MNA

During the meeting at the Telecommunications and Postal Training Centre of MPT here today, they reviewed the first phase of the project and signed agreements on the second phase of the project.

They also discussed to release GSM/UMTS in March.—MNA

MNA

YANGON, 4 Feb — Scott Hend took the Zaygaba Myanmar Open 2012 lead after the third round at the Royal Mingalardon Golf & Country Club today.

After the third day, Australian Scott Hend has maintained his lead of the open (16-under) for the tournament, followed by Kiradech Aphibarnarat of Thailand (15-under) and Tetsuji Hiratsuka of Japan, Marcus Both of Australia and Ben Fox of the USA (14-under).

Myanmar’s Thein Zaw Myint is 5-under and Zaw Moe is 2-under for the tournament.—MNA

YANGON Mayor inspects road upgrading, sanitation

YANGON, 4 Feb — Yangon Region Minister for Development Affairs Yangon Mayor U Hla Myint has assisted in laying the 24-inch in diameter pipes in Thingangyun Township today.

The new pipe line is 22.97 mile long linking Thingangyun Township and Ngmanyeyeik Water Plant and it would be used to supply 45 million gallons of water daily to Yangon.

The mayor also inspected upgrading of roads and dredging drains in Thakayta, North Okkalapa. Insein, Kyimyindaing, Ahlone, Latha, Kyauktada and Mingala Taungnyunt townships.

Basic education level work coordination meeting held

YANGON, 4 Feb — Deputy Minister for Education U Aye Kyaw addressed the basic education level work coordination meeting of the ministry on behalf of Union Minister for Education here this morning.

The deputy minister called for accuracy of statistics and invited suggestions for promotion of education standard.

Director-General of Education Planning and Training Department U Bo Win explained measures to be taken and directors-general and chairperson of departments and associations reported on ongoing works. The work coordination meeting ends tomorrow.—MNA
It is possible to prevent certain cancers: doctor

SINGAPORE, 4 Feb — The incidence of cancer is indeed rising globally, but it is possible to prevent certain types of cancer by avoiding some of the known risk factors, like smoking, and get vaccinations for certain viruses, a doctor said on Friday.

Lee Soo-Chin, senior consultant at the National University Cancer Institute, Singapore, said smoking is one of the most preventable lifestyle risk factors for cancer. “If people stop smoking, it will significantly reduce the risks of lung cancer, throat cancer and a lot of other smoking-related cancers,” she said in a recent interview with Xinhua ahead of the World Cancer Day on 4 February.

There are other cancers that are related to viral infections, too. Hepatitis B, which is common in many parts of Asia, is associated with increased risks of liver cancer. Therefore, getting vaccinations against the virus nowadays.— Xinhua

Five people killed in Turkey due to carbon monoxide heater poisoning

ANKARA, 4 Feb—Five people from four families were killed in carbon monoxide heater poisoning in southeastern Gaziantep Province of Turkey on Friday, the semi-official Anatolia news agency reported.

The victims are Dondu Acar, 29 years old; Resul Acar, 10; Mustafa Acar, 12; Fatma Acar, 7; and Mustafa Acar, 17.

They were found dead at home in Nizip district of Gaziantep, where one of the relatives could not reach his family and informed villagers to look for them.

The bodies were taken to Birecik State Hospital, said the report.

An investigation into this incident was underway.— Xinhua

Arctic changes could spell dire consequences

SYDNEY, 4 Feb—The first signs of dangerous climate change in the Arctic could spell dire consequences for the whole of humankind, scientists warn.

The Arctic has been warming at three times the global average and the loss of sea ice, which had melted faster in summer than predicted, was linked tentatively to recent extreme cold winters in Europe.

But there’s more to come and in a manner that has not been highlighted before.

University of Western Australia researchers say the Arctic region is fast approaching a series of imminent “ tipping points” that could trigger an abrupt domino effect of large-scale climate change across the entire planet, the Swedish journal AMBIO and Nature Climate Change report.

Mexico drought worsened by cold

MEXICO CITY, 4 Feb—What officials call the most severe drought Mexico has ever faced has been worsened by a spate of cold weather. This week, the government authorized $2.63 billion in aid for 19 of Mexico’s 31 states. With agriculture devastated in nearly half of the country, the money will go to potable water, food and temporary jobs for citizens displaced by the drought.

Freezing temperatures worsened the already rising prices of produce such as corn and beans, and may lead to inflation. The New York Times reported Tuesday certain areas in need of aid are difficult to reach, delaying the flow of food and water to people in those regions.

The most severely affected are indigenous communities, particularly tribal areas of the Tarahumar community in the Sierra Madre, among Mexico’s poorest citizens.—Internet

US researchers find obesity begins in brain

HOUSTON, 4 Feb—Though most people think obesity is a problem of hips, thighs and bellies, a new study by US scientists shows that obesity begins in the brain where the female hormone estrogen plays a role. The study by a group of researchers, led by Baylor College of Medicine and The University of Texas Southwestern Medical School, shows that the hormone works through two populations of neurons, estrogen receptor-alpha (SF-1) and neurons that project to the hypothalamus, a critical part of the brain called the hypothalamus.

The researchers found that the two kinds of neurons play different but important roles in metabolism, fat distribution and appetite control, according to the February issue of the Baylor College of Medicine news. “Before menopause, women are protected from obesity and associated disorders by estrogen,” said Dr. Yong Xu, the first author of the study and assistant professor of the USDA Agricultural Research Service Children’s Nutrition Research Center at BCM and Texas Children’s Hospital.

After menopause, the risk of obesity in women rises, while the risks of estrogen replacement therapy outweigh its effect on reducing obesity, Xu said. Researchers studied four different kinds of mice to determine the effect of estrogen and found that their work on neurons in the hypothalamus that carry an estrogen receptor alpha. The hypothalamus links the nervous system to the endocrine system to regulate multiple physiological processes, including those controlling bodyweight.— Xinhua

Study finds US racial segregation at lowest level in a century

NEW YORK, 4 Feb—Segregation of African-Americans in cities and towns across the United States has dropped to its lowest level since 1910, according to a study reviewed on Tuesday. The Manhattan Institute a New York-based conservative think tank reported that “all-white neighbourhoods are effectively extinct” and that black populations in urban ghettos are in decline based on census data from neighbourhoods.

Immigration and gentrification helped convert ghettos into racially-mixed communities and contributed to diversifying suburbia, according to economists Edward Gleaser of Harvard University and Jacob Vigdor of the Brookings Institution who wrote the study. The Hispanic population has increased since the 1960s, with Latin American immigrants settling in both predominantly black and white neighbourhoods, the report said. The typical African-American now lives in a neighborhood that is 14 percent Latino.

Some experts, however, argued that the decline in desegregation in residential areas has not meant an end to racial inequality. Minorities at every income level tend to reside in poorer neighbourhooods than whites with comparable incomes.— Xinhua

Cadmium pollution cleanup measures safe, effective: experts

LUZHOU, 4 Feb — The measures adopted to bring down cadmium concentration levels following a toxic spill in a river of south China’s Guangxi Zhuang autonomous region are safe and effective, experts have told Xinhua. By 6 am Saturday, the water quality of the Lijiang River, a source of drinking water for local residents, is up to national standard, according to data released by the emergency headquarters handling the incident.

Neutralizers designed to gather the matter and ease its removal have been placed in the river, where three masons and a forensic team work on Tuesday raised an unknown hitmen, according to local media.— Reuters

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Xinhua

The New York Times

Xinhua
Japanese archaeologists find potteroy with ogre’s face

OGAKA, Feb — A team of Japanese archaeologists has found a piece of pottery painted with the face of ogre which dates back to the 12th century in Nara Prefecture in western Japan.

The earthenware was excavated from a well built in the early 12th century at Shindo Rinsen in Kashihara City, Nara Prefecture, where once Japan’s capital was located. Japan’s Nippon Hoso Kyokai (NHK) public broadcaster reported on Friday.

The excavation team said that the pottery is round shape with about 10 centimeters in diameter, noting that a face of ogre was drawn on its surface in ink. In particular, the team stressed, bold lines are clearly shown on its eyebrows and tusks from his mouth, making the face quite humorous and impressive. It is believed that the discovery of pottery is the first time in Japan. The team started the excavations in June 2010 and also found in the same site other pieces of pottery which seem to be used as dishes or saucers for ritual ceremony in the era.

Japanese archaeologist Shinichi Sagawa in Gangoji Museum for Research of Cultural Property was quoted by NHK as saying that it was widely believed during the Middle Ages, possibly by legend from China, that picturing or imaging of ogre was one of the popular methods to protect people’s daily life from enemy, evil and illness. The pottery will be on display at Kashihara Municipal Sendai Museum from this Saturday to the end of March. — Xinhua

From shipwreck in Italy, a treasure now beckons

ROSE, Feb — In the chaotic evacuation of the Costa Concordia, passengers and crew abandoned almost everything on board the cruise ship: jewels, cash, champagne, antiques, 19th-century Bohemian crystal glassware and thousands of art objects, including 300-year-old woodblock prints by a Japanese master.

Now, a veritable treasure trove beneath the pristine Italian waters where the luxury liner ran aground last month. Though some objects are bound to disintegrate, there is still board enough to tempt treasure seekers — just as the Titanic and countless shipwrecks before have lured gold of goldsmen, and other riches for as far back as mankind can remember.

It may be just a matter of time before treasure hunters set their sights on the sunken spoils of the Costa Concordia, which had more than 4,200 people on board.

“As long as there are bodies in there, it’s considered off base to everybody because it’s a grave,” said Robert Marx, a veteran diver and the author of numerous books on maritime history, underwater archaeology and treasure hunting.

“But when all the bodies are out, there will be a mad dash for the valuables.”

The Mafia, he said, even has underwater teams that specialize in going after sunken booty. The Costa Concordia was essentially a floating luxury hotel and many of the passengers embarked on the ill-fated cruise with their finest clothes and jewels so they could parade them in casinos and at gala dinners beneath towering chandeliered ceilings.

On top of that was the massive wealth belonging to the ship itself: elegant ships stocked with jewelry, more than 6,000 works of art decorating walls and a wellness spa containing a collection of 300-year-old woodblock prints by Katsushika Hokusai, a Japanese artist most famous for his work of a giant wave picturing or imaging of ogre’s face

Vermont inmates hide pig in official police car
deal

Vermont, 4 Feb — Inmates working at a Vermont correctional unit’s print shop managed to sneak a prank image of a pig into a state police cruiser that is emblazoned on police cars, and 30 cruisers spotted the design for the last year, officials said on Thursday.

“I dishonour the memory of those past and present members, especially for those who have lost their lives in the line of duty,” Dasaro said. Vermont contracts with correctional facilities employing prisoners to make some print products, including the cruiser decals. Police said someone who works at the print shop changed the emblem from the officially sanctioned design.

“It is a very difficult task to have this happen,” said Stephanie Dasaro, state police spokeswoman. “We were given birth by Mainland mothers

Mainland women giving birth in Hong Kong is a very good sign, and more young people are getting married as well. This is very encouraging for Hong Kong. So we must reserve sufficient capacity for local parents,” he said.

Chow said the government needs to adjust the quota every year, and is discussing the issue with Mainland authorities to deter people from trying to bypass the birth-registration system. According to statistics, about 88,000 babies were born in Hong Kong in 2010, among them about 41,000 were given birth by Mainland mothers.

Hong Kong to adjust quota for Mainland mothers

HONG KONG, 4 Feb— Hong Kong’s Secretary for Food & Health York Chow said on Friday that the city government will review the need for an adjustment in the quota and policies regarding pregnant Mainland women giving birth in Hong Kong.

Speaking at a media session on Friday, Chow said the government will discuss the issue with the Hong Kong Hospital Authority and private hospitals over the next two months.

He said the government has cut the quota for non-local women giving birth in Hong Kong to 35,000 for 2012, to ease demand for obstetrics services.

“We can see local mothers are giving birth more than ever, which is a very good sign, and more young people are getting married as well. This is very encouraging for Hong Kong. So we must reserve sufficient capacity for local parents,” he said.

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Los Angeles, 4 Feb— Thirty bales of marijuana estimated to be worth $4.3 million have been found floating off the Southern California coast.

Los Angeles County sheriff’s investigators say a boater discovered the pot Wednesday more than six miles off Marina del Rey.

The Los Angeles Times (http://lat.ms/xMphpf) reports the bales were fished out of the sea with the help of lifeguards and was turned over to US Customs and Border Protection officials.

30 floating marijuana bales found off California beach

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Mainland women giving birth in Hong Kong is a very good sign, and more young people are getting married as well. This is very encouraging for Hong Kong. So we must reserve sufficient capacity for local parents,” he said.

Chow said the government needs to adjust the quota every year, and is discussing the issue with Mainland authorities to deter people from trying to bypass the birth-registration system. According to statistics, about 88,000 babies were born in Hong Kong in 2010, among them about 41,000 were given birth by Mainland mothers.

Los Angeles, 4 Feb— Thirty bales of marijuana estimated to be worth $4.3 million have been found floating off the Southern California coast.

Los Angeles County sheriff’s investigators say a boater discovered the pot Wednesday more than six miles off Marina del Rey.

The Los Angeles Times (http://lat.ms/xMphpf) reports the bales were fished out of the sea with the help of lifeguards and was turned over to US Customs and Border Protection officials.
Gamer dies at web café—but no-one notices

The body of Chen Rong-yu, 23, was found slumped in a chair at a café in New Taipei city on Tuesday night, according to local reports.

He was rigid on a chair with his hands stretched out towards the keyboard and mouse, police said. He had been playing League of Legends.

Mr Chen’s body had apparently been sitting there for up to nine hours without any of the 30 other people in the café noticing.

He was last seen by a waitress talking on the phone around noon on Wednesday.

An initial police investigation found he might have died of a cardiac arrest triggered by low temperatures.

Theeman’s family said he had been treated for a heart problem in September of last year. Police are still looking into the cause of the death.

They say they suspect that a combination of tiredness, lack of movement and the cold weather could have caused blood clots and a heart attack.

Jason Segel honoured by Harvard theater group

Actor Jason Segel lamped at a response from a member of the audience as he is honored as the Hasty Pudding Man of the Year at Harvard University in Cambridge, Mass, on 5 Feb, 2012—Internet

Jason Segel was honored as Man of the Year by Harvard University’s Hasty Pudding Theatricals. He got the traditional pudding pot on Friday evening after a roast by the nation’s oldest undergraduate drama troupe.

Segel plays Marshall Eriksen on the CBS series “How I Met Your Mother.” He co-wrote and starred in last year’s films “The Muppets.” And Friday he sang a version of “Rainbow Connection” written by the troupe.

Segel got his start in the short-lived but critically acclaimed television series “Freaks and Geeks.” He later wrote and starred in the 2008 movie “Forgotten Sarah Marshall,” which earned more than $100 million worldwide.

Hasty Pudding honored actress Claire Danes as its Woman of the Year. Last year’s Man of the Year was Jay Leno.

Bee Gee Robin Gibb makes “spectacular” recovery

LONDON, 4 Feb—Bee Gees singer Robin Gibb said on Friday he had made a “spectacular” recovery from a serious illness, which was widely reported to be cancer.

The 62-year-old, most famous as a founding member of the disco-era hit machine the Bee Gees, told BBC Radio 2: “Well, it’s all simple. I was diagnosed with a growth in my colon. It was removed. And I’ve been treated for that by a brilliant doctor, and in their own words ‘the results have been spectacular’.”

Media speculation about his deteriorating health was sparked by his past and failure appearance in recent months. Some reports went so far as to suggest he was close to death, claims Gibb said had been unfounded.

“I mean the fact is, I’ve never spoken to anybody about my condition or the condition that I was in. I did a lot of them go over the top to the point where they’re telling me things that I didn’t even know about myself,” he said.

“The prognosis is that it’s almost gone and I feel fantastic and really from now on it’s just what they could describe as a ‘mopping-up’ operation. I am very active and my sense of well-being is good,” Gibb has just finished recording his first ever classical work with son Robin-John called “The Titanic Requiem” which is due for release on 19 March.

This may be good news for fans of the couple, who have been waiting for the wedding of tinsel town’s hottest couple.

Both Saif and Bebo have been going steady for several years and are now ready to take that relationship to another level with a weddding,” a source said.

“An Immediate fans are waiting for the couple to take off with an engagement on 10th February.

Sail-Kareena to get engaged on 10 February?

February. They are quite excited about the engagement,” the source added. Saif’s sister, actor Soha Ali Khan revealed to a TV channel that the two will marry a week after the release of their spy thriller, Agent Vinod.—Internet

Popular actor Ben Gazzara dies in NY

LOS ANGELES, 4 Feb—Actor Ben Gazzara, known for his brooding tough-guy presence in dozens of films, television shows and stage productions over his long career, died of pancreatic cancer on Friday at a Manhattan hospital, his lawyer said. He was 81.

A three-time Tony

Los Angeles, CA—Ben Gazzara, one of Hollywood’s most trusted character actors, died tonight from cancer in Manhattan, New York. He was 81.

Gazzara made his big break into films with his role as an accused killer in Otto Preminger’s 1959 courtroom drama “Anatomy of a Murder.”

Stefan Booth begins work on ‘Romeo’

New York, 4 Feb—Hailee Steinfeld and Douglas Booth have begun work in Italy on the latest film version of Shakespeare’s tragic romance “Romeo and Juliet,” producers said. Hailee, 16, and Douglas, 21, portray the star-crossed lovers in the film directed by British filmmaker baz Luhrmann.

The film’s cast also includes Damian Lewis, Stellan Skarsgard, Paul Giamatti, Natalie Portman, Leonardo DiCaprio, Javier Bardem, Morgan Freeman, James Franco, Daniel Radcliffe, and Benedict Cumberbatch.

“Romeo and Juliet” is a love story—a tale of star-crossed lovers. It is set in Verona, Italy, in the 16th century. The film is expected to be released in 2014.

Robby Gibb of the Bee Gees arrives at the World Music Awards in Monte Carlo on 18 May, 2010—Internet

Gamer gets $10K Internet bill for watching movies

A Canadian family said they unknowingly raked up a $10,000 bill while using their mobile Internet to watch movies on Netflix while on vacation.

John Gibson of Weyburn, Saskatchewan, said he recently took his family on vacation to Phoenix, where his grandchildren used his SaskTel mobile Internet to watch Netflix movies for up to nine hours without his knowledge.

The charges resulted from heavy data usage outside of the company’s service area, causing roaming charges to accumulate.

Gibson said he spoke to the company and they agreed to reduce the bill to $1,000. He said the experience was a pricy lesson. “It’s a sort of my fault,” he said. “I’ll pay the thousand bucks and — lesson learned.”

DUI suspect complained of ‘big boobies’

A Florida woman accused of driving under the influence told a sheriff’s deputy her “big boobies” hindered her ability to take a field sobriety test. The Martin County Sheriff’s office said Maureen Raymond, 49, of Port St Lucie was pulled over around 9:20 pm Sunday by a deputy responding to a report of a reckless driver, TCPalm reported Friday. Raymond, who the arrest report said smelled of alcohol and possessed an empty glass that smelled like it had contained an alcoholic beverage, told the deputy she could not comply with his instructions in the field sobriety test because of her “big boobies.”

Maureen Raymond’s mugshot, via the Martin County Sheriff’s department.

“I asked her if she wanted to attempt the task and she stated if I hold her hand,” the arrest affidavit states. “I asked her again if she would like to attempt the task and she stated not really because she has big breasts.”

Raymond was arrested on suspicion of driving under the influence. She refused to take a breath test, the sheriff’s office said.

Robin Gibb, via Martin County Sheriff's Office.
Ryan Giggs set for new contract at Manchester United

Manchester, 4 Feb—Ryan Giggs is ready to open talks on a new one-year contract after seeing Paul Scholes’ successful U-turn on retirement. The deal would take the veteran beyond his 39th birthday and 900 appearances for United. But after seeing team-mates Scholes and Nicklas Mahmut of France 6-3, 6-4 in 74 minutes. “So far everything’s going pretty well. I have a second match under my belt. The very important thing in my game is serve. It was working pretty well, except for one game where I lost maybe a bit of concentration and lost that game, but finally it was able to finish it in straight sets, so happy for that,” Berdych said after the match.

Gael Monfils

Paris, 4 Feb—The Top 3 seeds at the Open Sud de France, Tomas Berdych, Gilles Simon and Gael Monfils won their respective matches to reach the last 4 of this tournament. Top seeded Czech, Tomas Berdych, overcame Nicolas Mahut of France 6-3, 6-4 in 74 minutes. “So far everything’s going pretty well. I have a second match under my belt. The very important thing in my game is serve. It was working pretty well, except for one game where I lost maybe a bit of concentration and lost that game, but finally it was able to finish it in straight sets, so happy for that,” Berdych said after the match.

Manchester, 4 Feb—Manchester City boss Roberto Mancini has named Carlos Tevez in his 25-man squad for the remainder of the season—and admitted he could pick him again. Mancini said a fully fit Tevez could wear the sky blue shirt again, despite previously asserting that the Argentine international was “finished” at City.

Terry misses Chelsea’s match hosting Man Utd

London, 4 Feb—John Terry was ruled out of Chelsea’s Primier League match hosting Manchester United on Friday due to a knee injury. The center back, who was removed as England captain while awaiting trial in July on charges of racially abusing an opponent, may also miss the next weekend’s away match at Everton.

Sergena Williams, left, says her sister Venus show be ready for the US Fed Cup match against Belarus.

Washington, 4 Feb—Both Serena and Venus Williams have been called for the United States’ Fed Cup Group II tie against Belarus in Massachusetts this weekend as Serena leads the field but Venus only plays doubles.

Levin leads frost-bitten Phoenix Open

Scottsdale, 4 Feb—Spencer Levin fired an eagle-under 63 for the clubhouse lead as the $6.1 million PGA Tour’s Phoenix Open was suspended because of darkness for the second consecutive day. Levin was 15-under par after 128 through two rounds.

Carlos Tevez return is possible—Roberto Mancini

Manchester, 4 Feb—Manchester City boss Roberto Mancini has named Carlos Tevez in his 25-man squad for the remainder of the season—and admitted he could pick him again. Mancini said a fully fit Tevez could wear the sky blue shirt again, despite previously asserting that the Argentine international was “finished” at City.

Terry remains at City after interest from AC Milan. Inter Milan and Paris St Germain failed to turn into a transfer. “If he comes back and he is fit — it is possible,” conceded Mancini. Tevez, 27, remains in Argentina and, as yet, there has been no indication when the striker may return. “Carlos is not an option at the moment but it is possible in the future if he comes back,” added Mancini. “I hope for him he has been training in the last three months to keep his condition.

There is only one thing on my mind, the Barclays Premier League.” Club captain Vincent Kompany has insisted City have the mental strength to keep their title challenge on course.

“I hope for him he has been training in the last three months to keep his condition. Mancini on Tevez.

City have had a mixed set of results in January, allowing Manchester United to draw level with them on points at the top of the Premier League table.

The Goodison Park defeat marked Kompany’s return to the City team after a four-game suspension. He had collected his red card in the 3-2 FA Cup third round loss to United in January.
**DISTRICT NEWS**

Discussion on revenue held

LETPADAN, 4 Feb—Letpadan Township Internal Revenue department held a discussion on revenue on 26 January morning. Staff Officer U Kyaw Hlaing of Letpadan Township Internal Revenue Department, Township Development Affairs Committee and authorities and local farmers. The discussion was attended by officials of Township General Administration Department, Township Development Affairs Committee and Myanmar Police Force and 100 tax payers.—Township IPRD

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**Palethwe paddy grown through GAP**

HOPANG, 4 Feb—Cultivation of summer paddy through good agriculture pattern was demonstrated at 1.37 acres of farmland in Manmai Ward of Hopang Township on 25 January. Departmental officials supervised cultivation of Palethwe summer paddy strain. It was attended by district and township level officials, members of township agricultural committee, local authorities and local farmers.

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**NMN-ner Joke**

Child sent to bed

A small boy is sent to bed by his father...

[Five minutes later]

“Da-ad...”

“What?”

“I’m thirsty. Can you bring me a drink of water?”

“No. You had your chance. Lights out.”

[Five minutes later]

“Da-ad...”

“What?”

“I’m THIRSTY...Can I have a drink of water??”

“I told you NO! If you ask again I’ll have to spank you!!”

“What??!!”

“I’m THIRSTY...Can I have a drink of water??”

“I told you NO! If you ask again I’ll have to spank you!!”

“WHAT?”

“I’m THIRSTY...Can I have a drink of water??”

“I told you NO! If you ask again I’ll have to spank you!!”

“WHAT?”

“I’m THIRSTY...Can I have a drink of water??”

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“WHAT?”

“I’m THIRSTY...Can I have a drink of water??”

“I told you NO! If you ask again I’ll have to spank you!!”

“WHAT?”

“I’m THIRSTY...Can I have a drink of water??”

“I told you NO! If you ask again I’ll have to spank you!!”

“WHAT?”

[Ice cream is in the room]

“What??!!”

“I’m TONGUETHIRSTY!!...Can I have a drink of water??”

“I told you NO! If you ask again I’ll have to spank you!!”

“WHAT??!!”

“I’m TONGUETHIRSTY!!...Can I have a drink of water??”

“I told you NO! If you ask again I’ll have to spank you!!”

“WHAT??!!”

“I’m TONGUETHIRSTY!!...Can I have a drink of water??”

“I told you NO! If you ask again I’ll have to spank you!!”

“WHAT??!!”

“I’m TONGUETHIRSTY!!...Can I have a drink of water??”

“I told you NO! If you ask again I’ll have to spank you!!”

“WHAT??!!”

“I’m TONGUETHIRSTY!!...Can I have a drink of water??”

“I told you NO! If you ask again I’ll have to spank you!!”

“WHAT??!!”

“A small boy is sent to bed by his father...

[Five minutes later]...Your Ice Cream is ready!!

Blackburn 7-1 Blackpool

Robin van Persie’s hat-trick, two goals from Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain, Mikel Arteta’s strike and Thierry Henry’s late goal saw Arsenal thump Blackpool

Theo Walcott was key to Arsenal’s game as well with a hat-trick of assists, the first one coming only just 80 seconds into the game when he set up van Persie’s tap-in with a cross from the right.

Blackburn looked like they had some fight in them after the return goal from van Persie and Oxlade-Chamberlain put paid to the notion. It was an even tougher task for them after Gael Givet was sent off for a two-footed challenge on van Persie two minutes from the break. The second half was smooth-sailing for Arsenal, who tore the Blackburn defence with ease, allowing Mikel Arteta to get on the scoresheet as well and van Persie to complete his hat-trick.

Van Persie turned Thierry Henry’s provider for the final goal of the game in injury time when he set Thierry Henry up for the return goal to score his second goal in his second coming.—Internet
Literary Award includes 12 genres and the Manuscript Award every year. The National Literary Award and Sarpay Beikman development by rendering assistance. Like the previous governments, the new international community and own country. Minister U Kyaw Hsan said that literature committees and guests. Award and Thuta Swesone Literary Award committee and Sayawun Tin Shwe Literary award committee, literary award selection Libraries Foundation, members of literary Publishers Association and Myanmar Artisans Asiayon, Myanmar Printers and Asiayon, Myanmar Traditional Artists and Journalists Association, Myanmar Thabin executive members of Myanmar Writers and Minister for Finance and Revenue Daw San Swe. and Yangon Region Chief Minister U Myint Swe.

For the development of Myanmar’s literature, the State presents National Literary Award and Sarpay Beikman Manuscript Award every year. The National Literary Award includes 12 genres and the Sarpay Beikman Manuscript Award 14 genres. As the Sarpay Beikman Manuscript Award includes first, second and third prizes, 12 National Literary Awards and 42 Sarpay Beikman Manuscript Awards are presented each year.

The Union Minister went on to say that this year’s National Literary Award includes the award for English version book, and advice has been sought from the literati to continue to present awards for the books written in English in the coming years.

Myanmar publishes about 4,700 books in various subjects. If 1,000 copies per book are published, there will be more than four million copies of books every year. So, it can be said that in comparison with the yearly publishing of books, awards presented are few in number.

The Union Minister added that to fill the gap, Tun Foundation Literary Committee has started presenting Tun Foundation Literary Award and it has now been presented for six times. Similarly, Sayawun Tin Shwe Literary Award, Thuta Swesone Literary Award and Pakokku U Ohn Pe Literary Award are being presented to contribute towards national literary development. And the State forses and welcomes more private literary awards.

Today’s prize winning works are found to have included knowledgeable facts for the nation and the people. Moreover, as awards have been awarded for the English version books and manuscripts, it will surely help develop the Myanmar literature as well as the nation’s English language skills. Now is the time when Myanmar is in the process of democracy transition in accord with the constitution. Building a democratic nation calls for the uprightness of legislative, executive and judicial pillars. The fourth estate called media is responsible for ensuring the uprightness of the three pillars. As the people are the ones who will decide everything in shaping a democracy, they can be said the (See page 10)

Summer sports training courses to be held in Nay Pyi Taw

Nay Pyi Taw, 4 Feb—A working coordination meeting for opening summer sports training courses in Nay Pyi Taw this year was held at the meeting hall of the Ministry of Sports here on 1 February morning.

At the event, Deputy Minister for Sports U Aye Kyi made a speech citing that as youths play in a vital role in shaping a democratic country, they need to be healthy, and that the heads of schools should push their respective physical training teachers to persuade their students keep sports spirit in mind and to nurture their skills in school sports because only when a student is in good physical shape, will his brain be able to work effectively.

Then, the deputy minister heard the reports presented by Deputy Director-General U Ohn Myint Oo of Sports and Physical Education Department (Upper Myanmar) under the Sports Ministry and Deputy Director-General of No. 2 Basic Education Department U Myint Shwe on holding the courses respectively and then be left necessary instructions.

After that, township education officers, headmasters and headmistresses present at the meeting respectively reported to him about general matters.—MNA

QPR 1-2 Wolves

London, 4 Feb—Substitute Kevin Doyle scored the winner and provided an assist as Wolves came from behind to beat 10-man QPR and record their first win in 12 games. The Ireland international came off the bench at half-time and helped set up Matt Jarvis’ equaliser 51 seconds later, before going on to net the equaliser 51 seconds later, helping set up Matt Jarvis’ goal soon after as McCarthy’s side pushed for an equaliser. QPR’s confidence in the opening exchanges was epitomised by the returning Adel Taarabt, who played a neat one-two with Zamora before curling just wide of the far post.

The Union Minister for Information and for Culture U Kyaw Hsan presents award to U Thaw Kaung for book on Aspects of Myanmar History and Culture.—MNA

Iran launches observation satellite: media