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.

U Thein Sein, President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, receives ASEAN Secretary-General Dr Surin Pitsuwan and party

NAY PYI TAW, 20 Feb—President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Thein Sein received a delegation led by ASEAN Secretary-General Dr Surin Pitsuwan at the Credentials Hall of the Presidential Palace here at 3 pm.

Also present at the call together with President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Thein Sein were Union Minister for Foreign Affairs U Wunna Maung Lwin, Union Minister for Information and for Culture U Kyaw Hla, Union Minister at the President Office U Soe Maung, Union Minister for National Planning and Economic Development U Tin Naing Thein and departmental heads.

They cordially discussed matters relating to political developments in the country and work programmes for further cooperation in the region.—MNA

President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Thein Sein receives delegation led by ASEAN Secretary-General Dr Surin Pitsuwan at the Credentials Hall of the Presidential Palace in Nay Pyi Taw.

MNA

People on the east and west banks of Thanlwin River are happy with the emergence of Thanlwin River Bridge (Hpa-an)

Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann receives RFA Executive Producer

Union I&C Minister receives ASEAN Secretary-General

PAGE 2
Union I&C Minister receives ASEAN Secretary-General

NAY PYI TAW—Secretary-General of ASEAN Dr Surin Pitsuwan paid a call on Union Minister for Information and for Culture U Kyaw Hsan at the Minister’s office here at 12:45 pm today.

Also present on the occasion were Deputy Minister for Information U Soe Win, Deputy Minister for Culture Daw Sunda Khin, Managing Directors and Directors-General from Ministry of Culture and Ministry of Information.

At the call, they had a cordial discussion on rural areas development tasks and promoting cooperation in culture and media sectors between Myanmar and ASEAN, implementation of rural areas development tasks with eight poverty alleviation measures by forming central committee led by the President, preparations for successful holding of SEA Games 2013 by forming committee and measures for a greater transparency in the April by-elections.

Undertakings of ASEAN Ministers Responsible for Information (AMRI) and ASEAN Ministers Responsible for Cultural and Arts (AMCA) by Ministry of Information and Ministry of Culture under ASCC-ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community and follow-up tasks to be done at a time when Myanmar takes ASEAN Chairmanship.

After that, the Union Minister presented Myanmar Learning Society oil colour painting for ASEAN Secretariat through Dr Surin Pitsuwan.

Union Minister for Information and for Culture U Kyaw Hsan meets Secretary-General of ASEAN Dr Surin Pitsuwan.

Displaced people in Bhamo and Momauk Tps provided with assistance

NAY PYI TAW—Deputy Minister for Border Affairs Maj-Gen Zaw Win, Deputy Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement U Phone Swe and party met displaced people, who fled on account of regional volatility, in the compound of Momauk Baptist Church in Alinkaung Ward, Momauk Township, Bhamo District on 17 February.

Deputy Minister Maj-Gen Zaw Win said that the Head of State looking to improvement of socioeconomic life of national brethren is taking steps to join hands with national races armed groups by seeking common ground. While creating better living standard for locals more than before, the State is trying hard in order that the peace flowers can bloom in the country. The State with genuine goodwill is negotiating with armed groups to end the conflicts in the state, believing that the armed groups would show their enthusiasm for perpetual peace in the interest of the people. Just as the region restores peace, agriculture and livestock firms as well as resettlement would be carried out.

Deputy Minister U Phone Swe said that the State, officials and well-wishers are providing necessary assistance to locals. On the other hand, they should stand on their own. If a state faces danger, endowed with Union Spirit, national people from remaining regions and state will be ready to lend a helping hand.

Deputy Minister for Border Affairs Maj-Gen Zaw Win presents Sky Net DTH TVs and accessories provided by the President, cash assistance by Border Affairs Ministry, SWRR Ministry, Myanmar Gems Entrepreneurs Association and rations by the WFP to locals. The displaced people at Yogyi Ywama monastery and Gayuna Bhamo transit camps in Bhamo Township were also provided with Sky Net DTH TVs and accessories, cash and ration.

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PERSPECTIVES

Tuesday, 21 February, 2012

Satisfactory results

Agricultural industry needs proper changes as the age-old manual method or conventional method can no longer produce satisfactory results at a time when countries smaller in area and lesser in natural resources than Myanmar are exporting largest amount of rice superior in quality and popular in global markets.

Another disadvantage of the manual method is the high cost as it demands a great deal of manpower and causes a lot of wastage. Imagine the amount of wastage caused by human labour for the country’s total paddy sown acreage of 17 million acres at a rate of six baskets per acre (roughly, one basket of rice is equal to 44 pounds).

In contrast, mechanized farming cuts production cost by half and minimizes wastage to a considerable degree. Generally, mechanized farming is extra effective and more commercial in large-scale cultivation, especially for gigantic square-shape crop-growing plots.

Consequently, large-scale mechanized farms have become essential part of the nation to feed its own population and to compete with other global exporters in quality and quantity in the long run. The bottom-line here is the transformation of the whole agricultural industry into a production force fully adaptable to modern techniques and systems.

Undoubtedly, large-scale mechanized farms need a large amount of capital which is not within the reach of rural farmers tilling most of the nation’s farms. We now have some big domestic enterprises doing agro-business on a wider scale. But they alone cannot bring satisfactory results we are searching for. At this point, we need to create cooperative farms with the participation of farmers themselves.

We have the Agriculture and Irrigation Ministry, the Cooperatives Ministry and other relevant organizations for all-round assistance including financial aids farmers need in setting up such cartels. What’s more, the educative model farm in Nay Pyi Taw is providing peasants all over the country with valuable knowledge through demonstrations.

Almost definitely, new initiatives and new way of thinking and actions coupled with spiritual and material changes are the sine qua non of achieving satisfactory results.

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Myanmar Medical Association (Mawlamyine) holds 10th Medical Conference

NAY PYI TAW—The tenth Medical Conference of Myanmar Medical Association (Mawlamyine) was held at the General Hospital (Mawlamyine), attended by Mon State Chief Minister Dr Yaw Myint Naing and Chairman of Mawlamyine Medical Association (branch) Dr Aye Nyein extended greetings.

Afterwards, the Mon State Chief Minister and the Chairman of MMA formally opened the medical show corners. And they then looked around the show corners with guests.

Han Golf Masters Academy to open basic golfing course

YANGON—Han Golf Masters Academy starts 10-day basic golfing course at Myanmar Training Golf Course in Mayangon Township here on 27 February.

Veteran golfers U Chan Han and Ko Ko Lay and assistants trainers from Han Golf Masters Academy will teach golfing techniques. Those who want to join the course may have to enlist no later than 26 February. For more details, one may contact Myanmar Training Golf Course (Ph: 01-4515797; 651374 and 0920376771).—NLM
US strategic shift to Asia-Pacific provides opportunity to improve ties with China

**Karazi asks US not to negotiate with Taleban on their behalf**

Islamabad, 20 Feb—Afghan President Hamid Karazi has asked the US not to negotiate with the Taleban on their behalf.

"Americans cannot negotiate on our behalf with the Taleban. We are on behalf of the Taleban," The Dawn quoted Karazi, as saying.

He was quick to clarify his government’s stand on the withdrawal of US troops to Afghanistan and Pakistan, where Afghanistan and Pakistan have certain conditions.

Earlier this week, the dialogue on peace and stability in Afghanistan between Kabul and Islamabad had reportedly faltered because of persisting differences over how to fight terrorism and questions about what role the US will play in it. In this context, the US is seeking peace and stability to two countries.

"As an important player in the attainment of that goal," Karazi said.

**Motorcycle linked to Iranian bombers**

Bangkok, 20 Feb—Thai police said a motorcycle was bought by one of the five suspects in the plot to attack Israeli diplomats in the capital, Bangkok post said on Sunday.

National Deputy Police Chief Pansiri Prapawat said investigators were trying to determine if the motorcycle was used in an attempt to attack Israeli diplomats or other targets in the Thai capital.

The Post said five individuals had been identified as suspects in the alleged ring, including two who have apparently fled to Iran and two others captured after being injured by an explosion last week not far from where the motorcycle was found.

The fifth suspect has not been identified but police were seeking an arrest warrant, the newspaper said.

**Person injured in central Nigeria explosion**

Lagos, 20 Feb—one person was injured in a car explosion in the town of Suleja in central Nigeria’s Niger State on Sunday morning, a police spokesman confirmed with Xinhua.

Police spokesman in Nigeria’s capital Abuja Muhammed Garuba told Xinhua that reports reaching him indicated that one person had been injured in a car explosion in central north Niger State. Nigeria’s rescue agency also confirmed the explosion.

NEMA has alerted other response agencies to an explosion reported in Morocco area of Suleja. Public are strongly advised to desist from getting close to explosion and allow rescue workers access to site, the televised statement said.

**Two people killed in ambush, shootout in N Philippines**

Manila, 20 Feb—Two people were killed in an ambush and shootout in northern Philippine province of Cavitie early Monday morning, police said.

Citing an initial investigation, Philippine National Police spokesman Agapito Cruz Jr said that at about 5:45 am, a certain Boy named Evangelista, a shepherd farmer owner, was found ambushed as three persons on board a motorcycle traversing along Centennial Road corner Lahay street in Batundalig Village.

A victim identified as Joel Hernandez Manias of Chut village, La Paz, Tarlac Province, died on the spot while the two other victims survived and were brought to a hospital for treatment, he said.

At around 8:20 am, the elements of the Cavite Provincial Police Office engaged the suspect in an encounter during a pursuit operation that resulted in his death, Cruz said.

The suspect was allegedly armed with an M-16 rifle and a caliber 45 pistol, he said.

Further investigation was ongoing to determine the motives of the ambush, he said.

**Personnel shift to Asia-Pacific provides opportunity to improve ties with China**

Washington, 20 Feb—The US military’s strategic shift to the Asia-Pacific region provides an opportunity to improve the relationship with China, Martin Dempsey, chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff said on Sunday.

Speaking during an interview with the US TV news network CNN, the top US military officer said that the US military has taken a decision to rebalance itself toward the Pacific in a re-strategy move.

"We have an opportunity to improve our relationship with China, and I am personally committed to having that outcome rather than get into an arms race or into some kind of confrontation with China," Dempsey said.

The Obama administration has launched with a big fanfare its "pivot to Asia" strategic shift since last late year, arousing widespread suspicion that the US move is aimed at containing the rise of China, whose influence in the Asia-Pacific region has been rapidly increasing to counterbalance the US dominance.

During the 13 to 17 Feb visit to the US by China’s Vice President Xi Jinping, the two leaders affirmed their commitment to further boost their cooperative partnership based on mutual respect and mutual benefit. They also agreed to promote the steady and sound development of bilateral military ties based on the principle of mutual respect, mutual trust, justice and mutual benefit.

**‘Iron Dome’ system moves to Tel Aviv**

Tel Aviv, 20 Feb—A defence system used to protect Israeli cities from rocket attacks will be deployed in Tel Aviv for a drill, the Israeli military said on Sunday.

Known as the Iron Dome battery, the moveable shield against medium-range rockets known to be used by Hamas and Hezbollah is part of Israel’s multi-layered defence capability, and will be set up in the Tel Aviv metropolitan area for the first time for several days.

The military stressed the deployment of anti-rocket equipment is a part of a pre-planned training exercises, although the Iron Dome has never appeared in central Israel.

"The battery is being placed in various locations from time to time,” the military’s public affairs unit said. Ynet News, an Israeli news agency, said on Sunday that although terrorist organizations have yet to fire rockets into the Tel Aviv area, security officials are aware the groups own rockets with the capability, and expect the city to be the main target in upcoming conflicts.

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THE NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR Tuesday, 21 February, 2012

**KAMPALA, 20 Feb — Patrick Anywar, 14, lies curled up naked in the dust and midday heat of a Ugandan village, struggling to breathe.** At his younger brother and sister playing in front of the family home. After a minute’s effort to face his siblings, Anywar’s head slumps onto his chest and he crouches, “My body is gripped by convulsions.” Anywar is one of more than 3,000 children in northern Uganda who are suffering from a mystery ailment known as nodding disease, poses outside her family home in Tomang village this month. *For several years, scientists have tried — and failed — to determine the cause of the disease, which locals say has killed hundreds of youngsters.*

Disabled elderly say they want dignity, control

San Francisco, 20 Feb — Two factors — a sense of dignity and a sense of control — are critical to quality of life for disabled elderly people, according to a new study that also found most disabled seniors rate their quality of life as “fair to very good.” The two factors were emphasized by 62 disabled seniors (white, black, Hispanic, and Chinese American) who were interviewed by researchers at the San Francisco VA Medical Centre and the University of California, San Francisco.

“By ‘control,’ these elders mean a sense of autonomy in their activities of daily living,” lead author Dr Jennifer King, who was a medical student at the UCSF School of Medicine at the time of the study, said in a UCSF news release. “Because of disability, not all of them are able to do all activities on their own, but they want to feel they have some say in how those activities progress throughout the day,” she explained. When the study participants were asked to rate their quality of life on a scale that ranged from ‘excellent’ to ‘poor.’ “These folks are not doing badly,” senior investigator Dr Alexander Smith, a palliative medicine doctor at SFVAMC, said in a news release. “Their quality of life, as they rate it, is definitely higher than some might assume it would be for very good,” which was in the middle of the five-point scale that ranged from ‘excellent’ to ‘poor.’

“The disease is terrible — it does not let him drink or eat by himself,” Abwoyo told AFP. “The disease is terrible — it does not let him drink or eat by himself.”

**Bulgarian plant set to start churning out cars next year**

This file photo shows a showroom of Chinese manufacturer Great Wall Motors, in Sofia. With a brand new Bulgarian plant set to start churning out cars by end-February, China’s Great Wall Motor hopes to establish a foothold to expand sales across Europe, says its local partner Lixi Motors.

**US consumer prices up 0.2% in January**

New York, 20 Feb — Gasoline prices have never been higher this time of the year. At $3.53 a gallon, prices are up 25 cents since Jan. Analysts said it may be surprising that Chinese firms seem so determined to get into Europe, a saturated market where car sales are declining, but there are benefits for them, especially in terms of branding and prestige. “It is a way for them to make progress in quality levels,” said Yann Lacoix, analyst at Euler Hermes in Paris. In Britain, Geely Motors plans to start selling a mid-range sedan by the end of the year at a very competitive price of $15,400, 12,000 euros.

**Gasoline prices have never been higher this time of the year.**

In this 16 Feb, 2012 photo, a customer fills up at an Irving Oil gas station, in Berlin, VI

**Pregnant women who own a dog are 50 percent more likely to get the recommended 30 minutes of exercise a day by going for brisk walks, a new study finds.** Take care of your skin after you Internet

**Dogs can boost exercise rates for moms-to-be**

**Gas prices are highest ever for this time of year**

**Disabled elderly say they want dignity, control**

Internet

Sofia, 20 Feb — Chinese automakers have returned in force to Europe, buying up brands and plants after early efforts to get a foothold in one of the world’s largest car markets failed. Great Wall Motors is the latest China entrant, with production at its plant in Bulgaria due to start Tuesday, giving it access to the European market of some 500 million people and a very competitive line up which may give Europe’s established firms pause for thought. Prices for its base Volvo C10 model, the Stedel 5 pick up and Hoover HS four-by-four-run from just $8,000 euros to 14,700 euros ($10,600 to $19,400) and the company, which has 10 sites in China, says is aiming for production of 500,000 vehicles overseas by 2015.
Stonehenge inspired by sound illusion, archaeologists suggest

WASHINGTON, 20 Feb — Theories about the purpose of Stonehenge range from a sacred temple to a place of spiritual worship. Now, an archaeologist suggests that the 4,000-year-old monument in southern England may have been an attempt to mimic a sound-based illusion. If true, pipers were to play in a field, observers walking around the musicians would hear a strange effect, said Steven Walker, a doctoral researcher at Rock Art Acoustics USA, who specializes in the sound properties of ancient sites, or archaeoaudioacoustics. At certain points, the sound waves produced by each player would cancel each other out, creating spots where the sound is dampened. It’s this pattern of quiet spots that may have inspired Stonehenge, Walker told an audience on Thursday (16 February) in Vancouver, British Columbia, at the annual meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

The theory is highly speculative, but modern-day experiments do reveal that the layout of the Stonehenge ruins and other rock circles mimics the piper illusion, with stones instead of competing sound waves blocking out sounds made in the center of the circle. In support of the theory, Walker pointed to myths linking Stonehenge with music, such as the traditional nickname for stone circles in Britain: “piper stones.” One legend holds that Stonehenge was created when two magic pipers led maidens into the field to dance and then turned them to stone.

Walker experimented by having blindfolded participants walk into a field as two pipers played. He asked the volunteers to tell him whenever they thought a barrier existed between them and the sound.

Digital tools ‘to save languages’

There’s an app for everything—even an endangered language like Tuvan.— Internet

WASHINGTON, 20 Feb — Facebook, YouTube and even texting will be the salvation of many of the world’s endangered languages, scientists believe. Of the 7,000 or so languages spoken on Earth today, about half are expected to be extinct by the century’s end. Globalization is usually blamed, but some elements of the “modern world,” especially digital technology, are pushing back against the tide. North American tribes use social media to re-engage their young, for example.

Tuvan, an indigenous tongue spoken by nomadic peoples in Siberia and Mongolia, even has an iPhone app to teach the pronunciation of words to new students. Small languages are using social media, YouTube, text messaging and various technologies to expand their voice and expand their presence, Walker said.

“Every language has something to give,” said K. David Harrison, an associate professor of linguistics at Swarthmore College and a National Geographic Fellow. “It’s what I like to call the flipside of globalization. We hear a lot about how globalization exerts negative pressures on small cultures to assimilate. But a positive effect of globalisation is that you can have a language that is spoken by only five or 50 people in one remote location, and now through digital technology that language can achieve a global voice and a global audience.”

Motorola Droid 4 released; Samsung Galaxy Tab 2 announced

WASHINGTON, 20 Feb — Motorola may have hit a rough patch, but it’s emerging with new devices and possibly the guidance of its new parent company, Google. The Droid 4 is one of Motorola’s latest devices to hit the market, weighing with its medium size, full QWERTY keyboard, 4G support and stellar battery life. But while Motorola’s playing catchup, Samsung forges ahead with plans to release a Galaxy Tab 2, ready with Android 4.0 Ice Cream Sandwich. HTC’s ramping up its ICS efforts as well, with plans for an early access preview of Android 4.0 on its Sensation line of smartphones.

Motorola Droid 4

Motorola’s hit several strong points with the latest Droid 4, including a sleek slide-out QWERTY keyboard that will convert any Blackberry user. At $199 with a two-year contract, this new smartphone features a 4-inch 960x540 LCD panel. The five-row rubber keypad is one of the best, with a well-spaced layout and backlit keys. The Droid 4 comes with support for Verizon’s 4GLTE network. The battery life is notable, though the battery itself isn’t replaceable. The best downside for the Droid 4 at this time is its lack of Android 4.0 Ice Cream Sandwich.

Samsung Galaxy Tab 2

Samsung’s slipped a few details about its latest tablet, the Samsung Galaxy Tab 2 (7.0). It’s the ICS successor to the original Galaxy Tab model, which has faced several obstacles in gaining an ICS upgrade. The 7-inch 1024x600 PLS LCD display is accompanied by a 1GHz dual-core processor and 1GB of RAM. The Galaxy Tab 2 will also come with Wi-Fi and a 3-megapixel rear-facing camera. While there’s several perks to the Galaxy Tab 2, there’s also some signs that this is an entry-level device compared to Samsung’s other well-fitted tablets. The main camera, for example, is fixed-focus and lacks an LED flash. The VGA resolution is signs that this is an entry-level device compared to Samsung’s high-end models.

Hi-tech cars: Driver distraction warning in US

WASHINGTON, 20 Feb — US transport safety officials have proposed guidelines to limit driver distraction from gadgets built into cars. The planned voluntary rules would cover “integrated electronic devices, including mobile phones.” Officials want distracting functions to be disabled when driving. In 2010, US figures suggested that “distraction by a device or control integral to the vehicle was reported in 26,000 crashes.”

The new proposals include goals to reduce the amount of inputs required to operate a device—the number of buttons to push—and reducing unnecessary visual information. There are also guidelines requiring one-handed operation and a two-second limit on “off-road glances” — the time spent looking at the device.

Why ‘Android fragmentation’ isn’t so bad

WASHINGTON, 20 Feb — Even though Android is the most popular smartphone platform in the US, and even though there were 10 billion Android app downloads as of December 2011, many Android users are frustrated that they’re still treated like a second-class app market. That’s because “fragmentation” makes it more complicated to develop Android apps that will run on most Android phones. New research from Localytics claims that Android fragmentation might be decreasing less of a issue.

For a start, this could bring more popular apps to Android phones faster—or at least making Android phones come in a dizzying array of sizes, configurations, and capabilities as compared to a fairly small selection of iPhone models. Also phone manufacturers and wireless carriers tend to customize the Android interface in “flavors” such as HTC Sense and Motorola Blur.

Localytics provides analytics tools that app developers use to monitor how people use apps. Data gathered from Localytics users during two weeks in January indicate that many Android phones now have “remarkably similar specifications.” Localytics notes that this significantly simplifies the task of deploying mass market Android apps.

Herschel telescope ‘in last year’

The Herschel telescope has been kept extremely cold to study its frigid targets.

WASHINGTON, 20 Feb — Herschel, Europe’s billion-pound space observatory, has entered what is likely to be its last year of operation. The telescope studied the formation of stars, and has taken some remarkable pictures since its launch in May 2009. But its detectors require a constant supply of superfluid helium to keep working, and the store of this coolant has now dropped to less than 100kg.

This past week saw Herschel begin what engineers believe will be the final 365 days of its mission life. “There’s quite a bit of uncertainty in all this,” of course,” said Dr Paul Goldsmith from the Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, California, US. “It could be 11 months, it could be 14 months, and we’re naturally hoping for the latter. It’s certainly true that we have enough observations proposed to go well past the year if the helium lasts that long,” he told BBC News.

Dr Goldsmith has been discussing the observatory’s successes during a special seminar here in Vancouver at the annual meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS). He is the US space agency (NASA) venture, Herschel has a 6% contribution from the Americans, who provided some 45% of the total cost of the telescope’s three instruments, Internet.
Iranian Intel official says ‘Stuxnet virus infected 16,000 computers’

The HERAN, 20 Feb—A senior Iranian intelligence official has claimed that an estimated 16,000 computers were infected by the Stuxnet virus, which targeted the country’s nuclear facilities and other industrial sites in 2010. The Iranian State media quoted a deputy intelligence chief identified only as H.A. by the Iranian news agency ISNA as saying that thousands of computers were infected by Stuxnet, but he did not specify whether worldwide or just in Iran. He also said that Iran is facing difficulties in obtaining anti-malware software because of international sanctions, forcing the country to use its own experts to design the software, Fox News reports. Iran had earlier acknowledged the malicious software affected a “limited number” of centrifuges, a key component in nuclear fuel production. Iran claimed that its scientists discovered and neutralized the malware before it could cause serious damage.

Budget panel at odds on spending benefits

WASHINGTON, 20 Feb—Top members of the US House Budget Committee predict a slow going in the coming debate over President Obama’s budget proposal. Rep Paul Ryan, R-Wis, and Rep Chris Van Hollen, D-Md, both accused their colleagues on the opposite sides of the aisle of intransigence and dogmatic partisanship and blamed it for the seeming lack of progress in getting spending under control and the economy back on track.

Ryan, chairman of the House Budget Committee, said on NBC’s “Meet the Press” that Democrats refused to trim spending to offset the extension of the payroll tax cut. “What justifies in my view is we couldn’t get the Democrats in the Senate and the White House to support cutting $100 billion over 10 years to make sure that this did not hurt the deficit,” he said.

Van Hollen, the committee’s ranking Democrat, countered by arguing continued slashing of government spending would end up slowing the economy down and aggravating the unemployment problem. “If [payroll tax cut] will help economic growth,” Van Hollen said. “It could add up to 1 percent GDP this year. You are putting more money in the pockets of the American people, and they can go out and spend that money buying goods and services.”

UK govt to store people’s phone call, messages, e-mail details under new anti-terror plan

London, 20 Feb—The British government has planned to store the details of every phone call, text message, email traffic and websites visited online as a part of its new anti-terror plans. Under the new scheme to counter-terrorism, landline and mobile phone companies and broadband providers will be ordered to store the data for a year and make it available for a year and make it available to counter-terrorism, landline and mobile phone companies and broadband providers will be ordered to store the data for a year and make it available for a year and make it available to

UNESCO to launch new Intangible Cultural Heritage Centre in southeast Europe

Paris, 20 Feb—A new Intangible Cultural Heritage Centre in southeastern Europe based in Sofia, capital of Bulgaria, will open Monday, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) said on Sunday. UNESCO Director-General Irina Bokova is due to inaugurate the Regional Centre for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage in South-Eastern Europe under the auspices of UNESCO while she officially visits the country, said a UNESCO statement.

The centre to be opened in Sofia is one of six around the world that focus on intangible cultural heritage. This centre is the only one in Europe, therefore “plays a crucially important role,” the UN cultural agency said. Underlining the importance of UNESCO centres and institutes in advancing the Organization’s strategic objectives and priorities, the UNESCO’s chief said “they amplify UNESCO’s messages in societies and regions across the world and promote networking and exchange of relevant technical information. These centres play a key role in reinforcing UNESCO’s impact on education, science, culture and communication in the world.” During her visit to Sofia, Bokova will hold meetings with Bulgarian President Rosen Plevneliev and other senior government officials as well as prominent Bulgarian intellectuals.

Chinese defence minister meets with Indonesian counterpart

BEIJING, 20 Feb—Chinese Defence Minister Liang Guangjie met with his Indonesian counterpart Purnomo Yusgiatronto on Monday and exchanged views on bilateral ties and relations between the two militaries.

During their talks, they praised the communication and cooperation between the two militaries.

Liang, who is also a state councilor, said the two militaries have achieved encouraging progress in recent years with close contact between the two defence departments and high-level military officials.

“The two sides have promoted pragmatic cooperation in all fields, such as personnel training, equipment and technology, joint exercise, maritime security and multilateral safety,” Liang said. “China is ready to work with Indonesia to promote the two countries’ strategic partnership and make new contributions to regional development and prosperity.”

Yusgiatronto said the two militaries have enjoyed sound development in recent years.

“Increasing cooperation between the two countries’ defence and security cooperation is highly significant. Indonesia attaches great importance to the two countries’ defence and security cooperation and cooperation between the two militaries so as to promote regional peace, stability and development,” he said.

Santorum leads Romney by eight points in US poll

WASHINGTON, 20 Feb—White House hopeful Rick Santorum has opened an eight-point lead over presumptive frontrunner Mitt Romney among likely Republican voters nationwide, a new poll showed on Sunday.

Thirty-six percent of those surveyed said they supported the Christian conservative, while 28 percent preferred the former Massachusetts governor, according to the latest results from Gallup’s daily tracking poll. Less than a week ago, Romney was leading Santorum, a former US senator from Pennsylvania, by two points, putting the two candidates in a statistical tie. Former House speaker Newt Gingrich trails the two leaders with 13 percent, while veteran libertarian Texas congressman Ron Paul was not far behind with 11 percent, the poll showed.

Santorum—who surprised Romney with wins in key contests earlier this month in Missouri, Minnesota and Colorado—is now trying to maintain his momentum for the 28 February primary in Michigan, Romney’s home turf.

The Gallup poll was conducted from Tuesday through Saturday among about 1,200 likely Republican voters.

The margin of error is plus or minus four percentage points. In late August the Republicans will confirm their candidate to face Democrat Barack Obama in the 6 November presidential election.
NAY PYI TAW, 20 Feb—Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw Thura U Shwe Mann received a delegation led by Executive Producer of RFA Mrs SuSan Lavery at Zabuthiri Hall of Hluttaw Building, here, at 4.45 pm today.

Also present at the meeting were Deputy Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw U Nanda Kyaw Swa, the chairmen of Pyithu Hluttaw Affairs Committee and the secretaries, the Hluttaw representatives from national race parties and local media men.

At the meeting, the Speaker of Hluttaw had a cordial discussion with the visiting guests on the formation of Hluttaw and its responsibilities, measures being taken for improvement of capacity building of Hluttaw representatives to ensure perpetuation of Hluttaws, paying study tour of international parliaments, and steps being taken for further formation of necessary committees in addition to four original committees as the Hluttaw committees play a leading role in the flourishing of democracy.

The Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw and officials responded to questions raised by local and foreign media men.—MNA

Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann receives RFA Executive Producer

People on east and west banks of Thanlwin River are happy with the emergence of Thanlwin River Bridge (Hpa-an)

* The emergence of Thanlwin River Crossing Bridge (Hpa-an), main entrance to Kayin State, makes people keep in helpful smoothly transportation those from Kayin State and the rest States and Regions.

* Thanks to the construction of Thanlwin River Crossing Bridge (Hpa-an), the areas of east Thanlwin dwellers will surely improve the economic, education and health sectors.

* Narrowly gaps between the remote areas and developed ones will be of the bridge and it much contributes to greater development of the people in the far flung areas on account of the bridge.

Salient points of Thanlwin River Crossing Bridge

1. The Thanlwin River Crossing Bridge (Hpa-an) is situated 2 miles 6 furlongs far from the south of Hpa-an, Kayin State.
2. The construction of the main bridge is 1771 feet with 28 feet motorway flanked by 5 feet pedestrians on each side. The total length of the bridge including approach structure is 2252 feet.
3. It is steel truss type bridge and on Thaton-Myainggalay-Barkat-Hpa-an Road.
4. The construction of the bridge was as of 4-4-1994 and opened 4-8-1997.

Translation: TLA
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Pyithu Hluttaw session continues for sixth day

(from page 16)

Afterwards, Deputy Minister for Electric Power No. 2 Aung Thaw Oo answered seven questions related to the power supply sector.

U Aung Kyaw Khin of Kyauktan constituency asked whether the ministry had a plan to install power cables to Ayeyawady Ward, Shewpyithaya Ward and Thidaung Myaung Ward in Kyauktan Township.

The deputy minister replied that to install the cables to the wards, the ministry would spend estimated 48 million kyats on installation of cables and establishment of one 315-KVA transformer in Ayeyawady Ward, estimated 68 million kyats on installation of cables and 500 KVA transformer in Shewpyithaya Ward.

The ministry would need over 230 million kyats to supply power to the three wards and the budget would be limited to supply power to the three wards simultaneously, therefore, the ministry would seek annual budget for supply power to each ward.

Dr Daw Aye Myint of Shwedagon Constituency asked whether there is a plan to replace 100 KVA transformer of Energy Ministry in use at Ngawrwarayar village-tract in Shwedagon Township in Bago Region with 200 KVA transformer. The deputy minister answered: As Ngawrwarayar village-tract in Shwedagon Township of Bago Region is close to oil storage and distribution division of the Energy Ministry, the electricity is supplied to the village from (110/4) KV, 100 KVA transformer which supplies electricity to the oilfield of the Energy Ministry. Following higher number of electricity consumers, reaching 201, more electricity consumption at night and oil pumps and water pumps run by the Energy Ministry, the existing transformer becomes far from meeting the demand and electricity cut took place in the village and staff quarters.

For distributing round-the-clock electricity to the village, the transformer owned by the Energy Ministry will no more be used in the 2012-2013 fiscal year and new 100 KVA transformer will be installed.

U Kyaw Soe Lay of Mohmyn Constituency asked whether there is a plan to install 33 KVA power grid from Mogaung 66 KVA Power Grid has been completed cent per cent and asked when the electricity will be distributed through the power grid, whether electricity will be supplied to village-tracts in Myoyn and Mogauang, which villages, if any, will receive electricity, and how the villages out of the project can get access to electricity.

The deputy minister answered: (33/6) KVA 2 MVA power station was installed from Dagon dine power station in Mandalay: the Electricity is supplied to Myoyn through Wathawgyi of Sagaing. Upon completion of Othawt power station (Kantali) in 2010, the electricity is supplied to Myoyn from Othawt (Kantali) power station through 33 KVA power grid. It reduces the length of power grid by 20 miles and increase voltage. One (33/11) KV 5 MVA transformer replaced the (33/6) KVA 2 MVA transformer in Myoyn in September 2010. It was installed from Dagundine power station to distribute electricity to wider consumers in the 2012-2013 fiscal year. It will be carried out, ban and allotment.

The ministry provided oil for two days a hour to towns where electricity is supplied by generators. To distribute electricity for more hours a day to towns where electricity is supplied for more hours a day to towns where electricity is supplied.

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Third regular session of first Amyotha Hluttaw continues for sixth day

(from page 16)

Kayin State government would manage to relocate 54 persons on the 7.92 acres in Ohnthaikwin in Ward No. 2 of Kamanaung Township by opening dossier La/Na (39).

De Aye Maung of Rakhine State Constitution No. 1 asked about multipurpose transport of Kalatan River. In response, the Union Minister said that framework agreement on construction and dealing of Kalatan River multipurpose transport supportive project and protocol on facilitation of multipurpose transport of Kalatan River were signed in New Delhi on 2 April, 2008.

Thank you to the project, Sittway jetty 6600-ton vessels can stand at, two jetty for 300-ton vessels in Sittway and Paletwa and other related port buildings would be visible in Myanmar. Moreover, Myanmar would get six 300-ton vessels and benefits of stable water course along the Kalatan River and emergence of a new route from Paletwa to India-Myanmar border.

Rakhine and Chin states would have better transport that creates chance to deal with tourist industry and direct trade not only with India but also with other countries using international seaports, and have other benefits such as regional development along the Kalatan River, abundance of job opportunities, border trade opportunities and better transport means in the region.

According to bilateral bond between the two countries, Myanmar would provide requirements at short time. For the first step, 324-m-long and 139-m-wide retaining wall would be built 500-m-long land plot in parallel with the Kalatan River between Phaungtawgyi port yard and Mingyi Kyaukta. After being reclaimed, the land plot would be extended to the river on which port buildings including 273-m-long and 15.2-m-wide main jetty, 139-m-long and 9.5-m-wide approach bridges would be constructed.

In Paletwa, Inland Water Transport is making measures to construct jetties in coordination with the Ministry of Environmental Conservation and Forestry. A joint committee was taking steps to pave a highway from Paletwa to Myanmar-India border. As there was no report concerning EIA and SIA, measures for EIA, SIA would be made in coordination with India.

There isn’t any plan to remove the Sittway People’s hospital, Sittway Myana Market and Odan Ward along with Kalatan River, residences of the rural people and hospital in Kyehbingyi Ward, as they are far from Sittway Port project. Besides, the project isn’t near with public-owned lands, and there wouldn’t be any blocks of airway due to not building high buildings in those places.

Concerning a proposal “whether or not there is any plan to conserve Pin Creek between Paletwa and Matalpaw Townships” presented by U Salai Khwe Yan of No. 12 Constitution of Chin State, the Union Minister said that there is a watercourse along Laymyo River from Rakhine State to Paletwa. It is needed to seek strong and weak points and natural impacts in repairing part of the watercourse.

If the cliff is removed, aqua animals will be in ruin. Such plan will make small motor vessels. So, the State’s budge should be spent on other sectors beneficial to region. Plans for removing of cliffs in Sinsaung Village-track, Longyi above Vikon Village and Haikabi Paruang above Aweky’s Village would be reported after making a new field line.

Deputy Minister for Construction U Soe Tin replied to questions of four Hluttaw representatives.

U Than Swe of Taninthayi Region Constitution No. 2 asked if there is a plan to repair Dawei-Myiota Road. In response, the deputy minister said that Dawei-Myiota Road was repaired by using annual capital fund and maintenance fund. But, due to torrential rains in this rainy season, there were flood on the road three times that damage the road in a short time.

So, motors can run smoothly more than before because damaged roads and bridges were repaired and maintained with the funds of maintenance for 2011-2012, which caused by the floods.

Forest Department has instructed the company to construct bypass because some log-loaded trucks are now running on that road section. Local people need to make cooperation in its maintenances Taninthayi Region Government is doing the maintenance of that road section. So, funds for upgradings and maintenances of it will be solicited in 2012-2013 fiscal year.

U Nyunt Hlaing of Ayeyawady Region Constitution No.4 raised the question on “Is there any plan to repair on Zalun-Danubyu-Kyoein_pinase road section on Hinthada-Nayungdagon-Myongan motor road.”

Regarding the question, the deputy minister said that the project is under planning. Due to Nargis cyclone occurred in May 2008, the road was under flood. Till 31.5.2011, Road construction project special groups have carried out the maintenances and repair of road measuring 35 miles and 7 furlongs long.

It was carried out in cooperation with Seinsakai Co. Ltd through BOT system. Plans are under way to build Kyoeinpinase-Danubyu-Zalan motor road by construction project special group (4) of the Ministry of Construction as an all-weather one.

With respect the question of U Sai Win Maung of Shan State Constitution No. 5 on “Is there any plan to construct Muse bypass”, the deputy minister replied: arrangements are being made to fix scales on both sides in addition to the old ones so as not to traffic jam and traffic contestations at Asia World Gate. At the entrance to Muse. Under the supervision of Township Development Committee, Than Chi Co is building two miles and three furlongs long bypass stretching from the entrance to Kyangasan.

Township Development Committee will carry out upgrade road of traffic from Muse entrance to Yahaku junction into concrete one at a cost of K1685 with Than Chi Co through BOT systems during six months.

At present, there is a plan to construct eight-mile-long road to Manwein gate of Muse 105.5 mile as Muse bypass. There are four and firo roads at Muse gate. At 105 mile border gate, pass of motor vehicles is allowed during 6 am to 9 pm daily. Traffic jams occur due to the drivers overtakes each other at the times of the gate’s open and close.

With respect the question of U Hla Shein Bo of Chin State Constitution No. 8 on “Is there any plan to upgrade Yaysayng strategic road stretching towards 3.7mile post of Mindat-Muptui motor road”, the deputy minister replied: jeep road stretching from Mile post No. 350 to Shwe Aung Tha Village of Htilin Township Mindat-Muptui motor road was built with the funds of border areas and national races development.

Four village roads linking to Shwe Aung Tha Village in Htilin Township are village-to-village roads built by Ministry of Border Affairs.

The distance between Mindat-Muptui feeder and Shwe Aung Tha Village is about 68 miles, which it takes three and half hours drives. Construction of bridges on that road has been completed. Ministry of Construction has no plan to occupy and upgrade it at present.

Member of the Government’s Grantee, Pledges and Undertakings Vetting Committee U Nyunt Lin submitted the committee’s report and proposal to discuss the report. It was seconded by a representative. The Hluttaw approved the proposal. The Hluttaw approved and passed the nomination of representatives who want to discuss it.

Proposal of Dr Myint Kyi of Yangon Region Constitution No. 8 on “Urging the Union Government to boost the paddy production productivity and to make the farmers earn more income” was discussed by representatives U Swe Aung of Yangon Region Constitution No.12, U Saw Maw Tun of Dago Region Constitution No.1, U Kan Nuyn of Sagaing Region Constitution No. 5, U Saw Ohn of Mon State Constitution No. 9, Dr Banya Aung Moe of Mon State Constitution No. 7, U Hla Swe of Magway Region Constitution No. 12, U Gan Hsai of Kachin State Constitution No. 2, Daw Khin Thein of Yangon Region Constitution No.1 and No. 1 and U Sai Paung Nat of Shan State Constitution No. 12.

They discussed that good quality seeds and good agricultural practices for growing paddy and crops systematically.

It is a duty bound for each and every farmer to do so while the State and the private companies are making physical and mental efforts to achieve improvement in agricultural sector.

According to the President’s speech citing that we should do our best to develop agricultural sector by transiting the consideration on being a farmer due to lack of education into the one on being a farmer in spite of their good education, the ministry has tabled a proposal to add an agricultural subject in the courses of BEHS students, starting from coming academic year, to the Union Government Office.

The Hluttaw announced that the proposal is proved.

U Hla Swe of No. 12 Constitution of Magway Region presented a proposal “to prepare for the 277th June 2012-2013 fiscal year by selecting athletes from Basic Education High School/Higher Education level inter-school matches, from Region level matches, from inter-ministry matches”.

A representative agreed with it.

The Hluttaw announced to submit name lists if the hluttaw representatives who have facts to be discussed.

The 6th day of third regular meeting of the first Amyotha Hluttaw ended at 10 am on 21 February, 2012, and continues its 7th day at 10 am on 21 February, 2012.

Today’s session of the Hluttaw saw eight queries replied by respective Union Ministers, one proposal submitted, three proposals tabled and one proposal discussed to be proved.
Bushfire threatens homes in Western Australia’s town

SYDNEY, 20 Feb—Residents in the town of Northcliffe in Western Australia’s southwest have been advised to evacuate after a bushfire escaped contain-ment lines, authorities said on Monday.

The Department of Environment and -DEC) said on Monday morning the fire was about 8 kilometres south of Northcliffe after breaking containment lines on Sunday. Northcliffe, with a population of 400, has also been placed on emergency alert. The DEC said firefighters were expecting the wind to change to a more southerly influence later on Monday and the risk of fire impact to properties in the area could be increased.

“At the moment, the police have indicated to us that they have visited between 35 and 40 homes asking people to evacuate, and that’s within a four-kilometre radius of the fire,” DEC Incident Controller Peter Keppel told the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC).

About a dozen people evacuated from their homes spent the night in a shelter in Northcliffe. The Northcliffe District High School has been closed for the day. The fire, caused by lightning 10 days ago, has burnt through more than 26,000 hectares of bush land and forest.—Xinhua

Coal mine collapse kills seven in north China

TATIANA, 20 Feb—Seven workers have been confirmed dead as of Monday morning after the roof of their coal mine collapsed Sunday in the northern province of Shanxi, local authorities said.

The accident occurred Sunday noon in a shaft of the Beiyu Coal Mine in Puxian county in the city of Linfen, trapping the seven who were then checking the shaft. By 10:20 am Monday, rescuers have pulled out all the trapped workers’ bodies, said a statement from the city government.

Beiyu Coal Mine is a legally-run coal mine owned by Shanxi Puxian County Hongsyuan Group.

The cause of the accident is under investigation.—Xinhua

Small, micro-enterprises need specific, suitable support

BEIJING, 20 Feb—China has set its sights on promoting small and micro-sized enterprises (SMEs) development this year, and experts said what those enterprises need is specific and suitable support. Small firms play an irreplaceable role in fostering economic growth, increasing employment, facilitating scientific and technological innovation and maintaining social stability. However, they bear the vulnerabilities such as limited size, weak influence and the lack of resources. In face of the uncertainty of the market and economic development, small and micro-sized enterprises need more effective support from the government to survive and develop.—Xinhua

NPE staff make pilgrimage and excursion to Kyaikhtyo Pagoda

NAV PYI TAW, 20 Feb—The staff members of National Planning and Economic Affairs (NPE) held a programme to make pilgrimage and excursion to Kyaikhtyo Pagoda on 10 February. Altogether 135 pilgrims led by group leader Chf Editor U Than Myint Tun of The New Light of Myanmar daily performed the public holidays.

They asked difficulties and attended to the needs.

The Union minister explained about importance of the documents. Officials answered queries raised by local people. The Union minister cordially greeted local people there.

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International strawberry symposium opens in Beijing

BEIJING, 20 Feb—The seventh International Strawberry Symposium opened in northern Beijing on Saturday with over 1,000 agri scientists from around the world exchanging latest technologies of strawberry cultivation.

Vice Premier Hui Liangyu attended the opening ceremony of the symposium, scheduled from 18 to 22 February, in Changping District.

When visiting the Strawberry Expo Garden, Hui said boosting strawberry production with high technology is part of China’s efforts to upgrade its agriculture sector and to help increase farmers’ incomes.

The symposium is also a platform for the international exchanges and cooperation of agricultural technologies and efforts should be made to introduce more advanced technologies in the field from foreign countries to boost the modern agricultural industry in China, Hui said.

Initiated by the International Society for Horticultural Science in 1988, the International Strawberry Symposium is held every four years and is a high-level academic event showcasing the latest global high-tech achievements, production and development in the strawberry industry.

This year’s symposium is the first time the event has been held in an Asian country.

Iran halts oil sales to France and Britain

Tehran, 20 Feb—Iranian officials said crude oil sales to Britain and France had been cut off amid a dispute over economic sanctions.

A spokesman for the Oil Ministry said Tehran didn’t need the business and had new customers lined up for the barrels. “Exporting crude to British and French companies has been stopped,” the unidentified spokesman said on the ministry Website. “We will sell our oil to new customers.”

Iran has warned several European nations they would also be cut off in retaliation for new international sanctions aimed at Iran’s nuclear programme. The European Union had pledged to stop importing Iranian oil starting on 1 July. The British newspaper The Guardian said the move could push up the price of Brent crude, a blend of North Sea oils that is used a benchmark for crude futures. China, India, Japan and Italy are considered the biggest customers for Iranian crude, which accounts for the lion’s share of Iran’s export revenues.—Internet

Three die in Arizona house fire

SAN CARLOS, 20 Feb—Three people died in a house fire on the San Carlos Apache Reservation in southeast Arizona, a Bureau of Indian Affairs agent said.

When police and firefighters arrived at the burning house early Sunday morning they were told by a 63-year-old woman that her grandchildren and a family friend were inside, according to Warren Youngman, assistant special agent with the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Firefighters found the bodies of two boys, age 5 and 7, and a man, 50, dead in the nbble. Although their names were not released, the Arizona Republic confirmed on Sunday they were members of the San Carlos Apache tribe. Agents from the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms are investigating the incident. Youngman said the cause of the fire remains unknown.—Internet

Fire extinguished at BP refinery

SEATTLE, 20 Feb—A fire at the largest oil refinery in Washington State took about 90 minutes to put out, fire officials said. The blaze at BP’s Cherry Point refinery on Friday afternoon caused no serious injuries, The Seattle Times reported.

The refinery in Whatcom County on the Canadian border north of Seattle is the third largest on the West Coast. BP spokesman Scott Dean said production continued during the blaze, although the fire slowed operations. Tim Hamilton, head of Automotive United Trades Organization, a gasoline supplier trade group, said the fire could cause an additional increase in prices at the pump in Washington. He said a 15-cent gallon hike is added in the pipeline because of an increase in wholesale prices. Recommended Sources: Internet

Trail begins Tuesday in cyber-suicide

NEW BRUNswick, 20 Feb—Jury selection is set to begin in the New Jersey trial of a man who either pulled a prank or committed a hate crime, officials say.

Dharun Ravi allegedly used his laptop and camera to record and Internet broadcast his Rutgers University dorm roommate Tyler Clementi with another man in 2010, leading to Clementi’s suicide, prosecutors say. Charged with spying, Ravi’s trial in Middlesex County Superior Court is scheduled to be televised on the truTV Channel, and has brought conflicting comment from legal analysts regarding the penalty for such an offence.

Jury selection is scheduled to begin on Tuesday.

The Newark (NJ) Star-Ledger said Sunday the case crosses the lines of bullying, cyber stalking, hate crime and invasion of privacy, or it may merely be a college prank.

The trial, which is expected to last four weeks, is expected to expose the uncertainty of the justice system when dealing with what Susan Abraham, a New York law school and former New Jersey prosecutor, called “this kind of emotional bullying. Should it be treated in criminal courts, or some other way?” The problem with criminalizing these postings and the things young people do on the Internet is a lot of them don’t know what the rules are. Maybe they should.” — Internet

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Iran halts oil sales to France and Britain

Tehran, 20 Feb—Iranian officials said crude oil sales to Britain and France had been cut off amid a dispute over economic sanctions. A spokesman for the Oil Ministry said Tehran didn’t need the business and had new customers lined up for the barrels. “Exporting crude to British and French companies has been stopped,” the unidentified spokesman said on the ministry Website. “We will sell our oil to new customers.”

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Nine missing after bridge collapse

Residents examining a bamboo bridge that collapsed into the Cihideung River on Sunday in Cibanteng, Bogor. Antara photo/Jafhauiri. Residents examining a bamboo bridge that collapsed into the Cihideung River on Sunday in Cibanteng, Bogor. —INTERNET

WASHINGTON STATE AVATANCES KILL FOUR PEOPLE

WASHINGTON, 20 Feb—Two avalanches near Washington state have killed four people on Sunday, but authorities initially said to be missing were found alive, authorities said.

Three skiers died when an avalanche struck near the Stevens Pass ski area in the Cascade Mountains of north-central Washington, King County Sheriff’s spokeswoman Sergeant Cindi West said. She said eight other people listed as missing following the avalanche had been found alive and unharmed. “There are three confirmed dead,” West said. “The other individuals did self-rescue and are fine.”

The snow came down at a road about 2 miles (3 kilometres) from Stevens Pass and about 10 miles (16 kilometres) from the town of Skykomish. In an unrelated incident, West said, a 41-year-old Seattle man was killed in an avalanche at the Alpental ski area while snowboarding out of bounds with friends. —Reuters

Bus accident kills 26 in northern Ecuador

QUITO, 20 Feb—At least 26 people were killed and 15 others injured on Sunday in Ecuador’s northern province of Imbabura in a traffic accident, local police said.

The accident happened at 7:45 a.m. (0045 GMT) when the driver of an inter-provincial bus lost control of the vehicle and fell into a 50-meter deep cliff in the mountainous region, said Doris Viteri, head of the Transit Control in Imbabura.

At least 41 people including the driver were confirmed to be on the bus at the time of the accident, which took place on the Ibarra-San Lorenzo highway, a police spokesman told local radio.

Emergency personnel was working to recover the bodies of those dead while all those injured were taken to nearby hospitals for treatment. Police said that while the cause of the accident is being investigated, it is believed the driver was speeding. —Xinhua

Police arrest suspected killer in Mexico

SAN DIEGO, 20 Feb—A fugitive wanted for the slaying of his wife in San Diego in 2010 was arrested Sunday in Tijuana, Mexico, police said.

Perez had been searching for Armando Perez since 12 Oct., 2010, when Diana Gonzalez, his estranged wife, was killed in a men’s bathroom on the campus of San Diego City College, the San Diego Union-Tribune reported.

Perez was named as the main suspect in the murder, police said.

He then fled to Mexico where he has been since. San Diego police homicide detectives obtained a warrant for Perez’s arrest, while the Mexican government issued a provisional arrest warrant allowing Perez to be detained in that country for extradition to the United States.

Perez is expected to be transferred from Tijuana to Mexico City, where he will be granted an extradition hearing.—Internet

One killed, dozens injured in fatal coach crash in France

LOUIS, 20 Feb—At least one Briton was killed and 24 others injured in a fatal coach crash in northern France, local media reported on Sunday.

The coach, carrying 47 British vacationers, was on its way back to Birmingham from Italy’s Valled Aosta region, Sky News reported. A 61-year-old man was killed and a teenager was in critical condition, it said. —Xinhua

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**Pattinson feels too old for more 'Twilight' movies**

**LONDON, 20 Feb—**If author Stephenie Meyer was to write any more "Twilight" books, actor Robert Pattinson doubts he can ever be a part of the movie adaptation because he feels he will be too old for it. The 25-year-old Pattinson portrayed vampire Edward Cullen in the movie adaptations of Meyer’s popular books since the first film hit cinemas in 2008.

The fourth and final book in the "Twilight" saga has been split into two film releases, and "Breaking Dawn—Part 2" is due to be released in theatres later this year. While Meyer has flirted with the idea of revisiting the characters in her vampire fantasy in the future, but should any additional novel get turned into a movie, Pattinson is worried he will look past his prime to star as the ever-youthful Cullen, reports dailystar.co.uk.

"I’d be curious what Stephanie would write, but I just think I’d probably be too old. I’m already too old. But yeah, it’d be kind of interesting," he said.—Internet

**Escaped cobra caught on glue trap**

A cobra that had been missing since last month after it escaped from its cage in Brownwood, Texas, was found inside the owner’s home, police said. Police picked up the young sunset monarch cobra on Wednesday night, the Brownwood Bulletin reported.

"Officers arrived to find the cobra with its head attached to a large glue trap. Animal Control arrived and took custody of the cobra and it is currently incarcerated at the Brownwood Police Department," a police statement said. "The cobra appeared to have thrived well outside of its captivity."

After the cobra was reported to be on the loose, pesticide was sprayed around the home, and some experts believed the snake was dead, KTAL-TV reported. But glue traps were also placed in the house, just in case.

The cobra, renamed Baby, has been given to an environmental center. Its owner has been jailed on an unrelated drug charge.

Last year, a cobra got loose in the reptile house at the Zoo in New York. It was found lying low in the reptile house days later.

**Witherspoon taken by Middleton meeting**

"Whenever I am super excited about things, my husband calls it the double-barrel. That’s when I smile so big I look like a child," she said.

"I would like to hang out," Witherspoon said of Middleton. "I’m not sure she wants to hang out with me. I could see that happening."—Internet

**Russell Brand dating Mexican painter**

**LONDON, 20 Feb—**English comedian Russell Brand is said to be dating a Mexican painter whose work explores sensuality and sex. Oriela Medellin Amicoes, 25, was seen slipping back into her apartment after staying overnight at comedian Russell’s pad earlier this week, reports thesun.co.uk.

"It is believed Russell, who in December filed for divorce from Katy Perry, began dating Oriela after they met at yoga classes. When asked whether she and 36-year-old Russell are together, she said: ‘I am not comfortable talking about this."—Internet

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Majestic Messi hits four as Barca rout Valencia

**Barcelona, 20 Feb — Lionel Messi hit four goals to inspire Barcelona to a 5-1 victory over Valencia, but champions still remain 10 points behind leader Real Madrid. Messi, playing his 200th game for the club, took his league goal tally to 27 for the season and 42 in all competitions although third-placed Valencia had stunned the Spanish and European champions by taking a shock early lead.**

“With the football we have played we don’t deserve to be so far behind but our challenge now is to keep the title race open and that is down to us,” said Messi after his Camp Nou masterclass. “There are lots of crucial challenges ahead and it’s necessary to keep going like this.”

Barca coach Pep Guardiola said his team and insisted that they do not deserve to be so far off the pace in the title chase.

“I feel amazing,” Raonic said. “I am not really happy with the tennis I played this week.”

In the 79 minute match, Raonic was at fault with seven aces and winning 90 percent of his first serve points, putting his first serve points to 9-3, 6-2 for his third career title.

Edwards wins pole for season-opening Daytona 500

**Daytona Beach, 20 Feb — Carl Edwards fell bitterly short in last season’s bid to win the NASCAR championship. He’s starting 2012 out front. Edwards, who lost the championship last season on a tie-breaker to Tony Stewart, won the pole for the season-opening Daytona 500, beating teammate Greg Biffle for the top starting spot during a windy Sunday qualifying session at Daytona International Speedway.**

Edwards turned a lap at 194.738 mph — the fastest pole-winning speed since Jeff Gordon’s lap of 195.067 mph in 1999. Biffle was second at 194.067 mph to give Ford and Roush Fenway Racing a sweep of the front row. “It’s so neat to come down here and to be so fast and to really have fun qualifying here,” Edwards said. “These are the best race cars we’ve ever had at Daytona. Coming down here I didn’t even consider the pole, so this is huge.”

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**Wladimir’s brother Vitali. “This behaviour kills the hard work of the sport and the sport and fellow human beings.” There has to be consequences for these kinds of actions, which must never be tolerated by the boxing organizations, the media, fellow boxers and boxing fans.**

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Azarenka overcomes injury to top Stosur in Qatar

Doha, 20 Feb — Top-ranked Victoria Azarenka of Belarus shook off a lingering ankle injury on Saturday to win the Qatar Open, routing Samantha Stosur of Australia 6-1, 6-2. Azarenka earned her 17th straight victory and first title since replacing Caroline Wozniacki atop the rankings after winning the Australian Open. It was her third title overall in 2012. Azarenka showed no ill effects after twisting her left ankle in the semifinal against Agnieszka Radwanska on Saturday. She broke the fifth-ranked Stosur twice to lead 4-1 in the first set, making a brief trip to the net to clinch it with a backhand volley. Azarenka cruised to victory after winning the first three games of the second set.

“It’s amazing. I can’t believe I could play that kind of tennis today,” Azarenka said. “I knew I wouldn’t be 100 percent, so I had to change and adjust. I was just surprised today that everything was going in.” Fearful of further aggravating her ankle injury, Azarenka said she tried to keep the rallies short and took advantage of the windy conditions. The ankle was wrapped during the match and Azarenka said it should be fine after a few days of rest. Internet

PSG stay top despite Montpellier scare

Montpellier’s Guarly Bocaly (L) looks at teammate, Younes Belhanda (R) celebrating after he scored a goal during the French L1 football match PSG vs Montpellier at the Parc des Princes in Paris, 20 Feb — Montpellier proved their Ligue 1 title credentials by holding league leaders Paris Saint-Germain to a 2-2 draw in the top-of-the-table clash at Parc des Princes on Sunday. John Utaka’s header gave Montpellier a 2-1 lead with eight minutes to play but a tap-in from substitute Guillaume Hoarau two minutes from time preserved PSG’s one-point lead over Rene Girard’s side at the summit.

“It was a good result because it was a difficult, well-balanced match,” said PSG coach Carlo Ancelotti. “The result was good because we had problems building up play from the back and winning the ball back but the players worked hard and their reaction after Montpellier’s second goal was good. “We didn’t want to lose the match and their reaction was fantastic.” Hoarau’s goal prevented Ancelotti from believing he could play that kind of tennis today.” Montpellier’s surprise title challenge remains firmly on their minds after losing to Paris Saint-Germain. “I’ve really fed off the energy of the crowd. Hopefully we can do the same at the Olympics.” Internet

Hoy leaves crowd dreaming of Olympic cycling gold

London, 20 Feb — Chris Hoy and Britain’s cycling team rounded off the Track World Cup at London’s new OlympicVelodrome on Sunday, leaving the cheering home crowd more confident than ever of gold at this year’s Summer Games.

Hoy, a four-time Olympic champion, followed his victory in Saturday’s 5km with a 2-0 win over Maximilian Levy in the men’s sprint, overpowering the German on the home straight in the first race and keeping his line under severe pressure on the back straight in the second. Hoy’s win and a silver medal for Britain’s men’s team pursuit outfit helped the host nation finish atop the points table at the four-day meet — which doubled as an Olympic test event at the new 6,000-seat arena.

“I’ve had a tough day out there and felt it in my legs,” the 35-year-old Scot said. “More than the actual result, I’m more pleased about the way I rode. It’s really important step towards the Olympics. “I’ve really fed off the energy of the crowd. Hopefully we can do the same at the Olympics.” Internet

Fire drill exercises in Thanlwin

Yangon, 20 Feb — Thanlwin Township Fire prevention Supervisory Committee organized the fire drill at Myana Market in Thanlwin on 16 February. Members of Fire Brigade participated in the fire drill. The township committee inspects implementation of fire preventive measures in the township.
Pyithu Hluttaw session continues for sixth day

Seven questions answered, one new proposal submitted, one bill approved, one important proposal submitted, additional members assigned to a commission

Nav Pyi Taw, 20 Feb — The sixth day session of Pyithu Hluttaw was held at Pyithu Hluttaw Hall in Pyithu Hluttaw Building here today, attended by Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw Thu U Shwe Mann and 358 Pyithu Hluttaw representatives.

During today’s session, seven questions were raised and answered, one new proposal was submitted, one bill was approved and one important proposal was submitted and additional members were assigned to a commission of Pyithu Hluttaw.

Pyithu Hluttaw received the Election Commission Bill on 17 February approved by Amyotha Hluttaw and Pyithu Hluttaw has invited those representatives who want to discuss the bill to enlist their names not later than 25 February as the bill committee of Pyithu Hluttaw will scrutinize and introduce the bill to Pyithu Hluttaw.

During the question and answer session, U G Phone Sar of Nagmon Constituency asked whether local people in the Khakaborazi National Park would be allowed to search and trade herbal plants and roots in the park for their livelihood.

Union Minister for Environmental Conservation and Forestry U Win Tun replied that the Khakaborazi National Park had been prohibited legally. The finding had helped research works and the park had attracted researchers and scientists, he added.

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The Subsection (a) and (c) of Section 7 and the Subsection (a) of the Section 8 of the Protection of Wildlife and Conservation of Natural Areas Law enacted in 1994, the Ministry of Forestry announced the Notification No 78/98 on 10 November, 1998, and established the Khakaborazi National Park, he said.

He continued to say that Khakaborazi National Park which was well-known as the Myanmar’s northern-most forests linking with the eastern area of the Himalaya Mountain Range was included in the lists for conservation for its rich biodiversity.

The new species were found in the park recently and the finding had helped research works and the park had attracted researchers and scientists, he added.

The Subsection (e) of the Section 29 and the Subsection (a) and (c) of the Section 30 of the 1994 Protection of Wildlife and Conservation of Natural Areas Law had prohibited the digging, plucking, collecting and doing something related to the plants in natural areas. Therefore, the searching and trading herbal plants and roots in the national park had been prohibited legally.

Throughout the protection of wildlife and conservation of natural areas bylaws, searching and exploitation of herbal plants and roots had been allowed within a limit at the border of the park and in the area established between the border and in the park, he added.

In an attempt to improve socio-economic life of the local people in Nagmon area, the Ministry of Environmental Conservation and Forestry and INGOs had been making efforts for creating jobs based on agriculture and other jobs for them in accordance with the rules and regulations of the State, he said.

Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw Thu U Shwe Mann attends sixth day session of Pyithu Hluttaw—MNA

Third regular session of first Amyotha Hluttaw continues for sixth day

Eight queries replied by respective Union Ministers, one proposal submitted, three proposals tabled, one proposal discussed to be proved

Nav Pyi Taw, 20 Feb — The sixth day session of third regular session of first Amyotha Hluttaw was held at Amyotha Hluttaw Hall of the Hluttaw Building here at 10 am today, attended by Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker U Khin Aung Myint and 198 Amyotha Hluttaw representatives.

Union Minister for Transport U Nyan Tun Aung replied to questions of four Hluttaw representatives on transport sector.

U Aung Nyein of Magway Region Constituency No. 6 asked about conservation of course of the Ayeyawady River. In response, the Union Minister said that erosion occurs in 13 villages of Watlat, Yonekoe and Wattumaus Village-tracts on west bank of the Ayeyawady River due to close flow of water to the bank and lack of hard soil along the bank. There occurs sandbank in Yenangyoung due to silt from Pin Creek upstream of the river.

Directorate of Water Resources and Improvement of River Systems carried out erosion prevention works in Kykkyon Village-tract, Aunglan and Zalun in Htinbyukyin Station of Salin Township, and water course conservation works in Bhamo, Latsaungyu water course conservation work and water clearance under Magway Bridge.

For stable water course of Ayeyawady River and Chindwin River, Royal Haskoning consult group of the Netherlands formulated a master plan for river water course conservation in 1986 with the assistance of World Bank. According to annual fund allotment, conservation works were carried out. Now, present water course is different from the plan. Reports on erosion prevention and water course conservation works will be presented to higher organizations making field trips.

Daw Nan Ni Ni Aye of Kayin State Constituency No. 6 asked whether there is a plan to construct retaining wall in Kamaung Sub-township and resettlements for the homeless. In response, the Union Minister said that Kamaung Sub-township in Phapun District of Kayin State is located on west bank of the Thanlwin River. Islands and sandbanks occur on east and in the middle of the river. Although no erosion occurs in the summer, there are deep water course on Kamaung and erosion along the bank side in the rainy season.

Directorate of Water Resources and Improvement of River Systems under the Ministry of Transport carried out works on construction of a retaining wall to prevent erosion in Thanwin Bridge (Hpa-an) in Kayin State, improvement of water course of the Thanlwin River, construction of retaining wall for improvement of Hpa-an-Uh-sha water course and retaining wall construction to prevent Thaungyin River erosion in Myawaddy.

Prevention of erosion in Kamaung Sub-township in Kayin State will be made. With respect to letter which was addressed to General Administration Department sent by 54 persons from (h) region, Ward No. 2 of Kamaung Sub-township, Papun District General Administration Department formed a group comprising Kamaung Township administrator (chairman) to probe into the report. According to feedback of the group.

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