Private entrepreneurs are to try to make sure that public consumers have no burden, buy products easily at a reasonable price, to work together with a view to improving living conditions of rural people as well as the grassroots.

Vice-President Dr Sai Mauk Kham addresses 21st Anniversary Plenary Meeting of UMFCCI

NAY PYI TAW, 25 May—Vice-President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Dr Sai Mauk Kham addressed the 21st Anniversary Plenary Meeting of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry at Myanmar International Convention Centre here this noon.

Union Ministers, deputy ministers, departmental heads, ambassadors from foreign embassies, personalities from international organizations, Patron of the UMFCCI U Aung Ko Win, President U Win Aung, vice-presidents, chairmen of sister organizations, CEC members and members of the federation and guests were present on the occasion.

The Vice-President in his speech said today strenuous efforts were being exerted with added momentum for economic development that was a sine qua non for building the country as a modern, developed nation and again private sector played the major role in national economic development. Thus, the UMFCCI was founded as the highest-level organization in private economic sector in order to lead, organize and monitor traders, industrialists and other entrepreneurs in Myanmar to move forward to international standard in manufacturing, trading and service industries with a view to ensuring sector-wise development of each economic sector of the country including the private sector.

The Vice-President said that he believed the UMFCCI as a NGO would be able to drive the national economy leading the private economic sector. The federation had seen over 90 calendars since its birth and in 1999, it was promoted to current status from UMFCCI association.

In 2011-2012, the federation could attract over new 2500 members and was standing as firm as rock with 23665 members.

The Vice-President then urged the federation to unite its members and sister associations and make efforts to enhance economic management skills, to be able to harness modern technologies in production and go well together with changing international economic systems.

(See page 8)
The country of smiles

Hospitality and generosity are dominant traits of Myanmar character. The generous nature of Myanmar is nurtured by the Buddha teachings. The streak of gentleness plus smiles in Myanmar character is an outcome of Buddhist influence.

As reforms have gone some distance, foreign investment in the country is in the offing. Even the countries which ostracized the nation previously have now become friendly with her. Therefore, the number of tourists who arrived in Myanmar by air per day this year, up from 600 to 700 during last year. In 2001, there were 364,743 tourists arrived at Yangon International Airport while 26,433 at Nay Pyi Taw, Mandalay and Nyaung U international airports.

Meanwhile, tourist arrivals in Myanmar are expected to reach 1.5 million in 2012. According to statistics of the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism, the number of tourist arrivals amounted to over 800,000 in 2011, up more than 24,000 or three per cent from over 790,000 in the same period of 2010.

The figures for the first two months of 2012 represented 98,486 who came mainly from North America, West Europe, East Asia, Australia and New Zealand, according to the Myanmar Tourism Promotion Board. The figures also show that up to February 2012, there was a total of 739 hotels in Myanmar including 22 foreign invested hotels, four joint-venture hotels, six government hotels and 707 privately-owned ones.

Being easy-going and friendly people, Myanmars are kind and their facial expressions, particularly their sweet smiles, always captivate the visitors. With this, it should come as no surprise that most of hotels, six government hotels and 707 private-owned ones.

Amyotha Hluttaw National Races Affairs Committee, Region Hluttaw representatives, national race representatives meet

YANGON, 25 May—A meeting between Amyotha Hluttaw National Races Affairs Committee and Hluttaw representatives of Taninthayi Region and national race representatives took place at the region government office on 23 May afternoon.

Region Hluttaw Speaker U Hnin Aung Kyaw made an opening speech and Amyotha Hluttaw National Races Affairs Committee Chairman U Hsai Paung Nat delivered a speech.

Next, the Hluttaw representatives, national race representatives, members of national race literature and culture committees, political parties and social organizations and townswomen made discussions. In response, members of Legal Affairs and Special Cases Assessment Commission and Amyotha Hluttaw National Races Affairs Committee made clarifications. Then, U Hsai Paung Nat made an opening speech and Region Hluttaw Speaker U Hnin Aung Kyaw made a speech. Those present made discussions and clarifications. The vice-president and the chief justice exchanged gifts.

In the afternoon, the Chinese delegation visited Mandalay Mahayami Buddha Image and Mandalay Hill Sunatsungyae Pagoda. In the evening, Chief Justice U Soe Theni hosted a dinner to the delegation at Rupar Mandalar Hotel.

Myanmar, France to cooperate in parliamentary affairs

Pyithu Hluttaw Committee Chairman meets IMS Asia Programme Head

NAV PHT TAW, 25 May—A delegation led by French Ambassador Mr Alexandre Michel of International Affairs Department of France Parliament paid a call on Pyithu Hluttaw Government’s Guarantees, Pledges and Undertakings Vetting Committee Chairman U Win Sein, at the assembly hall of Hluttaw Complex, here, yesterday morning.

At the call, they had a discussion on duty and undertakings of Hluttaw Committee, cooperation between Hluttaws of both countries and mutual assistance by both sides. Also present at the call were secretaries of Pyithu Hluttaw Committee—MNA

Chief Justice of Mandalay Region High Court U Soe Theni meets Chinese delegation led by Vice-President of Yunnan Provincial Supreme People’s Court Mr Wang Shuliang—MNA

Union Transport Minister receives President of ZETA Group and party

NAV PHT TAW, 25 May—Union Minister for Transport U Nyan Tun Aung received a delegation led by President Mrs Donatella Zingone Dini of ZETA Group based in Italy, yesterday morning.

At the meeting, they had a discussion on matters related to fuel prices, environmental degradation due to the use of fuel, steps being taken for replacing oil with LPG/CNG that is cheap and causing least damage to the environment, cooperation of ZETA technicians and Myanmar engineers in introducing LPG dual fuel to a vessel of Inland Water Transport, arrangement made for organizing a workshop in collaboration with Myanmar Engineering Society assessing the advantages of LPG/CNG by technicians of both sides.

Chief Justice of Mandalay Region High Court U Soe Theni meets Chinese delegation led by Vice-President of Yunnan Provincial Supreme People’s Court Mr Wang Shuliang—MNA

Union Minister for Transport U Nyan Tun Aung receives President Mrs Donatella Zingone Dini of ZETA Group based in Italy—MNA

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Chief Justice of Mandalay Region High Court U Soe Theni meets Chinese delegation led by Vice-President of Yunnan Provincial Supreme People’s Court Mr Wang Shuliang—MNA
Obama campaign targeting Romney's record as governor

WASHINGTON, 25 May—President Barack Obama said on Thursday he will nominate Allison Macfarlane, an expert in nuclear waste, as the nation’s top safety cop, seeking to turn the page on a period of bitter acrimony at the US Nuclear Regulatory Commission. Macfarlane, a Republican who served in the George W. Bush administration, will face the challenge of making the five-member commission work more collegiately as it implements the biggest changes the nuclear power industry has faced in years. 

Reuters

Nuclear waste expert tapped as top nuclear regulator

WASHINGTON, 25 May—President Barack Obama said on Thursday he will nominate Allison Macfarlane, an expert in nuclear waste, as the nation’s top safety cop, seeking to turn the page on a period of bitter acrimony at the US Nuclear Regulatory Commission. Macfarlane, a Republican who served in the George W. Bush administration, will face the challenge of making the five-member commission work more collegiately as it implements the biggest changes the nuclear power industry has faced in years. reforms sparked by the damage done to Japan’s nuclear system complex by an earthquake and tsunami last year.

She will replace Gregory Jaczko, whose term was marked by accusations from his four fellow commissioners that his bad temper had created a hostile work environment. But first, Macfarlane, 48, will face tough questions from Republicans who want to revive the Yucca Mountain nuclear waste dump in Nevada. Macfarlane has been a critic, writing a book in 2006 about the technical issues at the site called "Uncertainty Underground." "She’s not anti-nuclear, but she’s certainly not going to take her instructions from the industry," said Frank von Hippel, a nuclear proliferation expert at Princeton University, who has written academic papers with Macfarlane. "I’ve argued that the NRC has been subject to regulatory capture. Allison is certainly not captured by the industry," he said.

Reuters

France’s Hollande makes unannounced Afghanistan trip

PARIS, 25 May—French President Francois Hollande made an unannounced trip to Afghanistan on Friday to visit some of the French troops he wants to pull out over this year and meet Afghan President Hamid Karzai, whom he saw briefly last week in Chicago. Hollande, making a whirl of foreign trips last May in the wake of his inauguration, is accelerating the withdrawal of the roughly 1,400 French troops still stationed in Afghanistan to the end of this year, two years ahead of the NATO timetable. His office said he would present to NATO partners a long-term cooperation treaty signed with Kabul earlier this year. Hollande’s new withdrawal timetable is at odds with NATO partners adhering to a plan to hand over command of all combat missions to Afghan forces by the middle of 2013 and withdraw most of the 130,000 foreign troops there by the end of 2014. Some 2,000 troops are due to leave this year but some will remain to provide support and training, and to look after equipment. France has 14,500 military personnel and 1,400 containers that need to be taken out via road and plane.

Reuters

Venezuela tightens border security to bar entry of Colombian rebels

CARACAS, 25 May—Venezuela has posted some 3,000 troops along its border with Colombia on Thursday to prevent Colombian rebels from entering its territory. The Venezuelan government reinforced security along its northwest border with two army brigades and aerial support, official sources said, citing Defence Minister Henry Rangel Silva. The move came after Colombia said earlier this week it was concerned that insurgents had entered Venezuelan territory to gain support.

On Monday, Colombian troops and members of the rebel Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) engaged in a violent clash in the northern Colombian department of La Guajira near the border with Venezuela. Twelve soldiers were killed by the rebels. Immediately following the fight, Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez reassured Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos that he would crack down on any illegal activity on the Venezuelan side of the border. Silva said "elements of armed groups that may have penetrated into Venezuelan territory are being searched for in many sectors" along the shared 2,000-km border. He added it was the job of the Venezuelan authorities to consolidate the security points along the common border for safeguarding sovereignty. Any illegal armed groups that may have crossed the border will have to face "the iron fist" of the Venezuelan military units, said Silva.

Asalon Thursday, Venezuela's Foreign Minister Nicolas Maduro held talks in Caracas with visiting Colombian counterpart Maria Angela Holguin on the border issues. A joint statement following the meeting said the two sides would boost cooperation and communication to beef up border security. Alleged rebel incursions had strained ties of the two neighbouring countries. In mid-2009, when hardline President Alvaro Uribe was in power, Colombia broke off diplomatic and trade relations with Venezuela, but ties resumed in August 2010 after Santos came to power.
UK parents can control kids’ phones

London, 25 May—A cellphone SIM card remotely managed by a computer will allow parents to control a child’s phone and protect the child from bullying, a British company says.

Bemilo says its system, to run on the British Vodafone network, will allow parents to stop their children from going online, texting or making or receiving calls during certain hours.

“It’s a SIM that is just like any other SIM you would buy for any other network, but it enables parents to have full control in the context of safety,” Simon Goff, founder and chairman of Bemilo, told the BBC.

“They can allow or disallow certain contacts to call them, and they can set the times of the day the phone can operate.”

The SIM would help protect children from mobile phone bullying or “sexting” through unwanted phone calls or texts, Britain’s Family and Parenting Institute said.

Ancient ‘cursing stone’ found in Scotland

Glasgow, 25 May—Scotland’s first known example of a “cursing stone” associated with early Celtic-speaking peoples, said.

The stone, also known as a bullaun, around 10 inches in diameter and engraved with an early Christian cross, was found to fit perfectly into a large rectangular stone with a worm hole located at the base of a standing Christian cross on the Isle of Canna in Scotland’s Inner Hebrides, the BBC reported.

“Stones like this are found in Ireland, where they are known as ‘cursing stones’, but this is the first to be discovered in Scotland,” Katherine Forsyth, based at the University of Glasgow, said.

“They date from the early Christian period but have continued to be used by pilgrims up to modern times,” Forsyth, an expert in the history and culture of early Celtic-speaking peoples, said.

“Traditionally, the pilgrim would recite a prayer while turning the stone clockwise, wearing a depression or hole in the stone underneath.”

While a number of the bowl-shaped lower stones had been found elsewhere in Scotland, this was the first discovery of a top stone, she said.

“This exciting find provides important new insight into religious art and practice in early Scotland and demonstrates just how much there is still to be discovered out there.”

Experimental crop vandalism brings charges

Harpenden, 25 May—A British man is facing charges following a break-in at a research centre where a trial of genetically modified wheat is being held, authorities said.

Officials at the Rothamsted Research centre said test crops of the GM wheat had been vandalised on Sunday with “significant” damage, the BBC reported.

The centre, located in Hertfordshire, is testing to see if modified crops can deter aphids, a major wheat pest.

Opponents of GM crops have denounced the tests, saying the Centre for Food and the Natural Environment, which was on the site, could have allowed modified pollen to escape the confines of the test centre into the surrounding environment.

“The intruder caused significant, random property damage, but failed to disrupt the experiment in this attack,” the research centre said in a statement.

Anti-GM group TakeTheFlour Back has vowed to “decontaminate” the site unless the research is halted, but there has been no suggestion the man who has been charged is linked to the group.

“We have no information about this incident, but we are relieved if the quantity of GM pollen released from the trial has been reduced,” group spokeswoman Eleanor Baylis said. “The British people are clear that they’re not swallowing this technology.”

The alleged intruder, a 50-year-old man from Devon whose identity has not been released, will appear in court on 13 July, authorities said.

Scientists turn skin cells into beating heart muscle

London, 25 May—Scientists have for the first time succeeded in taking skin cells from patients with heart failure and transforming them into healthy, beating heart tissue that could one day be used to treat the condition.

The researchers, based in Haifa, Israel, said there were still many years of testing and refining ahead. But the results meant they might eventually be able to reprogram patients’ cells to repair their own damaged hearts.

“We have shown that it’s possible to take skin cells from an elderly patient with advanced heart failure and end up with his own beating cells, which can then be banked and subjected to a later treatment,” the BBC reported.

“Tissues BEATING TOGETHER”

Gepstein’s team took skin cells from two men with heart failure—aged 51 and 61—and transformed them by adding three genes and then a small molecule called valproic acid to the cell nucleus.

They found that the resulting hiPSCs were able to differentiate to become heart muscle cells, or cardiomyocytes, just as effectively as hiPSCs that had been developed from healthy, young volunteers who acted as controls for the study.

The team was then able to make the cardiomyocytes develop into heart muscle tissue, which they grew in a laboratory dish together with existing cardiac tissue.

Climate change hits globe’s water cycle

Livermore, 25 May—The Earth’s dry lands are getting drier and wet ones wetter as climate change shifts and accelerates the globe’s water cycle, US researchers say.

Changing patterns of salinity in the global ocean during the past 50 years show a clear fingerprint of climate change on the shift in water that results from rainfall and evaporation, they said.

Scientists with the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory in California said that colleagues at Australia’s Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization say the Earth’s water cycle has strengthened by 4 percent 1950-2000.

The cycle represents the ratio of rainfall rates with rates of evaporation. “These changes suggest that arid regions have become drier and high rainfall regions have become wetter in response to observed global warming,” LLNL researcher Paul Durack said. Changes in ocean salinity can be directly linked to climate change, researchers said.

While land-based data are sparse, they said, global oceans provide a much clearer picture. “Ocean matters to climate—it stores 97 percent of the world’s water, receives 80 percent of all rainfall and has absorbed 90 percent of the Earth’s energy increase associated with past greenhouse warming,” author Richard Matear of CSIRO said in a release on Monday.

To match skin to stem cells for heart failure patients

Fluorescent images of human heart cells generated from induced pluripotent stem cells of heart failure patients in an undated image. — Reuters

Climate change and extreme weather: new book

Berlin, 25 May—A new book, “Climate Change and Extreme Weather,” is due to be published on 8 June.

The book, written by a group of international experts, examines the impacts of climate change on extreme weather events such as floods, heatwaves, hurricanes and droughts.

It calls for urgent action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to the impacts of climate change.

The book is available for pre-order on Amazon and will be published in both print and digital formats.

Conclusion

The findings of this study highlight the urgent need for action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and address the impacts of climate change on extreme weather events.

It is important to note that while this study provides valuable insights, further research is needed to fully understand the complex interactions between climate change and extreme weather events.

As we continue to address the challenges posed by climate change, it is crucial that we adopt a comprehensive and collaborative approach to mitigate risks and protect vulnerable communities.

Together, we can work towards a more sustainable future, where we prioritize the health and well-being of our planet and its inhabitants.
Fake drugs threaten gains made in war on malaria

The United Nations declared the global malaria crisis a major health threat in the 1990s, sparking a surge of research into drugs that combat the disease. The drugs have cut the number of deaths from malaria by half since 2000, but a third of the world’s 200 million annual cases of malaria and 90% of the 1.5 million deaths it causes each year are still untreated, according to the U.N. health agency.

But researchers say that counterfeit malaria drugs and substandard medicines are flooding into markets in Asia and Africa, threatening gains made in the fight against the disease in the past decade, according to a study by global health experts.

The study found that 36 percent of anti-malarial drugs analyzed in southeast Asia were fake, while a third of samples in sub-Saharan Africa failed chemical testing because they contained either too much or not enough active ingredient. The researchers said the problem might be even bigger.

The emergence of resistance to artemisinin drugs — currently the most effective treatment for malaria — along the Thai-Lao-Cambodia border has already been documented.

“Despite a dramatic rise in imports of poor-quality anti-malarial drugs over the past decade, the issue is much greater than it seems,” said Gaurav Nayyar, of the Fogarty International Center at the US National Institutes of Health, in a study in the Lancet Infectious Diseases journal.

“Most cases are probably unreported, reported to the wrong agencies, or kept confidential by pharmaceutical companies.”

More than 3 billion people worldwide are at risk of malaria, a mosquito-borne parasitic disease which kills around 650,000 people a year, most of them babies and children in Africa.

Nayyar said many of the deaths caused by the disease could be avoided “if drugs available to patients were efficacious, high quality, and used correctly.”

The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that while less than 1 percent of medicines available in developed countries are likely to be counterfeit, globally, the figure is around 10 percent.

The United Nations agency estimates that as much as a third of all medicines in some developing countries are fake.

The researchers said the link may be due to breathing problems causing an inadequate supply of oxygen — intermittent hypoxia, or oxygen starvation — promoted tumour growth in mice with skin cancer. Likely, oxygen might stimulate the generation of blood vessels that nourish tumours — a process known as angiogenesis, the researchers said.

Scientists looked at 22 years of data from studies involving sleep problems of 1,522 people sleep problems. People with mild sleep disorder breathing were just 0.1 times more likely to die from cancer than those without the problem, but those with moderate sleep disorder breathing doubled the chances of cancer death, while severe sleep-disordered breathing increased the risk 4.8 times, the study said.

According to the plan, Mazda Motor is discussing a business tie-up with Italy’s Fiat, the world’s 7th-largest carmaker.

Mazda said on Wednesday that the makers began discussing a tie-up plan. Fiat is the majority shareholder in Italian automaker Chrysler.

According to the plan, Mazda would in 2015 start providing its 2-seat roadster to Fiat, which would market the vehicle under its Alfa Romeo sports car brand.

Fiat would put one of its own engines in the roadster, but the car would be manufactured at Mazda’s Hiroshima plant.

The 2 firms may also consider working together on environmentally friendly technology, including a fuel-efficient Mazda engine.

Mazda apparently aims to expand its sales outside Japan. The firm posted its 4th consecutive annual loss in March. Fiat would benefit by introducing lightweight vehicles using Mazda technology.

In March, the world’s number one automaker, General Motors, and the 8th-largest, Peugeot Citroen, announced a capital and business tie-up, creating the world’s largest auto alliance.

Observers say Mazda is seeking business ties to stay aloof amid weakening of its links with its former top shareholder, Ford.
Yemen: 35 al-Qaeda militants killed in clashes

SANAA, 25 May

Yemeni military launched an attack on Thursday on an al-Qaeda hideout in the country’s south as part of a wider offensive, killing 35 militants, the Defence Ministry said. The attack came four days after al-Qaeda claimed responsibility for a suicide bombing on a military parade rehearsal in the capital, Sanaa. The bombing killed 96 Yemeni soldiers. Funerals for 67 of the soldiers were held on Friday. The government said in a statement that its forces were controlling Bani Ibb, near the town of Jaar, another al-Qaeda stronghold.

Since 12 May, Yemeni security forces have been pushing an offensive against al-Qaeda, aiming to uproot the militants from territory they overran during more than a year of internal political turmoil in Yemen. Casualties have been high on both sides. Troops backed by warplanes and artillery, as well as armed tribesmen, battled al-Qaeda militants, mainly in Abyan Province in the south, aiming at regaining control over the provincial capital, Zinjibar. Yemen’s al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula is considered one of the group’s most dangerous branches. The impoverished country was the launching pad for three foiled al-Qaeda attacks on US targets.— Internet

Baghdad mortar attack kills one, wounds six

BAGHDAD, 25 May — A mortar attack in Baghdad killed one police officer and wounded six others on Thursday, in the second attack in Iraq’s capital during key talks on Iran’s nuclear programme, security and medical officials said. An interior ministry official said a mortar round struck a street in the Batwaee area of central Baghdad, across the Tigris River from the heavily-fortified Green Zone where the talks between Iran and world powers pressing to it scale back its nuclear programme were taking place. The official put the toll at one dead and six wounded, which was confirmed by a medical source at Al-Nafis hospital.

On Wednesday, the first day of the talks, four people were wounded by a roadside bomb near a Sunni mosque in Al-Yarmuk, west Baghdad. The attacks come despite heightened security measures in and around the Iraqi Capital for the two-day meeting. Thousands of additional Iraqi security personnel were deployed in areas north, west and south of Baghdad to try to prevent the firing of mortars and rockets into the capital, a security official said. The official also said without providing figures that additional forces were deployed at checkpoints in the Iraqi Capital, and searches increased. Also on Thursday, a roadside bomb against an army patrol near Dujail, north of Baghdad, killed one soldier and wounded another soldier and three civilians, an army officer said. In Mosul in northern Iraq, police on Thursday found the bodies of two girls who had apparently been bludgeoned to death, police First Lieutenant Mohammed Khalaf al-Jaburi said. The two had been kidnapped a day earlier, Jaburi said.

An Iraqi boy stands by the door of a building’s roof which was damaged in a mortar attack in the Batwaee area of central Baghdad.— Internet

Japan unlikely to achieve 25% greenhouse gas cut

TOKYO, 25 May — A government panel says Japan is unlikely to achieve its goal of cutting greenhouse gas emissions by 25 percent by 2020, even if it relies on the maximum possible amount of nuclear power generation. In response to the Fukushima nuclear crisis last year, the government tasked a panel of experts with examining various steps to combat global warming, including a review of its goal to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 25 percent compared to 1990 levels. The panel made an estimate of potential realization by examining scenarios that take into account different levels of nuclear power generation and 3 levels of renewable energy and other anti-global warming steps. The experts found that even if Japan derived 35 percent of its energy from nuclear power and adopted the most extreme anti-global warming steps, emissions would be cut by only 19 percent by 2030. Without any nuclear power, emissions would be cut by only 11 percent.

The panel plans to examine the issue further and submit a report to the government detailing potential emissions targets and the options available for reaching them. Observers say the findings are likely to put Japan under greater pressure to revise its mid-term emissions-reduction goals.

SpaceX capsule zips through practice drive by space station

CAPE CANAVERAL, 25 May — SpaceX Exploration Technologies’ unmanned Dragon spacecraft flew smoothly in a practice drive by the International Space Station on Thursday, clearing the way for it to become the first private vessel to reach the orbital outpost.

The Dragon will operate as planned, it will fly to within about 30 feet (9 metres) of the $100 billion station on Friday and shut down its maneuvering thrusters so the station crew can snare it with a robotic crane and hook it onto a docking port.

“Dragon took a test drive past the station early on Thursday, coming as close as about 1.5 miles (2.4 km) as the two vessels soared about the planet at 17,500 miles per hour (28,164 kph).”

Astronauts aboard the station showed they could command Dragon by ordering the capsule to turn on and off its strobe light.

It went very, very smoothly,” NASA flight director Holly Ridings told reporters after the test.” “We’ve been training and practicing for many years, but doing it for the first time with two dynamic spacecraft flying very close together you always want to make sure that you’re going to be able to do it as you’re trained,” she said.

“It’s a big confidence boost,” added mission director John Couluris, with California-based Space Exploration Technologies, or SpaceX.

“It’s exciting to be an American and part of putting an American spacecraft into orbit. We’re very proud right now,” he said.— Reuters

Picasso’s largest painting back on show

TOKYO, 25 May — Pablo Picasso’s largest painting—a 16-metre-wide stage curtain—will go on show in France for the first time in 21 years.

The curtain was painted as a backdrop for the 1917 ballet “Parade,” for which Picasso designed the costumes and sets. At over 16 metres wide and 10 metres high, it is Picasso’s largest known work. The painting has been stored in the Pompidou Centre in Paris for lack of space to stage the work. It will now be displayed in the centre’s sister museum in Metz, France.

The painting features a monkey on a ladder said to be Picasso. A woman in a white dress is said to be Olga Khokhlova, who danced in “Parade” and later married Picasso—NHK

Japan’s nuclear power emissions would be cut by only 11 percent.

Oil prices rose Thursday as US data showed the number of jobless claims fell. The US economy posted faster growth in the first quarter than previously reported, and the housing sector remained strong. Oil prices ended up, up 55 cents to $117.58 a barrel, on the New York Mercantile Exchange. Oil futures have risen 4.7% in the past month but are down 6.4% in 2012.

Photo shows Pablo Picasso’s largest painting, a 16-metre-wide stage curtain, which will go on show in France for the first time in 21 years.—INTERNET
Memorandum of Discussion on opening of Myanmar-Japan centre inked

YANGON, 25 May—A ceremony to sign Memorandum of Discussion on opening of Myanmar-Japan centre at the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

Rural development tasks undertaken in Monghsat

MONGHSAT, 25 May—As part of rural development and poverty alleviation programme, Monghsat District Administrator U Thaung Tin Htway, Township Administrator U Naing Aye and staff officer of District Information and Public Relations Department U Hla Htay inspected upgrading of village-tract-to-village-tract road, digging of canals and construction of Wanpon bridge, on 16 May.

After that, they also inspected progress in construction of basic education primary school in Punako Village. They also looked into upgrading of village-to-village road in Yaungkha-Maekyoke village and thriving summer paddy also looked into upgrading of village-tract-to-village-tract road, in Kyaunggon Township. They also looked into upgrading of village-to-village road in Yaungkha-Maekyoke village and thriving summer paddy.

Kyaunggon township gets new station hospital

KYAUNGGON, 25 May—A ceremony to donate cash and handover Wetchaung Station hospital, was held at the hospital in Kyaunggon Township, Ayeyawady Region on 20 May.

At the ceremony, Retd Attorney-General Thayay Sithu U Aye Maung, Deputy Minister for Health Dr Win Myint, Ayeyawady Region Minister for Social Affairs U San Maung Aye Maung, Deputy Minister for Health Dr Win Myint, and donor U Zaw Zaw pressed the buttons to open it.

After that, Chairman of Max Myanmar Co U Zaw Zaw donated K 43 million and Thayay Sithu U Aye Maung and Daw Khin Mya Mya family; K 12.8 million for hospital's construction.

Bohmu Bahtoo road upgraded to four-lane road

YANGON, 25 May—Upgrading of 22-ft-wide Bohmu Bahtoo road to 48-ft wide four-lane one is in process. The road is in Dagon Myothit (North).

Construction started in October 2011 and it has been completed by 60 percent. Yangon City Development Committee has allowed a budget of K 1.8 billion for it. After completion, it will link Kyansittha road, U-wisara road, Bayinnaung road and Bo Min Yaung road in Dagon Myothit (North) and Khaymathi road, Thudhamma road and other roads in North Okkalapa township.

Fires brake out in Mandalay Region

MANDALAY, 25 May—Fires occurred in Pyigyidagun and Mahaaungmye townships, Mandalay Region on 23 May.

The first fire started at the house of U Thein Gwe of Thipanggon ward in Pyigyidagun Township of Mandalay and was under control at 8:45 pm. Likewise, a fire occurred at Shweletha clinic of Yadanaumzi east ward in Mahaaungmye Township at 11:45 pm. It could be put out at 12 am.

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Thegon township gets new library

BAGO, 25 May—A ceremony to open library and donate books and cash in Inpawngwe Village, Thegon Township, Pyay District, Bago Region, was held at the library on 14 May.

At the ceremony, Sayadaw U Wilatha, Pyithu Hlutaw representative U Soe Aung, Township Information and Public Relations staff officer U Nyan Lin and village-tract administrator U Hla Lin formally opened it. After that, the Township IPRD staff officer explained the purpose of opening. Wellwisher donated books and cash through officials.

Books, cash donated to Sittway Township writers association

SITTWAY, 25 May—A ceremony to erect signboard of Sittway Township writers association and to donate cash for fund, was held in Sinka road ward, Sittway, Rakhine State on 20 May.

It was attended by Sittway District Information and Public Relations Department staff officer U Aung Kyaw Sein, ward administrator U Tun Sein Aung, executive members of Sittway Township writers association and donors.

Wellwisher donated books and cash through the chairman of Township writers association, the secretary and the treasurer.
Private entrepreneurs are to try to make...

(from page 1)

Last year, a large number of ambassadors from international organizations, business officials and businessmen paid visits on the federation to discuss economic matters. In addition, the federation could dispatch over 400 delegates to 15 foreign countries to attend seminars, training meetings and participate in 31 international trade fairs.

With respect to international relations, the federation was actively cooperating with such international and regional organizations as International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), ASEAN Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ASEAN-CCI), Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-sectoral Technical and Economic cooperation (BIMSTEC), Greater Mekong Sub-region Business Forum (GMS-BF), Ayeyawaddy-Chao Phraya-Mekong Economic Cooperation Strategy Business Council (ACMECS-BC) and could ink MoUs with 29 foreign countries.

The government is striving for increasing schooling rates under 30-year long-term national education promotion plan, the Union minister said.

He accredited the increasing contributions of local authorities, departmental personnel, social organizations, people and donors.

Six exercise books were distributed to each primary school student in previous academic year to make possible the compulsory primary education under guidance of the President, the Union minister said. For this year, the government provides all primary school students with all textbooks and six note books. Scholarships will be awarded to outstanding and needy students in middle and high schools since this academic year.

The Union minister and Deputy Ministers U Aye Kyu and U Ba Shwe presented scholarships to students in Nay Pyi Taw Council Area.

Now, crop wholesaler brokerages have been established nationwide to be able to systematically trade such crops as rice, beans and pulses and sesame, and measures are being taken for ensuring quality of products, systematic making of contracts and dissemination of information about market and prices under the leadership of UMFCCI. It can also be found that rice companies and beans and pulses companies are carrying out the whole supply change ranging from production to supply of their products to consumers.

The Vice-President went on to say that as fruits and vegetables have become important for exports, it is necessary to establish companies specialized in trading those crops. Myanmar will have to take its role in ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA) and ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) in 2015. So to seize upcoming opportunities and overcome pending difficulties and challenges, the country must be prepared for that.

Entrepreneurs in collaboration with experts are to make efforts for manufacturing quality products at a reduced cost, ensuring Myanmar products have a more highly-competitive market in both quality and price than other foreign markets, maintaining firm international market and seeking new markets.

For the improvement of national economy at a time when the country is having rapid changes in its political and economic fields, the UMFCCI needs to find out weaknesses in respective economic sectors and to work together with its congenial associations.

In conclusion, the Vice-President urged the UMFCCI to try to be a federation on which the State can rely by taking a leadership role in endeavours for development of private economic sector. Moreover, its congenial associations are urged to work in the public interest following economic ethics.

Then, the Vice-President had a documentary photo together with the Union ministers, deputy ministers, the patron, president and executives of the federation. He then cordially greeted those present.

The Vice-President viewed documentary photos on the federation’s local and international achievements displayed in the meeting hall.

At the second session of the meeting, UMFCCI Patron Union Minister for Commerce U Win Myint made a speech. Then, UMFCCI President U Win Aung made a speech. The annual report for 2011-2012 of the executive committee and the financial statement were read out and approval sought. After questions were replied and suggestions accepted, the chairing gave a concluding remark. — MNA

Union Education Minister addresses School Enrollment Day Ceremony

NAY PYI TAW, 25 May—Chairman of Central Committee for Schooling All School Age Children Union Minister for Education Dr Mya Aye called on teachers for not collecting extra fees apart from fixed fees as it could burden parents in his address to School Enrollment Day Commemorative Ceremony for 2012-2013 academic year at No (6) Basic Education High School in Zabuthiri Township here this morning.

He requested social organizations and contributors to help children pursue education for whole academic year. The Union minister made it clear that any content in textbooks can not be left out.

Seven days between 25 and 31 May is designated as School Enrollment Week during which commemorative ceremonies are being held in each township.

The government is striving for increasing schooling rates under 30-year long-term national education promotion plan, the Union minister said.

For private entrepreneurs in doing business, they are to try to make sure that public consumers have no burden and buy their products easily and at a reasonable price, and to work together with a view to improving the living conditions of the rural people as well as the grassroots.

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Union Construction Minister meets region and state level officials

NAY PYI TAW, 25 May—Union Minister for Construction U Khin Maung Myint highlighted the need to constantly monitor conditions of bridge, small or big, in each Region and State and to prioritize civil and regional development projects and housing development tasks in meeting with region and state level officials of the ministry at the ministry yesterday morning.

Deputy Ministers U Soe Tint and U Kyaw Lwin reiterated the minister’s call for applying allotted budgets for construction of roads and bridges in accord with the rules and regulations.

Managing Director U Kyaw Lin of Public Works and Head of Office U Kyaw Win explained future plans. — MNA
CBM Governor receives foreign banks delegations

NAY PYI TAW, 25 May—Governor of the Central Bank of Myanmar U Than Nyen of the Ministry of Finance and Revenue received China Development Bank and party at the same time in the evening. Both sides had a cordial discussion on strengthening bilateral cooperation in banking services. The departmental heads also attended the calls.

Ayeyawady Region Chief Minister receives guests

NAY PYI TAW, 25 May—Ayeyawady Region Chief Minister U Thein Aung receives delegation led by Mr Adam Leddy of Morek Water Solutions, Asia Pacific Pty., Ltd, at Region Government Office yesterday morning. At the call, they discussed undertakings of social affairs in the region. Likewise, the Chief Minister also met a delegation led by Mr Zhang Bin and party of China-Myanmar Friendship Association at the same venue at 2:45 pm. They had a discussion on investment in the region.

H-Pole No. 249 of Namkhame Muse 66-KV power grid destroyed by KIA

NAY PYI TAW, 25 May—Action on the information from duty-conscious locals that H-Pole concrete lamp post No. 249 of Namkhame Muse 66-KV power grid of Myanmar Electric Power Enterprise of the Ministry of Electric Power No. 2 had a bit tilted this morning, authorities concerned went there and checked it. And they found that the bottom of the concrete pole was damaged by the attack of KIA armed group and the iron rods inside were twisted. Moreover, what seemed to be a mine was found at another concrete pole.

Plas are under way to repair the damaged H-Pole. Such an incident in which KIA armed group is blowing up towers can cause reduced electricity supply and the people are having more problems, says the Ministry of Electric Power No. 2.

A Vietnamese delegation visits MRTV in Nay Pyi Taw

NAY PYI TAW, 25 May—A Vietnamese delegation led by Director Mr Nguyen Chu Nhoc of Voice of Vietnam and party visit Myanmar Radio and Television in Tatkon Township, here, this morning. There, they met deputy director-general U Tin Wan and visited assembly hall, radio national races programme room, recording studio, shooting studio, radio main control room, broadcasting room, radio editing room and news room.

Towers of Shweli-Mansan national grid being repaired

NAY PYI TAW, 25 May—Myanmar Electric Power Enterprise has been repairing the tower Nos. 73, 206, 207 and 208 of Shweli-Mansan national grid damaged in the mine blast of KIA Group on 18 and 19 May with 166 staff for resumption of normal power supply by the end of May. All the required equipment have arrived the sites, the repair of tower No. 73 has been completed by 80 per cent, and the other towers by 50 per cent.

Five 500KVA generators and six 300 KVA generators ordered from abroad for supply of more electric power arrived Yangon Port on 23 May, of which two 500 KVA generators were transported to Yangon, two 500 KVA and six 300 KVA generators to Mandalay and one 500 KVA generator to Paya the same night with vehicles. The generators were installed in respective places by 24 May afternoon and further measures are the ways to supply more electricity earliest.

Work coordination meeting of Central Census Committee held

NAY PYI TAW, 25 May—Work coordination meeting (2/2012) of Central Census Committee took place at the Ministry of Immigration and Population this afternoon, attended by Chairman of Central Census Committee Deputy Minister U Kyaw Kyaw Win and members and officials. The Deputy Minister explained signing of MoU on rendering assistance for taking population census for 2014, implementation of the work by the ministry in cooperation with UNFPA, the tasks being implemented by the State as a project and plans for formation of region-state, district, township, ward and village-tract census committees and assistance to be given by departments.

Next, CCC Secretary Population Department Director General U Myint Kyaw explained suggestions and remarks from the ministries included in Central Census Commission and assistance for the success of the work. Then, the committee members made their discussions.

Later, the deputy minister called for concerted efforts for achieving success in taking census and left necessary instructions.
Khitsan library opens in Myaungmya Township

Myanma Alin

Khitsan library in Kanywar Village in Tuchungkaungsu village-tract, Myaungmya, was held on 20 May. At the ceremony, Myaungmya Township administrator U Ko Ko Lat, District Information and Public Relations Department staff officer Daw Hla Kyi, donor village administrator Man Than Gywe Soe Soe, and Daw Khin Kyu Kyu Than delivered speeches on the occasion. The Township staff officer Daw Hla Kyi, donor village administrator Man Than Gywe Soe Soe opened the library.

ORDINATION CEREMONY: The 21st ordination ceremony was held at Parahita Shwe monastery in Myaung, Hinthada District, Ayeyawady Region on 19 May.—MYANMA ALIN

Inter-township Sittway District administrator’s Cup Men/Women volleyball tournament concludes

NAV P'TA W, 25 May—Opening ceremony of Inter-township Sittway District Administrator’s Cup Men/Women volleyball tournament (2012), was held at gymnasium in Sittway, Rakhine State on 10 May. Sittway District administrator U Lin Ko Ko opened the tournament. At prize-awarding ceremony held on 14 May, the Kyauktaw District Administrator, the Myebon Township administrator, the Sittway township women’s affairs organization, attended the awards ceremony. After that, Sittway District administrators awarded the first prize winner, Sittway Township Men’s team.

Land reclamation made in Wakema Township

WAKEMA, 25 May—Land reclamation for 100 acres of model farm was made at U-gyun Village in Wakema Township, Ayeyawady Region, on 22 May. It was attended by Township administrator U Soe Tun, staff officer U Phyo Wai Tun of Agriculture Mechanization Department, deputy staff officer U Nay Aung, deputy staff officer U Thant Zin of Myanmar Agriculture Services, officials and farmers. The 100 acres of Pawsanhmway paddy will be grown there.

Some billboards in Yangon get five-month free of charge

YANGON, 25 May—Some billboards in Yangon get the green light for erecting free of charges till August, according to Engineering Department (road and bridge) of Yangon City Development Committee. Temporary signboards (20 ft X 9 ft) and advertising billboards (smaller than 20 ft X 9 ft) will be allowed to erect from 1 April to 31 August. These billboards are to be removed on 1 September. YCDC will take action against those who fail to remove it in line with YCDC laws, rules and regulations.

Current billboards (bigger than 20 ft X 9 ft) in Yangon city area will be charged K 20,000 per one square feet and allowed till 31 March 2013. YCDC would take necessary actions against advertisers who fail to sign contract for billboards later than 31 May, in accord with laws, rules and regulation.—Kyemon

MWEA members leave for Malaysia

YANGON, 25 May—Members of Myanmar Women’s Entrepreneurs Association Dr The Myat Soe, Daw Khin Myo Thaw and Daw Phyu Than Lwin, left here for Malaysia on 24 May, to attend Young Awareness on Climate Change which will be held from 24 to 28 May in Kuala Lumpur of Malaysia as a fourth youth programme. They were seen off at Yangon International Airport by executive members Daw Myat Thanda, Daw San Myint, Dr Yu Nwe Win and Daw Khin Kyu Kyu Than.

Collective sanitation carried out in Inlay Lake

NYAUNGSHWE, 25 May—A team led by administrator officer of Inlay Lake Sanctuary carried out collective sanitation soon. “More than 100 people from Township Development Affairs Organization, hoteliers and environmental activists collected plastic and litters along Namlat creek that flows into the Inlay Lake”, said Inlay Lake Sanctuary administrator U Sein Tun. It is known that plans are under way to undertake environmental conservations in Inlay Lake sanctuary and its related areas in cooperation with related organizations.

SALE OF CHICKEN EGGS INSPECTED: Myitkyina of Kachin State sees sale of faked chicken eggs imported from border area. A team comprising Mawlu model village administrator U Mya Than, staff officer U Hsan Win of Livestock Breeding and Veterinary Department, Myanmar Police Force Police inspector Zaw Win, Sub-inspector Kee Thein and staff officer U Aung Kyu of Mawlu Development Affairs Department, inspects the sale of eggs in Mawlu Sibin haya market in Mawlu model village, Indaw Township, Sagaing on 24 May.—Kyemon

SHELTERS DONATED: Shelter at new Myenigon bus stop in Yangon, donated by private companies, under construction on 23 April.—Kyemon

BUS LINES INSPECTED: Officials from bus lines inspected traffic rules enforcement of public bus lines near Myenigon in Yangon Region.—MYANMA ALIN

YANGON City Development Committee
New Mexico wildfires merge; blazes rage in five states

SANTA FE, 25 May — Two raging wildfires in southwest New Mexico merged on Thursday to become the biggest blaze among fires that have torched forest and brush in parts of five Southwestern states. Blazes in rugged, mountainous areas of Arizona, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico and Utah have forced the evacuation of a few small towns and torched at least 170 square miles (440 square km) of forest, brush and grass since mid-month.

The Arizona fires were the first major blazes in the Grand Canyon state this year after a record 2011 fire season in which nearly 2,000 fires charred more than 1,500 square miles (3,900 square km). According to the National Interagency Fire Centre, winds bringing a blast of damp Pacific Ocean air cut fire growth in much of the state as a break on Thursday in several regions. But authorities seeking to control the combined 110-square-mile (285-square-km) New Mexico wildfire, which is called the Whitewater-Baldy Complex, said they have not managed to cut a containment line ahead of it.

And high winds are expected on Friday and Saturday, said fire information officer Iris Estes. Twelve homes burned down on Wednesday night in the Willow Creek subdivision, which is near Glia National Forest in southwest New Mexico, Estes said.— Reuters

SOUTH CAROLINA, 25 May — The 16-year-old boy who police said confessed to shooting into a crowd and wounding eight people outside an NBA basketball game made his first appearance on Thursday before a judge, who set his bail at $160,000. The boy was arrested on Tuesday and charged with eight counts of shooting with intent to kill. He remained in jail on Thursday night.

“The defendant was arrested and interviewed where he confessed to shooting into the crowd,” an Oklahoma City homicide detective said in an affidavit filed with the court. One of the eight people wounded on Monday night, after the Oklahoma City Thunder game with the Utah Jazz, remained in critical condition, police said.

The shooting occurred after two groups of young people repeatedly crashed outside the arena while thousands of fans in the street watched a live telecast of the game on a videoboard. Oklahoma City Thunder, which starts the NBA Western Conference Championship series against San Antonio Spurs in Texas on Sunday, has announced it will no longer stream games for fans to watch outside the arena.— Reuters

China retrieves 100,000 antiques through auctions

WUHAN, 25 May — Over the past 20 years, more than 100,000 antique items originally held in China have returned to the country after being bought at auction, Zhang Yanhua, chief of China Association of Auctioneers, said on Thursday.

Auction returns, more than 30 were obtained by China’s top museums, said Zhang at a national publicity event on art market legal issues in Wuhan, capital of central China’s Hubei Province. During past centuries, tens of millions of antique items have been taken out of China. Many Chinese, stimulated by their patriotism, have bought them back through auction.— Xinhua

US soldier found guilty of plotting bomb attack on army troops

HOUSTON, 25 May — A US soldier accused of plotting a bomb attack on Fort Hood army base was found guilty on all charges on Thursday.

Naser Jason Abdo was found guilty of attempted use of a weapon of mass destruction, attempted murder and four other charges, local newspaper the Austin American-Statesman reported.

Abdo, a Muslim soldier, faces up to life in prison for his conviction of attempted use of weapon of mass destruction, the paper said. Sentencing is set for this summer. Abdo was accused of planning to bomb a Chinese buffet frequented by soldiers at the nearby army base Fort Hood.

Prosecutors said he was planning to launch his attack around lunchtime to cause maximum number of casualties. Prosecutors said Abdo was just put together from assembling bomb when he was arrested on 27 July, 2011. Fort Hood was the scene of a rampage in 2009 that claimed 13 lives.

US military psychiatrist who opened fire on unarmed soldiers who were preparing for deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan on November. More than 30 others were injured.— Xinhua

Texas gunman who opened fire on soldiers going to Afghanistan was found guilty of attempted use of a weapon of mass destruction, the paper said. Prosecutors said he was planning to launch his attack around lunchtime to cause maximum number of casualties. Prosecutors said Abdo was just put together from assembling bomb when he was arrested on 27 July, 2011. Fort Hood was the scene of a rampage in 2009 that claimed 13 lives.

Missing Pakistani army helicopter found crashed into river

ISLAMABAD, 25 May — A Pakistani army helicopter which reportedly went missing earlier on Wednesday was found crashed into a river in eastern Pakistan, sources told Xinhua.

The wreckage of the crashed helicopter has been lifted by an army Mi-17 helicopter from the Chenab River near the Wazirabad interchange in Jacobabad area on Wednesday evening, said the sources.

Chenab River, Pakistan’s second largest river in Pakistan, which runs up from northeast Punjab and merges with the country’s second largest Jhelum River in central Punjab.

The bodies of the two people on board, a pilot and a training officer, have not been recovered yet, they said, adding that the search operation for the two missing persons is still underway.

The ill-fated helicopter reportedly went missing at about 11.30am on Wednesday while on a training flight over the Wazirabad area, a district lying some 100 kilometres north of Lahore, capital of Punjab Province.

The reason of the crash is not known. Details about the crashed helicopter are also not known.

The army did not issue any statement following the incident. This is the second crash of Pakistani army aircraft over the last week. On 17 May, two Pakistan Air Force trainer planes crashed near a residential area after bumping into each other while on a routine training mission in the country’s northern Nowshera area, leaving all the four pilots killed and five people on the ground wounded.— Xinhua

US Marines return to New Zealand to mark 70th anniversary of WWII deployment

WELLINGTON, 25 May — A contingent of United States Marines will arrive in New Zealand next month to mark the 70th anniversary of the arrival of US forces in the country during World War II, the New Zealand government announced on Wednesday.

Prime Minister John Key said a series of events were planned to help mark the anniversary, including an evening reception at parliament, following a wreath-laying ceremony at the National War Memorial. “Fifty US marines and a 50-person marine band will be spending three weeks in New Zealand participating in commemorative events,” he said.

“Those commemorations are a reminder that New Zealand and the US have a long-standing and strong history of mutual aid and support, built on shared values,” Key said. The relationship had always been underpinned by cooperation on region-wide issues, and was articulated in the Wellington Declaration signed between the two countries in 2010. He said New Zealand appreciated the commitment and courage of the US Marines who arrived 70 years ago.

“Together we will be remembering and honoring the sacrifices made during the Second World War,” said Key.— Xinhua

NBA game

OKLAHOMA CITY, 25 May — A 16-year-old boy who police said confessed to shooting into a crowd and wounding eight people outside an NBA basketball game made his first appearance on Thursday before a judge. His bail was set at $160,000. The boy was arrested on Tuesday and charged with eight counts of shooting with the intent to kill. He remained in jail on Thursday night.

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An amphibious vehicle of Chinese marine forces takes part in a joint military training mission in the country’s second largest Jhelum River in central Punjab.

The Olympic Rings, the symbol of the Olympic Games are displayed on St Pancras international station in London.— Reuters

Heavy smoke is seen at the accident site after a blast ripped through a factory workshop and triggered a fire in the Isanu Township of Zhijiang City, central China’s Hubei Province, on 23 May, 2012. The casualties are not immediately known in the accident, which took place at about 10am on Wednesday.— Xinhua

S Korea, Australia to hold 1st joint naval drill

SOUTH KOREA, 25 May— South Korea and Australia will stage their first joint naval exercise next week in waters off South Korea’s southern island of Jeju, the South Korean Navy said Thursday.

The two-day drill beginning next Monday will mobilize some 10 surface warships and submarines, including South Korea’s Aegius destroyer “Sejong the Great” and Australia’s guided missile frigate “Ballarat.”

Dubbed “Haedori-Wallaby,” the naval exercise will also involve Lynx anti-submarine helicopters and P-3C patrol aircraft, according to the Navy.

The upcoming drill is the first joint naval maneuver between the two countries since their defence ministers agreed late last year to jointly stage drills on a regular basis. The exercise will help enhance anti-submarine warfare capabilities and joint interoperability of the naval forces, Navy officials said. — Xinhua

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CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV SAIGON PRINCESS VOY NO(5)
Consignees of cargo carried on MV SAIGON PRINCESS VOY NO (5) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 26.5.2012 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.W.P.T where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon. Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claims Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel. No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: RK SHIPPING & TRADING PTE LTD
Phone No: 256924/256914

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV PATTANA MI VOY NO(10)
Consignees of cargo carried on MV PATTANA MI VOY NO (10) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 26.5.2012 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T. where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon. Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claims Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel. No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: EASTERN-CAR LINER SPORE PTE LTD
Phone No: 256924/256914

Tunnel explosion in Niigata

Tokyo, 25 May—Up to 4 workers are feared trapped after an explosion ripped through a tunnel being built in Niigata Prefecture, central Japan.

Police say the blast occurred on Thursday morning in Minaminozuma City. Three workers were taken to hospital after being found injured near the tunnel entrance. All 3 are reportedly conscious.

Police and firefighters are trying to confirm accounts that 4 workers are still inside the tunnel.

Police say the explosion seems to have occurred about 1.200 metres into the tunnel. The 3 rescued men were working at the mouth of the tunnel when they were struck by the force of the blast.

Work to build the 2,840 metre tunnel began in July 2008. Minaminozuma officials say it is being built on nationalhighway linking the city and Joetsu City facing the Sea of Japan.

The explosion occurred as workers were preparing to resume construction after a suspension of work due to snow in the winter months.

Niigata prefectural officials say the tunnel route was slightly altered from the initial plan after surveys found the ground to be soft, with the possibility of gas and spring water leaks.

Photo from helicopter shows the site of an explosion that occurred at a tunnel construction site in Minaminozuma, Niigata Prefecture, on 24 May, 2012.

New Zealand’s Christchurch shaken by 5.2 quake

Wellington, 25 May—New Zealand’s second largest city Christchurch was shaken by a magnitude 5.2 earthquake on Friday, but there were no immediate reports of damage or casualties.

The government seismology agency said the quake was centred 10 kilometres east of the city at a depth of 11 kilometres.

The city was devastated by a 6.3 quake in February last year, killing nearly 200 people, and destroying the central business district and making large areas of surrounding suburbs uninhabitable.

Media reported residents in some areas rushed into the streets, but there were no reports of damage or any injuries.

The city has been hit by thousands of aftershocks since last year’s quake.—Reuters

NKH

The Thunderbirds perform a fly past as graduates

The new women’s infections were caused by different bacteria, doctors have said.

Kuykendall’s infection was caused by Group A streptococcus, Dr Bill Kelly, epidemiologist for the Greenville Hospital System, said earlier this week.

Copeland’s doctors, meanwhile, have blamed her on Aeromonos hydrophila bacteria.

A 1996 report from the US Centres for Disease Control and Prevention estimated there were 560 to 1,500 cases of necrotizing fasciitis annually in the United States, with about 20 percent of them fatal.

The National Necrotizing Fasciitis Foundation has said that estimate is probably low.

Kuykendall has worked as a paramedic while her husband, Darren, is a firefighter. Twins Abigail and Ian were born on 7 May, at a Georgia hospital.

Kuykendall’s family members have created a website, www.Faithfulhope.ana.com, to keep family and friends updated on her progress.

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The National Necrotizing Fasciitis Foundation has said that estimate is probably low.

Kuykendall has worked as a paramedic while her husband, Darren, is a firefighter. Twins Abigail and Ian were born on 7 May, at a Georgia hospital.

Kuykendall’s family members have created a website, www.Faithfulhope.ana.com, to keep family and friends updated on her progress.

Reuters
**Man’s huge fish may not be certified**

A Virginia angler said his catch of an 18-pound, 4-ounce snakehead in the Occoquan River may have been a world record, but it will likely not be certified.

Juan Duran, 25, said he caught the fish near Woodbridge and only later discovered it beat out the world record of 17 pounds and 4 ounces, set in Japan 8 years ago, The Washington Post reported.

Duran said the International Game Fish Association asks for length and girth measurements for record-breaking catches and by the time he found out, he had already given his catch to a friend who turned it into a meal.

Duran said he is supplying the IGFA with photos, the scale he used to weigh the fish and a section of his fishing line in the hopes of convincing the organization to accept his record without the measurements.

“If it doesn’t work out, I know it’s the biggest snakehead ever caught and recorded,” Duran said. “So I’ll still be proud of myself.”

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**Marijuana found in 6-year-old’s backpack**

Police in Florida said they arrested the father of a 6-year-old whose backpack was found to contain more than 3 ounces of marijuana and a scale.

St Petersburg police spokesman said the kindergartner showed the drugs and the scale to a teacher at Campbell Park Elementary Marine Science Centre, the Tampa Bay Times reported.

Police said the child’s father, Larry Cornelius Stephens, 25, claimed ownership of the drugs and was arrested on charges of child abuse and possession of marijuana with intent to sell.

“We think he claimed responsibility so that we knew it did not belong to his child,” police spokesman Bill Proffitt said.

Proffitt said police have not determined whether the father intended for the child to take the drugs to school.

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**Britney Spears to release two-in-one fragrance**

**LONDON, 25 May**—Singer Britney Spears will release a new fragrance called Britney Spears Fantasy Twist, a two-in-one scent that will combine two of the singer’s favourite smells in a “sophisticated bottle.”

“With Fantasy Twist, I wanted to combine two of my favourite fragrances into a sophisticated bottle, giving my fans the power to choose the scent they desire at any given moment,” people.com quoted the 30-year-old as saying.

The fragrance comes in a sphere-shaped bottle that twists in half and turns into two smaller containers in pink and blue colours. Prices begin at USD 39.50 for the fragrance collection, which is due to hit stores in October.—Internet

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**Jason Gedrick joins ‘Dexter’ cast**

**LOS ANGELES, 25 May**—Actor Jason Gedrick has joined the Season 7 cast of the US crime drama “Dexter,” Showtime announced.

Gedrick will play the manager of a Miami-area gentlemen’s club linked to a high-profile murder case.

Production on the show begins this month in Los Angeles, the cable network said on Tuesday. The new season is to premiere 30 Sept.

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**Theatres in the Hollywood Boulevard section of Los Angeles on 2 February, 2012. Internet**

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**Jim Parsons confirms he is gay**

**NEW YORK, 25 May**—Emmy Award-winning actor Jim Parsons confirmed to The New York Times he is gay and in a 10-year relationship.

The 39-year-old star of TV’s “The Big Bang Theory” did not identify his long-term partner or go into detail about his private life.

The Times interview coincides with Parsons’ upcoming return to Broadway in “Harvey” after a successful run playing a young gay activist in “The Normal Heart” last summer.

In the article, journalist Patrick Healy writes, “The Normal Heart” resonated with him on a few levels:

Mr Parsons is gay and in a 10-year relationship, and working with an ensemble again onstage was like nourishment, he said.

He added, “I do not speak publicly about my personal life, but it is often seen with his boyfriend at awards shows and other entertainment industry events. —Internet

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**James Dohoon’s ashes shot into space**

**LOS ANGELES, 25 May**—The ashes of late Canadian actor James Dohoon have been successfully sent into Earth orbit via SpaceX’s unmanned Falcon9 rocket, E! News reported. The “Star Trek” icon died in 2005 after a battle with pneumonia and Alzheimer’s disease.

He was 85. A 2008 attempt to launch Dohoon’s ashes into space— in accordance with his wishes — was a failure, E! said. His dream came true, however, when his remains, along with those of more than 300 other deceased individuals, were released into the cosmos on Tuesday, the report said.—Internet
former Brazil keeper Dida signs

Joel Campbell (far right) in action for Costa Rica during Wenger’s side.

Former Brazil keeper Dida signs

Zach Johnson reacts to a missed birdie putt on the eighth hole during the first round of the Crowne Plaza Invitational at Colonial at the Colonial Country Club, on 24 May. 

INTERNET

Emile Heskey is one of only six players to make more than 500 Premier League appearances. 

Heskey among trio leaving Villa

Former Brazil keeper Dida signs

International Sports

Schiavone reaches Strasbourg semifinal

Schiavone, 25 May — Second-seeded Francesca Schiavone of Italy easily defeated Johanna Larsson of Sweden 6-7 (6), 6-3, 6-2 to reach the semifinals of the Strasbourg International tennis tournament on Thursday, but was then defeated by third-seeded Kimiko Date-Krumm of Japan 6-2, 4-6, 6-0.

INTERNET

Emile Heskey of Villa. The experienced striker has scored four times in 25 matches for Lorient and he is confident he has the attributes to be able to succeed at the Emirates Stadium. “I think I bring a lot of things to the Arsenal attack,” added Campbell. “I can contribute goals and assists. I want to people to see what I can do. I always think big, so I want to go to Arsenal and play as many games as possible. “I am a difficult player to be tackled off the ball. I am confident that I can get away.”

Heskey among trio leaving Villa

Colombian "A fantastic way to start," Dufner said on Thursday. "You have some questions after a win last week, how are you going to respond to that? I came out really quick today and got some birdies." Former winner Johnson grabbed the first-round lead with a six-under 66. "Today was great," Johnson said of his 13th consecutive round in the 60s at this event. "I got off to a good start. I just hit quality shots. I didn’t put myself ever in a position that was too wormy. “The times when I was just maybe in the rough and I had to get myself up and down, I managed to do that. “I gave myself a lot of opportunities. I made some long putts, but I missed some shorter ones, so it probably evened out in the end.”

Dufner won his first PGA Tour title on 11 August at the Bridgestone Invitational at Firestone Country Club in Akron, Ohio. Johnson followed him with his win on 21 August at the Wyndham Championship in Greensboro, North Carolina. Dufner finished with a 71 to win his first Tour event in three years. Johnson finished with a 67 to win his first Tour event in two years.

INTERNET

Former Brazil keeper Dida signs

Joel Campbell (far right) in action for Costa Rica during their friendly with Wales in February. — INTERNET

Campbell wants to earn Arsenal place

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Zach Johnson reacts to a missed birdie putt on the eighth hole during the first round of the Crowne Plaza Invitational at Colonial at the Colonial Country Club, on 24 May. 

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**Lower Mekong countries, US officials meet in Cambodia to bolster cooperation**

Pnom Penh, 25 May—Senior officials from the foreign ministries of the Lower Mekong countries and the United States met here on Friday to discuss a joint action plan to bolster cooperation in education, environment, health and infrastructure development.

The Lower Mekong Initiative (LMI) meeting was co-chaired by Tuot Panha, Undersecretary of State for Cambodia’s foreign ministry, and Kurt Campbell, US Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia and Pacific Affairs.

It was attended by Nguyen Quoc Dung, director general of Vietnam’s economic affairs department; Thongphane Savaphet, director general of Laos’s economic affairs department; and Nopporn Adcharryavanich, deputy director general of Thailand’s ASEAN affairs department.

Myanmar joined the meeting for the first time as an observer, representing San Lwin, deputy director general of political department.

Speaking in the meeting, Tuot Panha said that the Lower Mekong Initiative was launched in July 2009 by US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton.

Deputy Prime Minister Hor Namhong, who is the current co-chair of the LMI, said that the meeting would continue to promote the cooperation in education, environment, health and infrastructure development.

He said: “We thank the US for its continuous support to the Lower Mekong countries to address current and future development obstacles.”

The meeting was a preparatory one for the 5th LMI Ministerial Meeting in July, which is expected to be chaired by Cambodian Deputy Prime Minister Hor Namhong and the US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton.

**Torrential rains halt trains in south China**

NANNING, 25 May—Torrential rains have pounded parts of south China’s Guangxi Zhuang autonomous region, disrupting railway traffic and drinking water supplies, local authorities said on Friday.

Six passenger trains on a major railway near the city of Baise were forced to stop halfway through their journey after rainstorms destroyed a 35-metre-long roadbed, a spokesman for local railway authorities said.

More than 300 workers were dispatched to repair the road and conduct safety checks on the railway, the spokesman said. Meanwhile, rainstorms have destroyed houses, cut off road traffic, inundated crops, cut off drinking water supplies and damaged power, telecommunications and irrigation facilities in Baise’s Lingyun County, a county government spokesman said.

More than 77,000 rural residents have been affected, he said.

More torrential rains will hit the county over the next few days, which will complicate disaster relief operations, according to local meteorological authorities.

Xinhua

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**Crossword Puzzle**

**Across**

1. "Them" (pl.)

4. Money lent at interest (pl.)

9. Accomplished

13. Acad.

15. Breathing problem

16. April honorific

17. Something accepted as true without proof

19. Dearth

20. Rosa odorata (pl.)

21. Long men’s loincloth worn in India

23. Blocked

24. Depth charge target (hyphenated)

25. Aged

26. Baloney

29. Conclusion

32. 1,000 kilograms

33. Afflict

34. Face-to-face exam

35. Landed peasant in czarist Russia

**Down**

1. Autostraits好み

2. Attack

3. English exam finale

4. Ran out

5. __ out (declined)

6. Cuckoo

7. “The Matrix” hero

8. Mound exposed at low tide

9. Solvent

10. Conveyance to or from

11. Carnival attraction

12. Cheat, slantily

13. Magical wish granter

14. Skin problem

15. Mixed tissue tumor

16. Affairs of state

17. “Green Gables” girl

18. Kind of stock (hyphenated)

19. “@#$%&!” e.g.

20. Home, informally

21. Alkaline liquid

22. Brio

23. “The __ Ranger”

24. Hit the bottle

25. Statehouse VIP (abbrev.)

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**Weather Map of Myanmar and Neighbouring Areas**

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**Weather forecast for 26th May, 2012**

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Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) receives American military attachés to Myanmar

NAV PI TAW, 25 May—Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) General Soe Win received American military attaché to Myanmar Colonel Brey R-Sloan, who has completed her duty, and her successor Colonel William C-Dickey at Zeyarthiri Beikman here this afternoon.

Also present at the call with the Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) were General Hla Htay Win from the Defence Services Commander-in-Chief’s Office, Lt-Gen Kyaw Swe from the Command-in-Chief (Army)’s Office, Chief of Staff (Navy) Rear Admiral Thura Thet Swe, Chief of Staff (Air) Maj-Gen Khin Aung Myint and Commander of Nay Pyi Taw Command Maj-Gen Maung Maung Aye.—MNA

Sulegone Village self-reliant library to open villagers eyes

NAV PI TAW, 25 May—Making the strenuous efforts by 13 youths working abroad to broaden the horizons of villagers, Yaungchioo self-reliant library appeared on Sulegone Village in Myinkawa village-tract in Seikpyu Township in Magway Division. The opening of the library was held yesterday. The library was formally opened by Township Administrator U Win Myint, Staff Officer U Myo Myint Aung of Township Information and Public Relations Department, Village Administrator U Thein Tan and U Maung Maung Soe on behalf of the donors.

Next the Township Administrator made an opening speech and the Township IPRD Staff Officer explained purposes to open the library and durability. The donors donated various kinds of books, booklet and cash assistance.

The library with the length of 16 feet, width of 12 feet and height of 12 feet was equipped with sheets and bricks walls and was built at a total cost of K1.6 million.

MADAGASCAR, 25 May—Chelsea striker Fernando Torres has put a difficult season behind him and is itching to be part of the European champions’ future plans, the player said on Thursday following talks with the club’s hierarchy.

Torres voiced his concerns after being left out of Chelsea’s starting lineup for last weekend’s Champions League final victory over Bayern Munich, saying he had been close to throwing in the towel.

“My goal was to talk to them at the end of the season, I needed to know what plans they had for me,” Torres said in an interview published on his personal website. “We’ve talked and now I have no doubt what they expect of Fernando Torres. I just want to start next season as soon as possible.”

The 28-year-old moved to Chelsea from Liverpool in January 2012, after a record-breaking £50 million pounds transfer fee from their Premier League rivals. He has struggled to make an impact.

“Chelsea’s Fernando Torres celebrates his 3rd goal against Queens Park Rangers during their English Premier League soccer match at Stamford Bridge in London on 29 April, 2012.” —REUTERS

Torres excited by future after Chelsea talks

TORRES excited by future after Chelsea talks friendly against Venezuela in February, when the man called up in his place, Valencia’s Roberto Soldado, scored a hat-trick, and the pacy forward’s place at Euro 2012 looked to be in doubt.

However, coach Vicente del Bosque brought him back into the fold on Monday, and he is likely to make the final cut when the world and European champions announce their 23-man squad for Poland and Ukraine on Sunday. “I saw myself out (of the squad),” Torres added. “I never received a call with such enthusiasm.

Chelsea’s Fernando Torres celebrates his 3rd goal against Queens Park Rangers during their English Premier League soccer match at Stamford Bridge in London on 29 April, 2012.” —REUTERS