**President U Thein Sein on goodwill visit to Republic of Korea**

NAY PYI TAW, 7 Oct—President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Thein Sein, at the invitation of President of the Republic of Korea Mr Lee Myung-bak, left here for the Republic of Korea this morning to pay a goodwill visit.

The Myanmar delegation led by President U Thein Sein was seen off by Vice-Presidents Dr Sai Mauk Kham and U Nyan Tun, Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) General Soe Win, Union Ministers Lt-Gen Ko Ko, U Aung Kyi, U Thein Nyunt, U Myint Hlaing, U Thein Tun, U Maung Myint and U Htay Aung, Commander Maj-Gen Maung Maung Aye, Deputy Minister Police Maj-Gen Kyaw Kyaw Tun, departmental heads and personnel of the Myanmar delegation led by President U Thein Sein was seen off by Vice-Presidents Dr Sai Mauk Kham and U Nyan Tun, Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) General Soe Win, Union Ministers Lt-Gen Ko Ko, U Aung Kyi, U Thein Nyunt, U Myint Hlaing, U Thein Tun, U Maung Myint and U Htay Aung, Commander Maj-Gen Maung Maung Aye, Deputy Minister Police Maj-Gen Kyaw Kyaw Tun, departmental heads and personnel of the Embassy of the Republic of Korea at Nay Pyi Taw Airport.

The delegation members are Union Ministers U Wunna Maung Lwin, U Soe Thein, U Tin Naung Thein, U Khin Maung Soe, U Aye Myint, Region Chief Ministers U Myint Swe, U Ye Myint and U Nyan Win, Deputy Ministers U Han Sein and Dr Daw Thein Thein Htay and departmental heads.—MNA

**President U Thein Sein being seen off at Nay Pyi Taw Airport by Vice-Presidents Dr Sai Mauk Kham and U Nyan Tun and officials before departure for Republic of Korea.**

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**Over 20,000 foreigners visit Shwedagon Pagoda in September**

YANGON, 7 Oct—A total of 20442 foreign tourists visited Shwedagon Pagoda from 1 to 30 September. The majority of the visitors came from Thailand, China, Korea, France and Germany.

The increased number of tourists during that period helps the pagoda fund hit 99181 US dollars and 3629 FECs.

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**Djokovic beats Tsonga for third China Open title**

BEIJING, 7 Oct—Top-seeded Serbian Novak Djokovic beat Frenchman Jo-Wilfried Tsonga 7-6 6-2 on Sunday to win his third China Open tennis title in Beijing.

World number two Djokovic dug deep in the first set after an early trade of breaks to win a close tie-breaker and then broke the third-seeded Tsonga twice in the second set.

“I think the first set was really even and maybe a couple of points decided the winner there,” Djokovic told reporters.

“We both had our chances aside from those breaks that we converted... I managed to hold my nerve in the end. I made that early break in the second (and) I felt much more comfortable on the court.”

Sunday’s victory gave Djokovic, who also won the China Open in 2009 and 2010, his fourth title of the year.

It was the seventh title of the year for the American pair.—Reuters

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**International Day of Older Persons 2012 held in Okkan**

TAIKKYI, 7 Oct—A ceremony to mark the International Day of Older Persons 2012 was observed at U Maung Yon-Daw Yin Home for the Aged in Okkan of Taikkyi Township on 4 October.

Chairperson of Yangon North District Women’s Affairs Organization Daw Hnin Thanda Oo and members, Chairman of Taikkyi Township WAO Daw Nu Nu Wai and wellwishers donated utensils, medicine and cash to the aged.

Their donations in total amounted to K 420,000.

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**Canada Foreign Affairs Minister John Baird meets with Union Minister for Foreign Affairs U Wunna Maung Lwin on 3 October.**

(News reported)

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Sunday’s victory gave Djokovic, who also won the China Open in 2009 and 2010, his fourth title of the year.

The 2012 Australian Open champion will remain in the hunt to take back the world number one ranking from Roger Federer at the end of the year.

“That’s the target,” Djokovic said. “This will definitely help me in that race but it’s still quite open. There are still tournaments to come, big ones.”

Earlier, Mike Bryan overtook Australian Todd Woodbridge’s mark of 83 career doubles titles when he, along with brother Bob, beat Carlos Berlocq and Denis Istomin 6-3 6-2 for their third China Open title in four years.

It was the seventh title of the year for the American pair.—Reuters

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**Skipper Gerrard pledges future to Liverpool**

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**NATIONAL**

**Muntekwin-Kyitaung-Khawma-Nay Pyi Taw ring road in progress**

_Nay Pyi Taw, 7 Oct—_In his inspection tour of Muntekwin-Kyitaung-Khawma-Nay Pyi Taw ring road, Union Minister for Construction U Kyaw Lwin gave instructions on ensuring work plans for 22-mile ring road, timely completion of construction work meeting set standards in open season, completion of bridge and box culvert construction in parallel with road construction and better services of companies in their part.

The 22-milelong and 12-foot wide Muntekwin-Kyitaung-Khawma-Nay Pyi Taw tarred road is being built by three special groups, one district group and four companies.—MNA

**Union Minister for Education visits Toungoo University**

_Nay Pyi Taw, 7 Oct—_Union Minister for Education Dr Mya Aye this morning met officials of Ayeza Shwe Wah at briefing hall of Toungoo University. He then inspected construction sites of two buildings and thriving paddy plantations with System of Rice Intensification (SRI). He then met with the rector, pro-rectors, professors and heads of departments and officials.—MNA

**Brokerage, highway cargo terminal under construction**

_Yangon, 7 Oct—_Thiri Yadana Retail and Wholesale Brokerage and Highway Cargo Terminal are under construction near Aungmingala Highway Bus Terminal at the junction of No 3 Highway in Mingaladon Township and Thudhamma Road in North Okkalapa Township.

Under the project, U Myar Thu of Ga Mone Pwint Co Ltd said, “Ga Mone Pwint Township and Thudhamma No 3 Highway in Mingaladon Terminal at the junction of Aungmingala Highway Bus construction near Toungoo University. Education Dr Mya Aye this morning met gave instructions on Construction U Kyaw Lwin.

Khawma-Nay Pyi Taw ring road construction near

**Illegal timber seized in Bhamo**

Myitkyina, 7 Oct—_Kachin State Forest Department is joining hands with the departments concerned for environmental conservation and eradication of illegal timber extraction. On 2 October, the authorities seized a vehicle carrying illegal Tamalan logs in Bhamo. According to the information that a vehicle carrying timber stopped near Kohkyn Village of Bhamo Township at 10:30 am on 2 October, staff of Forest Department, members of Myanmar Police Force and village administrator inspected the Dongfang vehicle and seized nine logs of Tamalan weighing 0.892 ton and 75 post of Tamalan weighing 3,398 tons without owner.

The department confiscated the vehicle and opened a file of lawsuit.

Chief of Defence Services Vice-Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and wellwishers for locals in Kayah State were handed over gifts to the Chief Minister U Sao Aung Myat and state minister of Eastern Command Maj-Gen Soe Htut and senior military officers, Deputy Minister for Population and Immigration U Win Myint and Kayah State ministers, departmental officials, Bishop of Loikaw Catholic Church Rev. Soteo Phamo and bishops, peacemakers, representatives of groups that have made peace with the government; Kayin Nationalities People’s Liberation Front, Kayinni National Union Organization and Kayin National Independence Organization and representatives of Kayin National Progressive Party that reached Union level peace agreement with the government on 9 June 2012.

On behalf of the Bishop of Loikaw Catholic Church, a bishop made a wish. Then the commander said that Union level peace meetings with Kayin National Progressive Party were held successfully on 9 June 2012 in accord with the principles adopted by Union level peace making central committee led by President U Thein Sein. With peace and stability in the entire Kayah State, regional development tasks would be carried out in momentum. In collaboration with Kayah State government, regional development tasks would be implemented by Tatmadaw in line with the law. As a programme to provide local people with health care services, five Tatmadaw mobile medical units were sent there by the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services. These five groups would perform public health activities and provide health care services in some areas of Kayah State. He added that the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services had sent items manufactured by Tatmadaw factories for local people as gifts.

Next, Kayah State Chief Minister spoke words of thanks, and the commander handed over gifts to the Chief Minister.

Altogether three consumers goods, 13 foodstuffs, three items of stationary, four items of sports gear, 16 kinds of medicines totalling 38 items, foodstuff donated by Eastern Command and 2000 bags of rice and clothing worth K 65 million by Kanbawza Bank and Htoo Co were handed over at the ceremony. —MNA

**Shwe Parami Health Foundation giving medical service in Inlay Region**

_Nay Pyi Taw, 7 Oct—_Shwe Parami Health Foundation led by Shwe Parami Taywa Saydaw Ashin Chandadhika provided free medical treatment to locals in Inlay region of Nyaungshwe Township from 27 to 30 September for the time. Altogether 9399 patients including 167 eye patients, 47 ear, nose and throat patients, 25 general patients, 5 bones patients and 5 maternal patients underwent surgical operations. The Saydaw and party donated necessary facilities worth K 4.2 million for Sao San Tun Hospital in Taunggyi. On 29 September, Shan State Chief Minister U Sao Aung Myat and state ministers attended the launching of health care service ceremony.

**Local people in Kayah State get gifts of Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services, wellwishers**


*NYAUNGSHWE, 7 Oct—* Shwe Parami Health Foundation led by Shwe Parami Taywa Saydaw Ashin Chandadhika provided free medical treatment to locals in Inlay region of Nyaungshwe Township from 27 to 30 September for the time. Altogether 9399 patients including 167 eye patients, 47 ear, nose and throat patients, 25 general patients, 5 bones patients and 5 maternal patients underwent surgical operations. The Saydaw and party donated necessary facilities worth K 4.2 million for Sao San Tun Hospital in Taunggyi. On 29 September, Shan State Chief Minister U Sao Aung Myat and state ministers attended the launching of health care service ceremony.

*NLM*
Venezuelans urged to vote in Sunday’s presidential election

CARACAS, 7 Oct — Venezuelans were urged on Saturday to cast their ballots in an upcoming presidential election to determine the course of the country.

Electoral officers join in the preparation works to install a voting centre in Caracas, Venezuela, on 5 Oct, 2012. Venezuela will hold Presidential elections, on 7 Oct, Venezuela President Hugo Chavez and opposition candidate Henrique Capriles are both running for Presidency. — Xinhua

“We need to maintain civil conduct on a day which represents a crucial commitment for the nation,” Pablo Perez, governor of Venezuela’s Miranda state, said in a televised speech.

On Sunday it will be up to each person’s conscience, but the next day we will all be just Venezuelans,” he added.

Some 19 million Venezuelan voters will go to the polls on Sunday, in a race that pits incumbent President Hugo Chavez, who is promoting his so-called “21st century socialism,” against opposition leader Henrique Capriles, who describes his goals as “progressive.”

Latest poll gave Chavez 57 percent of voting intentions and Capriles 43 percent.

German Campos, who heads the local 30:11 polling agency, said that the vote would be fair and transparent.

Sunday’s election is a one-round, first-past-the-post system. There are six candidates in total, but only two are considered to have real chance of winning.

Venezuelans were urged to vote in Sunday’s presidential election.

**WORLD**

**Israel**

Israel strikes down drone aircraft

JERUSALEM, 7 Oct — The Israeli airforce shot down a drone after it crossed into southern Israel on Saturday, the military said, but it remained unclear where the aircraft had come from.

The drone, which was first spotted above the Mediterranean in the area of the Hamas-ruled Gaza Strip to the west of Israel, said military spokeswoman Avital Leibovich.

It was kept under surveillance and followed by Israeli air force jets before it was shot down above a forest in an unpopulated area near the border with the occupied West Bank.

Barak said it was shot down at about 10 a.m. (0700 GMT), after it travelled some 35 miles across Israel’s southern Negev desert.

Defence Minister Ehud Barak praised the interception as “sharp and effective.” “We view with great concern the possibility to compromise Israeli airspace and will consider our response in due course,” Barak said in a statement.

Soldiers, assisted by helicopters, were searching the area for the remains of the drone, which security sources said most likely did not originate from the Gaza Strip.

Israel’s Army Radio reported the drone was not carrying any explosives.

Israel’s military spokesman, Migi Regev, a former chief spokesman of the Gaza Strip, said on Saturday.

An Israeli Army helicopter flies over an open area in southern Israel on 6 Oct, 2012. The Israeli air force shot down a drone after it crossed into southern Israel on Saturday, the military said, but it remained unclear where the aircraft had come from. — Reuters

Israel’s Army Radio reported the drone was not carrying any explosives.

Israel’s military, wrote on Twitter it was an “Iranian drone launched by Hezbollah,” referring to the Lebanese Shi’ite group that fought a war with Israel in 2006.

Defence officials would not confirm Hezbollah’s connection to the drone.

**Iraq**

Four killed, 10 wounded in attacks in Iraq

BAGHDAD, 7 Oct — Four people were killed and 10 wounded in separate bomb and gunfire attacks in Iraq on Saturday, the police said. A soldier was killed and three were wounded when a roadside bomb went off around noon near an Iraqi army patrol in Taji area, some 20 km north of the capital Baghdad, an Interior Ministry source told Xinhua on condition of anonymity.

In the early hours of the day, gunmen broke into a house at a village near the city of Samarra, some 120 km north of Baghdad, and shot dead a man and wounded two of his family members, a local police source told Xinhua anonymously.

In a separate incident, a policeman was killed and another wounded in a roadside bomb explosion near their patrol in central the city of Fallujah, some 50 km west of Baghdad, a local police source told Xinhua.

In Iraq’s eastern province of Diyala, a magnetic bomb attached to a search carrying school children detonated in the city of Sadidiyah, some 120 km northeast of Baghdad, killing a school teacher and wounding four children, a provincial police source told Xinhua on condition of anonymity.

Violence in Iraq has ebbed from its climax in 2006 and 2007, when sectarian conflicts pushed the country to the brink of a civil war. But tensions and sporadic shootings and bombings are still common across the country. — Xinhua

**Iran**

Iran dismisses EU threats on natural gas export ban

TEHRAN, 7 Oct — The Iranian oil ministry has dismissed the recent threat by the European Union (EU) to ban Iran’s natural gas export.

The EU threat is a “propaganda campaign,” Aliereza Nikzad-Rahbar, a spokesman of the ministry, was quoted as saying in response to EU diplomats’ recent remarks that EU is nulling over imposing a ban on Iran’s gas export into Europe to put pressure on the Islamic republic over its controversial nuclear programme.

“It’s a legitimisation of the illegal manufacturing and storage of detonators triggered an explosion in a residential building in the Nanshi District of Baoding, north China’s Hebei Province. The assailants also set the container on fire. Later, the police said. A soldier was killed and three were wounded when a roadside bomb went off around noon near an Iraqi army patrol in Taji area, some 20 km north of the capital Baghdad, an Interior Ministry source told Xinhua on condition of anonymity.

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The driver and his assistant received bullet injuries in Masmang area of Balochistan and were shifted to Quetta, the provincial capital. Officials said that goods with was on its way from Karachi to Afghanistan when unknown gunmen riding a motorcycle opened fire at the convoy.

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Defence officials would not confirm Hezbollah’s connection to the drone.

**China**

North China residential building blast kills one, injuring 34

SHIJIAZHUANG, 7 Oct — Illegal manufacturing and storage of detonators triggered an explosion in a residential building of Baoding City in north China’s Hebei Province, which has left one killed and 34 injured by Sunday morning, local police said.

Police found self-made detonator shells at the explosion site of the six-storey building in Dongwywo Village. Detonator shells and materials of explosives were also discovered in the building’s basement. Police suspected illegal manufacturing and storage of detonators might have caused the explosion.

The injured have been sent to hospital for treatment. Among them, two remain in critical condition, a spokesman with the city government said.

Part of the building which shattered window glass of buildings 200 meters away. An overhaul of illegal storage of explosives has been staged across the city following the blast, police said.

Photo taken on 7 Oct, 2012 shows the site of an explosion in a residential building in the Nanshi District of Baoding, north China’s Hebei Province. The explosion took place on Saturday afternoon. Three men were confirmed dead and thirty others were sent to hospital for rescue. — Xinhua

Xinhua

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**Pakistan**

Gunmen attack NATO container in Pakistan, driver, cleaner injured

ISLAMABAD, 7 Oct — Unidentified gunmen in Pakistan’s northwest region attacked a container, carrying supplies for NATO forces in Afghanistan, and injured its driver and his assistant, police in the region said on Saturday.

The driver and his assistant received bullet injuries in Mustang area of Balochistan and were shifted to Quetta, the provincial capital. Officials said that the container with goods with was on its way from Karachi to Afghanistan when unknown gunmen riding a motorcycle opened fire at the convoy.

The assailants also set the container on fire. Later, the police said. A soldier was killed and three were wounded when a roadside bomb went off around noon near an Iraqi army patrol in Taji area, some 20 km north of the capital Baghdad, an Interior Ministry source told Xinhua on condition of anonymity.

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SpaceX set for its first cargo run to space station

CAPE CANAVERAL, (Florida), 7 Oct—Space Exploration Technologies, the first private company to fly to the International Space Station, is poised to launch its initial cargo mission to the orbital outpost as part of a $1.6 billion contract with NASA to deliver supplies.

Liftoff of the company’s Falcon 9 rocket and Dragon capsule is scheduled for 8:35 p.m. EDT on Sunday (0035 GMT Monday) from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station in Florida.

If successful, the company, founded and run by Internet entrepreneur Elon Musk, will restore a U.S. supply line to the station that was cut off by the retirement of the space shuttles last year. NASA has been dependent on Russian, European and Japanese freighters to service the station, a permanently staffed research laboratory that flies about 250 miles (400 km) above Earth.

As a result, it will be able to carry back experiment samples and station hardware that is broken or no longer needed. NASA contributed $396 million to SpaceX and up to $288 million to Orbital to help the firms develop their cargo ships.

“SpaceX is one of two firms hired by NASA to deliver cargo to the station. Its other contractor, Orbital Sciences Corp. (ORB.N), on October 1 rolled out its first Antares rocket to a new launch pad on Wallops Island, Virginia, for an engine test-firing slated for this month or early November. The rocket is scheduled to make its debut flight before the end of the year. Orbital also plans a practice run to the space station, similar to what SpaceX did when its Dragon ship docked at the station. If all goes well, Orbital will be cleared to begin work on its $1.9-billion NASA contract to fly cargo to the station.

REUSABLE

For Dragon’s first supply run, NASA is sending about 1,000 pounds (454 kg) of food, clothing, supplies and science gear to the station. Unlike previous station cargo ships, which were not reusable and burned up in the atmosphere during descent, SpaceX’s capsule returns to Earth.

On Monday, the Intelligence panel will release the findings of a nearly year-long investigation of the alleged security risk, both from Huawei Technologies Co Ltd and China’s ZTE Corp.

“SpaceX spacecrafts the Dragon (L) and the DragonRider sit on display before NASA Administrator Charles Bolden and SpaceX CEO and Chief Designer Elon Musk address SpaceX employees following the first successful mission by a private company to carry supplies to the International Space Station at the SpaceX facility in Hawthorne, California on 14 June, 2012.—Reuters

US House Intelligence panel head blackballs China’s Huawei

WASHINGTON, 7 Oct—US companies should avoid doing business with China’s Huawei, the world’s No. 2 maker of telecommunications gear, for fear its equipment could open doors for spying, the head of the US House of Representatives’ Intelligence Committee said.

“If I were an American company today ... and you are looking at Huawei, I would find another vendor if you care about your intellectual property, if you care about your consumers’ privacy and you care about the national security of the United States of America,” Chairman Mike Rogers said.

The Michigan Republican, a former FBI special agent, made his comments to the CBS television program 60 Minutes to be broadcast on Sunday. Excerpts provided by the program Friday did not spell out any evidence to back up Rogers’ concerns.

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NEW YORK, 7 Oct—Amazon.com Inc said on Friday it will spend over $1 billion to buy its Seattle corporate headquarters in what will be the United States’ biggest commercial real estate deal so far this year for a single property.

The world’s largest Internet retailer plans to buy 11 buildings in the trendy South Lake Union area, comprising 1.8 million square feet of corporate office space, for $516.1 million from Microsoft Corp co-founder Paul Allen’s investment firm.

Based on the value of the deal, Amazon is paying the highest ever price for an office building over 100,000 square feet in Seattle at around $544 per square foot. That is more than double the average rate of $308 per square foot for the city’s office space, according to Real Capital Analytics.

Amazon has been leasing the properties and it may make more economic sense for it to buy the location in the current low-interest environment and gain more control over its HQ, analysts said.

Amazon expects to close the deal in the fourth quarter on the modern office buildings in South Lake Union, a former semi-industrial wasteland now known as a center for tech firms and fashionable restaurants. “It’s good to have control over your home office,” said RJ Hottovy, an equity analyst at Morningstar.

At the end of August, Allen’s Vulcan Real Estate, part of his Vulcan Inc investment vehicle, put the buildings up for sale. The deal marks the United States’ biggest single-asset commercial real estate transaction of 2012, according to Real Capital Analytics, which tracks such sales.

Allen, who co-founded Microsoft with friend Bill Gates, has been the central figure in the revitalization of the South Lake Union neighborhood. Amazon already has plans to build new offices nearby to house its growing staff, which total more than 50,000.

Earlier this year, the e-commerce company revealed plans to build more than 3.3 million square feet of office space over the next eight years.

Italy’s Wind calls for mobile network sharing

CAPRI, 7 Oct—Italy’s third-largest mobile phone company Wind called for peers to share their frequencies and antennas to help roll out a superfast network.

Ibarra also said plans by Telecom Italia to separate its fixed network into a new company should be open to deals as they aim to save costs and boost coverage at a time of recession. In June, Vodafone and O2, owned by Telefonica of Spain, agreed to form a joint venture in Britain to pool infrastructure and cut costs of building a new superfast service.

Ibarra also cited negotiations by a new Italian operator to bring about network-sharing deals with open access and flexibility. In May the firm, also known as SpaceX, made a practice run to the $100 billion orbital outpost, a project of 15 countries, clearing the way for the first of 12 cargo runs.

SpaceX is one of two firms hired by NASA to deliver cargo to the station. Its other contractor, Orbital Sciences Corp. (ORB.N), on October 1 rolled out its first Antares rocket to a new launch pad on Wallops Island, Virginia, for an engine test-firing slated for this month or early November. The rocket is scheduled to make its debut flight before the end of the year. Orbital also plans a practice run to the space station, similar to what SpaceX did when its Dragon ship docked at the station. If all goes well, Orbital will be cleared to begin work on its $1.9-billion NASA contract to fly cargo to the station. 

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Mexico announces discovery of rich oil deposit

Mexico City, 7 Oct.— Mexico has discovered new deepwater oil deposits in the Gulf of Mexico with estimated reserves of 75 million barrels of oil, President Felipe Calderon announced on Friday.

Calderon said new deposit Supremus 1, the latest find by state-owned oil company Pemex, is located at 250 km east of Matamoros city in Tamaulipas state. It could be the largest oil field found in years with prospective reserves that could amount to as much as 13 billion barrels of crude equivalent.

With a flow depth of almost 2,900 metres, Supremus 1 is the eighth-deepest deposit in the world and is the second oil deposit announced by Calderon in less than 40 days.

On 29 Aug, Calderon announced the discovery of Trion 1, a deposit also located in the Gulf of Mexico less than 90 km from northeastern Tamaulipas state.

The deposits confirm the existence of a large oil system in the Gulf of Mexico’s deep waters, said the Mexican president, adding Mexico would continue working on the 22 wells, among which 15 have already been drilled during administration.

Pemex is the world’s seventh largest oil producer and the largest single contributor of the country.

France cuts 2012 growth forecast to 0.2 pct

PARIS, 7 Oct.— Ten people have now fallen sick from contaminated beef products from a Canadian plant that sent its meat across Canada and the United States, more than triple the number earlier reported, health officials said on Saturday.

The latest cases are linked to one of Canada’s largest-ever meat recalls, include three more illnesses in Alberta, where the giant XL Foods beef processing plant is located, two in Quebec and one in Newfoundland and Labrador.

All 10 people are recovering, the health and food inspection officials said on a conference call with reporters.

The ever-widening recall of meat from the plant now involves more than 1,800 products, including steaks, ground beef and roasts and now spans all of Canada and most US states.

The previous four cases were also in Alberta, and officials say they have evidence that these victims ate meat produced by the XL Foods plant in Brooks, Alberta, which has been shut down since 27 September.—Reuters

More Canadians fall sick in E coli beef recall

Ground Alberta beef in seen in coolers at Bon Ton Meat Market in Calgary, Alberta, 3 Oct 2012.—Reuters

Mexico cuts 2012 growth forecast to the 0.2 percent from a previous projection of 0.4 percent.

Due to diminished performance of industrial activities and weakening consumption, the country’s main growth engines, France was set to report zero growth over the third and fourth quarters of the year, compared to an initial forecast of 0.1 percent and 0.2 percent respectively, Insee said in report.

New data showed that the already struggling French economy would stagnate for the five consecutive quarter since the post-war period, adding more pressure on the socialist government to realize its promise of growth recovery in 2013.

Officials said to expand growth by 0.8 percent in next year’s budget. But economists considered the budget too ambitious in the face of the fragile economic activities and deteriorating business climate.

China’s individual and private businesses expand steadily

BEIJING, 7 Oct.— Individually-owned businesses grew steadily at an annual growth rate of 15.5 percent from 2002 to 2012, according to the data released by the State Administration for Industry and Commerce (SAIC).

Private enterprises currently account for over 70 percent of China’s total enterprises. Together with individually-owned businesses, they contribute to more than 60 percent of the country’s GDP, the data show.

Meanwhile, together, they provide 80 percent of jobs nationwide, and 90 percent of new jobs are from the private sector, according to the data.

Ma Fu, head of the private economy regulation department under the SAIC, said that reforms to improve the market system and create a fair competition environment over the years have contributed to the rapid and steady growth of the nation’s individual and private businesses during the past decade.—Xinhua

WTO dispute could offer further bate to US opponents of the $4 billion merger, which would be subject to thorough vetting by US authorities, including the US Trade Representative’s office, and is expected to draw close scrutiny from Boeing and its supporters in Congress. Critics of EADS fear the combination of BAE’s extensive US operations and suspected ongoing subsidies to Airbus might give the group unfair pricing power and damage the US industry.—Reuters

Health

French cuts 2012 growth forecast to 0.2 pct

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Death toll from meningitis outbreak rises to seven

NASHVILLE, 7 Oct.— The death toll from a widening outbreak of fungal meningitis linked to steroid injections has risen to seven, with 65 cases now reported in nine states, officials said on Saturday. The latest two deaths were reported on Saturday in Michigan, according to the data released by the State Administration for Industry and Commerce (SAIC).

10/08/2012, 2:45 AM

Washington, 7 Oct.— The US government said on Saturday it had received European Union documents on funding for the Airbus (EAD.PA) A350 after requesting them from the World Trade Organization over a month ago in an ongoing transatlantic dispute over aircraft subsidies.

“The compliance panel directed the EU to provide documents and briefing upon a request made by the United States more than a month ago, and we received the documents just yesterday,” a spokeswoman for the US Trade Representative’s Office said.

It is the first time the funding of Europe’s answer to the Boeing (BA) 787 Dreamliner, due to make its maiden flight next year, has been drawn directly into the world’s largest trade dispute but it remains to be seen how the WTO will act on the data.

Both sides claim to have obeyed WTO rules while saying their adversaries have not.

A European source said the Airbus panel merely wanted to see the funding papers to assess whether they were relevant. It has so far declined to address the A350 payments directly. No official WTO dispute could offer further bate to US opponents of the $4 billion merger, which would be subject to thorough vetting by US authorities, including the US Trade Representative’s office, and is expected to draw close scrutiny from Boeing and its supporters in Congress. Critics of EADS fear the combination of BAE’s extensive US operations and suspected ongoing subsidies to Airbus might give the group unfair pricing power and damage the US industry.—Reuters

New Light of Myanmaar Monday, 8 October, 2012

Business & Health

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10/08/2012, 2:45 AM
Egypt: Mursi says falls short of goals, seeks to assuage critics

CAIRO, 7 Oct—Egyptian President Mohamed Mursi said on Saturday that he had fallen short of goals he promised to fulfill in his first 100 days in office, but aimed to assuage critics by highlighting his most prominent achievements.

Mursi, who hails from the Muslim Brotherhood, was handed power in June by the army council that ruled Egypt for 16 months following Hosni Mubarak’s ouster in a popular uprising in 2011 and after a presidential election.

He spoke on Saturday before tens of thousands of Egyptians gathered at the Cairo stadium to mark the anniversary of Egypt’s successful crossing of the Suez Canal in its 1973 war against Israel.—REUTERS

US, Peru to update 60-year-old defence cooperation accord

LIMA, 7 Oct—The United States and Peru decided on Saturday to renegotiate a 60-year-old defence cooperation agreement between the two countries as Washington seeks to deepen security ties with Latin America after a decade focused on wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

US Defence Secretary Leon Panetta said updating the 1952 bilateral defence agreement with Peru would help the two countries work more closely on issues of mutual concern, from terrorism and drug trafficking to response to natural disasters.

“We have agreed to begin this process with the aim of improving and modernizing the agreement,” Defence Minister Pedro Cateriano told a joint news conference. Panetta said updating the accord would “improve our ability to conduct joint activities, to de-training and other exchanges.”

“Ultimately that will help us deal with shared security challenges in the future,” the US defence secretary said. The effort would update the Cold War-era document to take into consideration current threats facing the two sides and legal developments, including a new Peruvian constitution as well as new laws. The decision is part of a new US defence strategy approved earlier this year that shifts strategic focus to the Asia-Pacific region while deepening training and assistance to partner nations to help them provide for their own defence.

The principle thrust of our... new defence strategy is aimed at reaching out and developing partnerships and alliances throughout the world and particularly in this region,” Panetta said after Saturday meeting with Peruvian President Ollanta Humala.

The Pentagon released a Western Hemisphere Defence Policy Statement on Thursday that gave additional details about how the new strategy will be implemented in Latin America.

“The statement called for focusing on 21st century threats such as terrorism and drug trafficking, helping partners develop and professionalize their military forces and promoting integration and interoperability.—REUTERS

Premier Wen urges disaster prevention following Yunnan landslide

YUHANG, (Yunnan), 7 Oct—Premier Wen Jiabao has called for local governments to take more precautions against possible disasters and make greater efforts to handle safety-related issues, especially those concerning children. Wen made the call Friday after visiting the site of a landslide that occurred Thursday in the village of Zhenhe in Yiliang county, southwest China’s Yunnan Province.

The landslide killed 18 primary school students and one villager. Wen presented a bouquet for the victims and gave his condolences to their families, saying that governments at all levels must prioritize the safety of the population and students while carrying out reconstruction.

What has been achieved so far is not enough of course, but there are reasons for this. We are not trying to escape responsibility,” Mursi said, citing deep-rooted corruption in the country as one of the reasons for insufficient supplies.

“Amongst his top achievements, however, Mursi stressed the interior ministry’s work to step up security in the country, which had deteriorated after last year’s uprising.

Seeking to ward off criticisms that he had placed domestic affairs, Mursi said that a relative of the captain had managed to steer the boat back to port. The 15-metre ship carried 12 tourists as that found in fireworks.

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The trip marks Wen’s second visit to Yiliang since early September. He previously visited the area on 8 Sept, just one day after several earthquakes hit the county, killing 41 people.

After listening to reports on the causes of the landslide, Wen warned the local government that an earthquake might trigger a series of geological disasters in the near future.

Wen told two villagers who lost their children in the disaster that he came to the site to mourn the victims and will forever remember them.

The students who were buried in the landslide were attending school during the ongoing National Day holiday to make up classes that were missed due to the September quakes, local authorities said.—Xinhua

Yemen

Yemen foils Al-Qaeda plan to bomb an air base jointly used by United States

SAADA, 7 Oct—Yemeni security forces foiled a plan by militants linked to Al-Qaeda to bomb an air base jointly used by the United States to carry out attacks against the group, a security official said on Saturday.

A car packed with explosives was discovered by authorities near the gate of an Al Anad air base in Yemen’s southern province of Lahj, the official told Reuters. The car was carrying 26 passengers, all of whom were passengers—Yemen

Captain killed, tourists hurt in blast on Greek boat

ATHENS, 7 Oct—A small replica cannon blew up on a mock pirate ship off the southern Aegean island of Kos on Saturday, killing the boat’s captain and injuring five passengers, including a tourist from the United States, a police official said.

“Ultimately that will help us deal with shared security challenges in the future,” the US defence secretary said. The effort would update the Cold War-era document to take into consideration current threats facing the two sides and legal developments, including a new Peruvian constitution as well as new laws. The decision is part of a new US defence strategy approved earlier this year that shifts strategic focus to the Asia-Pacific region while deepening training and assistance to partner nations to help them provide for their own defence.

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Yemen
Turkey

Istanbul, 7 Oct—Turkey struck back at Syria after Erdogan warning

Supporters cheer for "four more years" as US President Barack Obama speaks during a campaign rally in Cleveland, Ohio on 5 Oct, 2012.—Reuters

Turkey strikes back at Syria after Erdogan warning

Turkey has nearly 100,000 Syrian refugees in camps on its border with Syria. Damascus has said its fire hit Turkey accidentally. Erdogan said on Friday his country did not want war but warned Syria not to make a "fatal mistake" by testing its cruise missiles.

Sudan

Sudanese military plane crashes with 20 on board

North Korean state media said on Saturday that the news agency reported. It was the fourth day of a four-day flight over the Mediterranean and into Israeli airspace. The exchanges are the most serious cross-border violence in Syria’s conflict, which began as a democracy uprising but has evolved into a civil war with sectarian overtones. They highlight a civil war with sectarian overtones. They highlight the fact that it was closing in on election victory.

Sudan

Khartoum, 7 Oct—A Sudanese military plane crashed in a rural area west of the capital Khartoum on Sunday, killing some of the 20 armed forces personnel on board and injuring others, the army said.

Police discover abandoned hand grenades, bullets in Turkish capital

Ankara, 6 Oct—Turkish police found 11 hand grenades and 16 rifle bullets left on an overpass along the Anadolu Boulevard in the capital Ankara on Saturday, local newspaper Today’s Zaman reported on its website.

Two planes collide at Madrid’s Barajas Airport, no casualties

Madrid, 7 Oct—Two aircraft were involved in a collision while on the ground at Madrid’s Barajas airport on Saturday afternoon, without casualties reported.

The incident occurred between an Air Europe flight with 49 passengers and a freighter flight from France, officials said. The report said the airport was closed for an investigation.
One of the best ways

Myanmar has become a fascinating tourist centre for global vacationers where they can find unspoiled natural beauties including white sandy beaches and blue seas, rich cultural heritage, amicability and hospitality and traditional values of more than 100 ethnic races.

Moreover the country is a new economic frontier for foreign investments and trade. Taking this opportunity well, the country has been developing tourism industry through seminars in major destinations. These seminars have been seeking ways to discuss with the stakeholders on current and future needs and to overcome difficulties all along the path to progress. The key of the tourism industry is the comfortableness, convenience, safety and security during the visitors’ stay in the host country.

Myanmar is now in her mission of adopting responsible tourism that ensures sustainable development of the industry according to her reform strategies and economic liberalization. Thanks to the mission the country has seen marked increase in the number of annual tourist arrivals.

A total of over 800,000 tourists visited Myanmar in 2011. This figure included arrivals through border entry points with China and Thailand. The arrivals from Yangon and Mandalay International Airports indicated 26 percent growth when compared with 2010. The first eight months of 2012 saw 340,458 arrivals.

When compared with the number of arrivals during the same period last year, Mandalay International Airports indicated 26 percent growth when compared with 2010. The first eight months of 2012 saw 340,458 arrivals.

One of the fastest growing industries of the world, tourism is seen as an important sector for the developing countries boosting foreign exchange earnings, generating job opportunities and alleviating poverty. As a promising smokeless industry, tourism directly or indirectly increases the incomes of local peoples of many world countries.

We are now developing our tourism industry in every aspect as it is one of the best ways of improving the economic condition of the local people of Myanmar.

NATIONAL

Union Commerce Minister meets locals from Kyunhla

NAV PYI TAW, 7 Oct — Union Minister for Commerce U Win Myint held a meeting with township level departmental officials, personnel from political parties, locals and social organization members at Kyunhla Township General Administration Department in Sagaing Region here this morning. In meeting with them, the union Minister said that rapid development is needed for rural people in ensuring development of grassroots level and reduction of poverty alleviation and the needs of rural people will be fulfilled as soon as possible.

At the meeting, the Union Minister donated 30 anti-venoms for local people.

The Union Minister attended state driving ceremony for Kyunhla Sangha Hospital at the site for construction of Sitagu Jivitadana Sangha.

On 6 October, the Union Ministerviewed Thapahseinka Dam.—MNA

Yeboke dam, Hpa-an industrial zone inspected

NAV PYI TAW, 7 Oct — Kayin State Chief Minister U Zaw Min met with trainees from Nursing and Midwifery Training School at the training school in Hpa-an and donated rice, beans, potatoes and edible oil provided by Kayin State government through the principal on 26 September.

On 27 September, the chief minister inspected construction of Yeboke dam near Hteelon village in Dawei-Myeik Township and viewed water supply to farmlands.

He attended natural environment and biodiversity conservation fingerlings releasing ceremony held by Kayin State Fisheries Department under the Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries and released the fingerlings into the dam.

The chief minister went to dam No 1 in Hpa-an industrial zone where he put the fingerlings into the dam and looked into nurturing of nursery.

At the briefing hall for construction of industrial zone, State Electric and Industry Minister U Saw Kyi Lin clarified implementation of industrial zone and the chief minister fulfilled the needs. The chief minister and officials discussed the progress of process and measures for regional development tasks at the meeting hall of the state government office.—MNA

Parliamentary experiences recounted

NAV PYI TAW, 7 Oct — Myitkyina Township Pyithu Hluttaw Representative Chairman of Pyithu Hluttaw National Races Affairs and Internal Peace-making Committee Vice-Chairman of Union Peace-making Committee U Thein Zaw recounted his parliamentary experiences in meeting with local people at Myitkyina Town Hall yesterday.

U Thein Zaw explained functions and legislations of previous sessions of three Hluttaws, peace negotiations with internal armed groups, peace process in Kachin State, and efforts in the interests of the nation and without partisanship, dogmatism and sectarianism.

Kachin State Chief Minister U La John Nang Hui explained provision of assistance to displaced families in terms of education, social welfare and medical treatment by accommodating them at relief camps, collaborative relief works of UN agencies and social organizations under theegis of the government, anti-narcotics programmes by forming anti-drug organizations at different levels, air transportation of rice to Putao for local consumption, and rural development and poverty alleviation efforts.

Next, U Thein Zaw donated 250 bags of rice through State Minister for Social Affairs Daw Bauk Ja for displaced people.

The Kachin State Chief Minister and the Vice-Chairman of Union Peace-making Committee inspected loading of foodstuffs including 230 bags of rice donated by State government, 100 by Sitagu Sayadaw on to a plane of Myanma Airways to send to Putao for consumption of local people and departmental staff. So far, 3712 bags of rice have been sent to Putao which were distributed to people and civil servants under the arrangement of the township administrator.—MNA

You used to be a jack of all trade. Isn’t it?

I can no more be a jack today. That’s why I’m trying to master some!

A cartoon by Win Myint Aung
UNION SPORTS MINISTER INSPECTS ISPE (YANGON)

YANGON, 7 Oct.—The Ministry of Sports is systematically selecting prospective athletes from regions and states to train them in sports centres. Dr Win Myint, chairman of the Myanmar National Sports Committee, inspected the sports training centre (Tint Hsan) in Mandalay. He inspected the camp and confirmed that the training centre is well equipped and the athletes are well trained.

MOBILE MILITARY MEDICAL TEAM PROVIDES MEDICAL TREATMENT IN PRUHSO TSP

NAW PI TAW, 7 Oct.—Kayah State Chief Minister U Khin Maung Oo, Commander of the Eastern Command Maj-Gen Soe Htut and Deputy Minister for Immigration and Population U Win Myint viewed the military mobile medical team providing free medical treatment and giving health educative talks to local people at Makayawshae Village, Pruhso Township, Kayah State on 5 October during which the team provided treatment to 62 villagers. The State Chief Minister and the medical team met local national people there and gave 59 bags of rice, clothes and seven kinds of consumer goods, 19 kinds of foodstuffs, three kinds of sports gear, and three kinds of stationery presented by the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services. The State Chief Minister and party viewed Kayah State Immigration and National Registration Department issuing citizenship scrutiny cards free of charge. The department issued citizenship scrutiny cards to 39 persons of the village. Likewise, they gave 52 bags of rice, 84 blankets, clothes, 20 kinds of foodstuffs, three kinds of consumer goods, three kinds of stationery and three kinds of sports gear to Hoya Village presented by the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services. The military mobile medical team No (3) also provided free medical treatment to 236 national races people from Hoya and surrounding villages.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION COORD MEETING HELD IN YWANGAN

NAW PI TAW, 7 Oct.—Ywangan Township rural development and poverty alleviation coordination meeting took place at the office of Public Works in Ywangan in Danu Self-Administered zone on 3 October with an address by Shan State Chief Minister U Sao Aung Myat. The State Chief Minister presented cash assistance to patients at Ywangan Township People’s Hospital and inspected the site for extended hospital building. He addressed the rural development and poverty alleviation coordination meeting at the Office of the Leading Body of Shan State-Administered zone in Pindaya and donated K 5 million for construction of one-storey building at Mongin Basic Education High School (branch) and for a one-storey RC building at Myinmu No (34) Post-primary School. He provided patients at Pindaya Township People’s Hospital with cash assistance and viewed the site for extended building construction. He also inspected site for construction of extended building at Ayeyawady Station Hospital.

Victorious Myanmar Karatedo team back from Thailand

YANGON, 7 Oct.—The Myanmar Karatedo Team led by President of Myanmar Karatedo Federation Dr Win Zaw that participated in the 1st Southeast Asian Karatedo Championship 2012 in Bangkok of Thailand from 28 to 30 September 2012 arrived back here by air on 1 October. Athletes from Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Vietnam, Singapore, Laos, Cambodia, Thailand and the Philippines took part in the championship.

Victory of Myanmar Karatedo Team. The team received the first iron frame installed at Ayeyawady Bridge. The team arrived back here by air on 1st October. The team was welcomed by the Ministry of Sports and Physical Education Department.

Loss of K 4.2 million case exposed

PYAWBWE, 7 Oct.—Tun Win, 43 of Pyarhaya 5th Street in Pyawbwe Township left Mandalay for Pyawbwe with a van driven by Kyaw Swa Htay on 3 October. At 2.30 am when they arrived at Sbe Broker in Meiktila, driver Kyaw Swa Htay said that he was eager to sleep. So, Tun Win kept his white bag containing K 4.2 million and fell asleep. When he woke up at 4.30 am, he lost his bag of money and then opened a file of lawsuit at No. 1 Police Station. The earnest efforts of the policemen led to the arrest of Soe Thu of Region 5 in Yadana Manaung Ward along with a 3Ya/18Km iron fence seized on 2 October at a local market. The fence was bought from Mandalay with stolen money, one Nokia handset worth K 250,000 and K 1,204,550 kept at his house on 3 October. Myawma Amin

46 teak logs seized on west bank of Sittoung

BAGO, 7 Oct.—According to the information through telephone from Thaunggyi Village Administrator of Nyaungbin Township in Bago Region, workers of Nyaungbin Township Forest Department together with IP Nyi Nyi Naing and party searched the designated place at 2 pm on 25 October. They seized 46 teak logs at western bank of Sittoung River.

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FIRST IRON FRAME INSTALLED AT AYEYAWADY BRIDGE

A ceremony to install iron frame at Ayeyawady Bridge (Yadana theinga) was held at the bridge in Kyaukmyuang Sub-Township on 30 September morning. The bridge will be 2480 feet long.

NEW LICIT OF MYANMAR Monday, 8 October, 2012

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Greek austerity talks to continue, progress seen

ATHENS, 7 Oct—Greece will continue talks with international lenders next week on new austerity measures for the debt-ridden country to clinch its next loan tranche, the finance minister said on Saturday, with both sides saying progress had been made.

Negotiators had been pushing for a deal before a meeting of euro zone finance ministers on Monday, but Greece said it would settle for a statement acknowledging that talks were advancing.

“We will continue next week as well,” Finance Minister Yannis Stournaras told reporters following talks in Athens with Greece’s troika of creditors—the European Union, European Central Bank and International Monetary Fund. “We hope there will be a positive presentation from the troika, the IMF, EU and ECB, at the eurogroup,” he said. “We’re trying to reach a compromise that will be in the interests of the economy and the poor.”

Five consecutive years of recession have driven unemployment to record levels, gutted household incomes and led to protests, riots and the collapse of the government last month. PM Antonis Samaras and the European Commission have agreed on a new aid package.

New protests are expected on Tuesday when German Chancellor Angela Merkel will make her first visit to Greece since the euro zone debt crisis erupted in late 2009. The trip represents a show of support for the government of conservative Prime Minister Antonis Samaras and an apparent signal of the determination of Europe’s most powerful leader to keep Greece within the euro.

Earlier on Saturday, a senior Greek government official said the sides needed another two weeks to agree on a first tranche of about $12 billion euros of new savings to secure the next tranche of some $31.5 billion euros ($41.14 billion)

A Greek presidential guard marches past the Monument of the Unknown Soldier in front of the parliament in Athens on 6 Oct, 2012. REUTERS

Training plane crashes in western Turkey

ANKARA, 7 Oct—A single-engined training plane of Turkish Aeronautical Association crashed in Izmir Province in western Turkey on Saturday, private Dogan news agency reported.

One pilot was killed and another injured when the Cessna 172-type TC-CBI registered aircraft took off from Izmir Efes Airport and crashed in the mountainous area in Odemis town of Izmir province, according to the report.

Rescue teams were dispatched to the spot, said the report, adding that an investigation into this incident was underway.

Afghan police kill 28 militants within 24 hours

KABUL, 7 Oct—The Afghan Ministry of Interior Affairs on Sunday said that the police forces, backed by the army and the NATO-led coalition forces, had eliminated 28 Taleban fighters in different provinces within the past 24 hours.

“ Afghan National Police (ANP) in collaboration with the army and coalition forces launched 17 cleanup operations in Kabul, Nangarhar, Laghman, Kapisa, Kunduz, Faryab, Wardak, Ghazni and Paktya provinces, killing 28 armed Taleban fighters over the past 24 hours,” the ministry said in a statement.

The ANP also detained 13 suspected militants besides seizing weapons and ammunition in the above raids, the statement added, without saying if there were any casualties on the side of security forces.

The Taleban insurgents, who have been waging an insurgency of more than one decade, have yet to confirm the death of their men.

The security forces have intensified cleanup operations against Taleban and other militants throughout the country recently but the insurgents in retaliation responded by carrying out bombings and laying out ambushes against the security forces.

On Saturday, two US soldiers with the coalition were killed in an insurgent attack in eastern Afghanistan, the coalition confirmed in a statement.

A Palestinian pours Beer during the 2012 Taybeh Oktoberfest beer festival in the West Bank Christian village of Taybeh, near Ramallah, on 6 Oct, 2012. The annual beer festival is put on by the Taybeh brewery, the only such establishment in the predominantly Muslim Palestinian territories. Xinhua

The emphasis on boosting forest coverage came amid the country’s efforts to increase its “forest carbon sink capacity.” This means using forested areas to remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, thereby helping address global climate change.

China’s forest coverage reached 20.36 percent in 2010, up from 18.2 percent in 2005, and is expected to further increase to 21.66 percent by 2015.—Xinhua

Afghan children wait to fill their water barrels next to a water pump in Kabul on 6 Oct, 2012. More than half of the Afghan population do not have access to clean drinking water, according to Afghan officials.—Xinhua

Western Mediterranean Dialogue ends with “Malta Declaration”

RAJAT, 7 Oct—The second Western Mediterranean Dialogue, commonly known as the “5+5 Dialogue,” ended on Saturday with the approval of a final declaration named the “Malta Declaration.” At the concluding Press conference, the leaders of Malta, Libya, Morocco, Mauritania and Tunisia highly praised the outcome of the summit and expressed their aspiration to enhance the regional cooperation in supporting small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs); combating irregular migration and strengthening the fight against smuggling. Malta’s Prime Minister Lawrence Gonzi said the summit promoted dialogue between Western Mediterranean countries for exchange of ideas on issues of security, migration and economic development.

The Milan Chamber of Commerce, according to the declaration, will set up a regional network of centres to provide service to SMEs.

In the discussion, we underlined the importance of supporting particularly the development of small- and medium-sized enterprises as a vital sector in job creating,” Gonzi said. On the issue of irregular migration, Tunisian Prime Minister Moncef Marzouki said he had suggested the creation of a task force focusing on rescuing migrants. The task force, he said, should be composed of military and civilian assets.

“It is very difficult to accomplish (preventing irregular migration) with only one solution. It needs a package of solutions based on solidarity between all the members both from the North and the South,” Gonzi said.

Moreover, the declaration condemned the violence in Syria and called for its immediate end. The second Western Mediterranean Dialogue opened here on Friday. The first such summit was held in Tunis in December 2003.
Three Japanese Self Defence Ships arrive in Cambodia to boost naval force ties - Cambodia

PHEAH SIHANOUK, 7 Oct—Three Japanese maritime self defence force ships docked at Cambodia’s Sihanoukville Autonomous Port on Saturday morning for a 5-day visit to promote ties and exchange experience between two countries’ naval forces. The ships were greeted by Cambodian Rear Admiral Ros Veasna, deputy commander of Ream Naval base in Preah Sihanok Province.

According to a Press release from Japanese Embassy to Cambodia, the 3 ships, named Kashima, Shimayuka and Matsuyuki, are led by Rear Admiral Hidetoshi Fuchinoue, commander of Japan Training Squadron.

“The visit is to strengthen friendship relations between the two nations,” the Press release said. “It will also give opportunities for 194 Japanese cadet school graduates to learn about culture and military as well as to strengthen friendship with Cambodia through various exchange programmes.”

During the stay in Cambodia, Rear Admiral Fuchinoue plans to visit Phnom Penh to pay courtesy call on Cambodian Deputy Prime Minister and Defence Minister Tea Banh.

“The visit of the Japanese ships is a warm gesture and a sign of furthered friendship that strengthens the bond between the two nations,” said Tea Banh in a statement.

The visit is part of the continued cooperation that both nations have with each other.

Singapore announces incentives for more to join healthcare sector - Singapore

SINGAPORE, 7 Oct—Singapore’s Health Ministry announced enhanced in-centives on Saturday to encourage midcareer professionals to switch their careers to become a nurse or allied health professional starting from April next year. The incentives announced by Minister of State for Health Amy Khor include fully-sponsored course fees and higher monthly training allowances of between 50 and 70 percent.

The Singapore government is investing more in healthcare facilities to cater to an ageing population, and the demand for nurses and allied health professionals are expected to increase.

One way to grow the pool is to attract more mid-career professionals, but they will need to undergo a professional conversion program by the Workforce Development Agency.

Such programmes typically cost between 62,000 Singapore dollars ($54,007 US dollars) and 68,000 Singapore dollars ($55,285 US dollars) for each trainee. About 20 to 30 percent of the fees are currently funded by employers, while the rest are subsidized by the Workforce Development Agency.

But from April next year, the Workforce Development Agency will bear all training fees. Monthly training allowances will also go up. Registered nurses or allied health trainees can expect to receive allowances of between 1,500 Singapore dollars and 1,700 Singapore dollars, compared the current 1,000 Singapore dollars.

“We find that one of the stress points for mid-career professionals switching into healthcare really is the loss of income during their conversion training period... and the cost of the training itself,” Khor said.—Xinhua

Philippines agrees landmark peace deal with rebels - Philippines

MANILA, 7 Oct—The Philippine government and Muslim rebels have agreed a peace deal for the country’s troubled south, President Benigno Aquino announced on Sunday, signaling an end to a 40-year conflict that has killed more than 120,000 people and crippled the region’s economy.

The long-awaited agreement sets in train a roadmap to create a new Bangsamoro autonomous region in Muslim-dominated areas of the south of the mainly Roman Catholic country before the end of Aquino’s term in 2016. Bangsamoro refers to Muslim and non-Islamic minority people in the southern Philippines.

“This agreement creates a new political entity and it deserves a name that symbolizes and honours the struggles of our forebears in Mindanao and celebrates the history and character of that part of our nation. That name will be Bangsamoro,” Aquino announced via a live broadcast from the presidential palace.

“This framework agreement is about rising above our prejudices. It is about casting aside the distrust and myopia that has plagued the efforts of the past,” said Aquino, surrounded by his cabinet ministers.

While obstacles still lie ahead, the deal signals a major breakthrough in trust between the government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) separatists, who have long viewed Manila’s motives in the talks with prejudice. It is about casting aside the distrust and myopia that has plagued the efforts of the past,” said Aquino, surrounded by his cabinet ministers.

Ferry disaster probe to be completed in six months: HK official

HONG KONG, 7 Oct—Director of the Marine Department of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) government Francis Liu said on Saturday that he expected a probe into the Lamma ferry disaster to be completed in six months.

Liu said officers are looking into various aspects of the tragedy, including whether safety measures on board the two vessels were adequate and why did the Lamma IV sink within minutes after the collision.

Lai Tung-kwok, Secretary for Security of the HKSAR government, said the police have boarded and will continue to board the two boats to collect all necessary evidence.

They are now conducting interviews on the survivors and witnesses to ascertain what they know so that we can piece up all available information to map out what happened in that night.” Lai said the police have already set up a hotline and have requested those witnesses to come forward to provide information.

The police have also registered a case against unknown attackers and conducted a search for the attackers managed to escape.

The local militia force rushed to the site of attack and conducted a search operation but no one was arrested.

The police also registered a case against unknown attackers and started investigation into the incident. No group claimed responsibility. Taliban militants are blamed for such attacks.

Some 70 percent supplies are reportedly transported for nearly 150,000 US-led NATO troops in Afghanistan.

Passengers wait for trains at the Nanjing South Railway Station in Nanjing, capital of east China’s Jiangsu Province, on 6 Oct, 2012. Many tourists chose to travel by high-speed trains during the Mid-Autumn Festival and the National Day holidays.—Xinhua

Electric’s “Lamma IV”—collided off Yung Shu Wan Pier of Lamma Island at around 8:20 pm local time on Monday, when the city’s residents were celebrating the National Day of China. A girl was certified dead in that night. Lai said the police have already joined healthcare sector
Bosnian president to visit Pakistan on 9-10 Oct

ISLAMABAD, 7 Oct—President of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bakir Izetbegovic, will be visiting Pakistan on 9-10 Oct at the invitation of President Asif Ali Zardari, the Foreign Ministry said on Saturday. During his stay in Islamabad, President Izetbegovic will meet the president and the prime minister. The ministers of Foreign Affairs and Defence will also call on the Bosnian president, a Foreign Ministry statement said. He will also address the business community of the two countries. In addition, the National University of Science and Technology (NUST) will confer an honorary doctorate on President Izetbegovic. “His visit would not only help further enhance bilateral cooperation between the two countries particularly in trade, investment, education and defence, but would also provide an opportunity to exchange views at the highest political level on various important international issues of mutual interest,” the statement said. President Izetbegovic is the son of late Alija Izetbegovic, the revered former President of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The last presidential visit from Bosnia took place in 2004 when Mr Sulejman Tihic, then President of Bosnia, paid a state visit to Pakistan. Pakistan extended support to the people of Bosnia, especially during their struggle for independence, and Bosnia supported Pakistan brethren during the devastating earthquake in 2005 and floods in 2010-2011. Pakistan and Bosnia and Herzegovina enjoy excellent relations deeply embedded in shared values and mutual interest on major global issues of common concern. The two countries also jointly pursue the common objective of global peace and stability in international forums, the Foreign Ministry said.

Houston conference promotes US-China educational, economic, cultural cooperation

HOUSTON, 7 Oct—Business leaders from China and the United States gathered in this fourth-largest US city on Saturday for a conference aimed at exploring potentials for bilateral cooperation and partnership. The Third US-China Educational, Economic and Cultural Conference attracted some 200 participants from both countries, who came to share experience and ideas about the opportunities, strategies and steps needed for business success in the world’s largest economy and largest emerging market. The conference “aims to create a business platform which will enhance opportunities for businesses from the United States and China, promote traditional culture and initiate private and business partnerships, which will enhance mutual understanding and development of US-China business relations,” said JP Li, president of the US-China Educational, Economic and Cultural Foundation which organized the event. “We are very excited about the opportunities that exist between Houston and China,” Ed Gonzalez, vice mayor of Houston, told Xinhua on the sidelines of the conference. “No relationship will probably be more important to our country than the US-China relationship. We are very proud to know that our city has been one of the front-runners in developing a strong relationship with China,” he noted.—Xinhua

Beijing’s PM2.5 monitoring network releases complete data

BEIJING, 7 Oct—A network to monitor PM2.5 in the air in the Chinese capital was completed on Saturday as another 15 monitoring stations began releasing real-time data. The network, which is composed of 35 PM2.5 monitoring stations, will publish the air quality data online, according to the Beijing Environment Monitoring Centre. The PM2.5 air quality standard monitors fine particles with a diameter of 2.5 microns or less. It is considered more hazardous to people’s health as it can go deeper into the lungs. But PM2.5 reading was not included in China’s air quality monitoring before.

The monitoring network will undergo a trial operation for three months, before the city’s environmental protection department formally adopts the data in 2013 as new measures to evaluate the air quality of the city. The Ministry of Environmental Protection has ordered 74 cities to apply a more comprehensive air quality monitoring standard and publish daily reports on PM2.5 by the end of this year.

European Investment Bank grants Morocco 43-m-euro loan for agriculture

RABAT, 7 Oct—The European Investment Bank (EIB) has granted Morocco a loan of 43 million euros (about $56 million US dollars) to develop its agriculture and improve the efficiency of irrigation, a local radio reported on Saturday. The loan aims to reinforce Morocco’s water-saving facilities for irrigation in the regions of Gharb, Haouz and Souss Massa, with a goal of modernizing the irrigation system for a better productivity.

The agreement on the loan will accompany the country’s policy for agriculture, a key economic sector that represents an average of 13.5 percent of GDP between 2006 and 2011 and employs around 40 percent of the country’s workforce.

California gasoline prices hit record amid supply woes

LOS ANGELES, 7 Oct—Gasoline prices in California hit record levels on Saturday, after an unprecedented surge in pump prices propelled by a perfect storm of factors that drove inventories in the region down to near historic lows. The average cost of a gallon of gas in the state stood at $4.61, edging past the previous record of $4.61 set in 2008, according to figures from AAA. But prices topped $5 a gallon in some locations. On Saturday, a local NBC station showed one downtown, Los Angeles gas station selling regular grade at $5.49 a gallon. Average prices in the Golden State were $4.145 a week ago, AAA data show. The abrupt price spike has shocked California’s car-loving residents, and left some retailers in Los Angeles scrambling for supplies. Signs have emerged that the run-up in prices could soon end, but motorists may think twice about hitting the road for now. “I think $5 is kind of hitting the limit,” driver Genoush Tunian told the local CBS station in Los Angeles. A series of events have conspired to limit supplies, causing gas stations in the West Coast region to fall this week to their third-lowest level in 20 years on a seasonal basis, government data shows.

A fire closed Chevron Corp’s Richmond, California, refinery during the summer. A Chevron pipeline that carries crude oil from the state’s Central Valley to refineries in the San Francisco Bay area has also been closed since mid-September.

More recently, Phillips 66 shut two plants to conduct planned maintenance, which power outage hit Exxon Mobil Corp’s refinery in the Los Angeles-area city of Torrance on Monday, disrupting operations for days. On Friday, the Torrance plant had resumed operations, which helped ease supply fears.
Kangana Ranaut undergoes crossfit training for her maiden Karan Johar venture

MUMBAI, 7 Oct—Known to be a method actor, Kangana Ranaut usually leaves no stone unturned to prepare for her characters in her films. The actress has just signed a Karan Johar film that will soon go on the floors and apparently she will now be learning crossfit training to get into the skin of her character.

A source informs, “The film helmed by Reniel D’Silva is a thriller. This will be her first KJo production and she wants to give it her best shot.”

Sources say that Kangana plays a medical student in the film. The actress had also done rigorous physical training for her superhero film, Krrish 2 with Hrithik Roshan. The source adds, “It was her decision to undergo the training process so that she looks her best in the film.”—PTI

Scarlett Johansson ‘bitter’ about ex husband Ryan Reynold’s marriage

fast. Scarlett is happy and dating, but she assumed he would wait a few years before he tied the knot again.” Scarlett—also romance her marriage to Ryan in the past. She said: “It was a beautiful thing. The falling in love and getting married and making

Scarlett is said to have fallen cross with the Gossip Girl star while they were still married and was distraught over the couple’s recent nuptials.

A source told the National Enquirer: “Even though there is no evidence behind it, Scarlett has convinced herself that Ryan cheated on her with Blake. She’s incredibly bitter about it. In any way, Scarlett feels like Blake actually stole Ryan from her, because it was when he started shooting Green Lantern with Blake in 2010 that everything fell apart.”

The 27-year-old actress was shocked to discover the couple had thrown a secret wedding reception in South Carolina in September and was especially hurt Ryan remarried so quickly, only a year after a year of dating Blake.

The insider added: “Ryan and Blake’s wedding has brought back a lot of pain for Scarlett. She’s sure that Blake deliberately seduced Ryan, even though she knew he was attached at the time. “On top of that, she feels like it’s a huge slap in the face that Ryan would remarry this that commitment... I think it’s nice to know that you’re capable of loving somebody in that way. I think it’s a rare opportunity.”—PTI

Bradley Cooper snubbed Dita Von Teese?

LONDON, 7 Oct—The burlesque dancer was seen making eyes at The Hangover actor at Farfalla restaurant in Los Angeles and tried to buy a drink for the handsome star, but he remained immune to her advances and left without saying goodbye.

An onlooker said: “Bradley completely snubbed Dita when she made a beeline for him. He was desperate to get his attention, so she asked the waitress to go over to his table and ask him what he wanted to drink.”

“Bradley told the waitress he’s on a health kick at the moment and said he was fine. After that, Dita was looking over at him, fluttering her eyelids and wanted him to join her and her friend. “But Bradley just wasn’t that into her, he ignored her eye contact and just looked down at his phone. He left before she did and didn’t even acknowledge her on the way out of the restaurant.”

The star—who was famously married to Marilyn Mason—appeared shocked by the actor’s rejection of her drink offer, even though Bradley has now been sober for eight years. The source added to RadarOnline: “She looked gutted. It really was an awkward moment for Dita, I’m sure a lot of men wouldn’t turn her down.”

Bradley is said to have rekindled his relationship with Zoe Saldana after their romance initially fizzled out in March. Meanwhile, Dita recently revealed she is enjoying the single lifestyle and is currently dating several men. She said: “I’m single and loving the freedom of being single and dating. It’s an exciting time. I’ve been in a lot of big relationships and I haven’t spent much time being single so I figured it’s a great time to be free and be without commitment.”—PTI

Comedian Steve Martin arrives at the 2011 Vanity Fair Oscar party in West Hollywood, California on 27 February, 2011. Reuters

Comedian Steve Martin in ad for Nebraska Senate candidate

OMAHA, (Nebraska) 7 Oct—Steve Martin has released an off-beat ad endorsing Bob Kerrey’s candidacy in Nebraska’s US Senate race, in which the actor and comedian demonstrates how to build a wad of paper while cue cards offering praise for Kerrey are displayed on the screen.

Martin, playing the role of “home crafts expert,” mangles a blank single sheet of white paper with paper clips, scissors, staples, chewing gum and a hammer, while a hand emerges from off screen offering typed messages in praise of Kerrey. “He's a principled man whom I have known and respected for many years,” reads one.

“But most of all... He is sane. And his ideas are workable,” reads another.

Kerrey, a Democrat, represented Nebraska in the US Senate from 1989 to 2001, when he moved to New York City to lead The New School university. He returned to Omaha this year to seek the seat of retiring US Senator Ben Nelson, a Democrat. Kerrey, who faces Republican State Senator Deb Fischer in the 6 November election, has trailed in polls.

In a Facebook posting introducing the web video, Kerrey joked he has been aware of Martin’s “home crafts expertise,” and is “pleased that he now wants to share his talents with you along with his endorsement for me for the US Senate.”—Reuters
LONDON, 7 Oct—Steven Gerrard has pledged his future to Liverpool for the rest of his playing career saying he will never leave the club. The 32-year-old Liverpool skipper, who has made nearly 600 appearances in all competitions since making his debut in 1998, told the BBC he had opportunities to leave a number of times in the past five years. “Everyone’s aware that my head has been turned by opportunities to leave a couple of times during the past five years,” Gerrard told Football Focus. “But Thorbjorn is one of the best players I’ve played against in my career and I’ve had the pleasure of playing against him twice before. A win for Liverpool would be a great result.”

Gerrard has won the Champions League and UEFA Cup with Liverpool plus two FA Cups and three League Cups. — Reuters

Skipper Gerard pledges future to Liverpool

South Africa's Branden Grace celebrates winning the Volvo Champions title in her homeland in January, Grace is not worried about leading from the front in the last round. “I think if I keep hitting the ball the way I am and I make the cuts, anything is possible,” he said. “But Thorbjorn is one of the best players I’ve played against in my career and I’ve had the pleasure of playing against him twice before. A win for Liverpool would be a great result.”

Gerrard has won the Champions League and UEFA Cup with Liverpool plus two FA Cups and three League Cups. — Reuters

South Africa's Branden Grace

Chelsea move four points clear, City up to second

LONDON, 7 Oct—Chelsea brushed Norwich City aside 4-1 at Stamford Bridge on Saturday to move up a four-point lead at the top of the Premier League after Everton, who were second, drew 2-2 at Wigan Athletic and slipped to third. Chelsea moved to 19 points as champions Manchester City climbed to second on 15 points after beating Sunderland 3-0 at the Etihad Stadium where Alexandar Kolarov, Sergio Aguero and James Milner were on target. Chelsea fell behind to an early Grant Hall own goal and a trophy remained.

Chelsea's John Terry in action during the English Premier League soccer match against Norwich City at Carrow Road, London, on 6 Oct, 2012. —Reuters

Hamilton takes wrong turn as McLaren pole run ends

SUZUKA, (Japan), 7 Oct—Lewis Hamilton recognised he had made a wrong decision on Saturday as McLaren’s run of four pole positions in a row came to an end at the Japanese Grand Prix. The 2008 Formula One world champion, who headlined-grabbing move to Mercedes in 2013 was announced last week, was referring only to his choice of qualifying setup on a difficult for McLaren pole run ends.

Hamilton makes six birdies but "If you try to fine tune the setup you try to fine tune the setup and sometimes you just go the wrong way."

Hamilton takes wrong turn as McLaren pole run ends.

Top seeds Azarenka, Sharapova set up China Open final

BEIJING, 7 Oct—World number one Victoria Azarenka set up a final date with Maria Sharapova at the China Open after the two seeds enjoyed comprehensive victories in their semi-finals on Saturday. Sharapova blew away home favorite Li Na 6-4, 6-0 before top seed Azarenka saw off the challenge from France’s Marion Bartoli 6-1, 6-2. Sharapova served three double faults to concede an early break to go 1-3 down in the first set against the Chinese number one Li but sailed through once she found her groove. "I had a couple of days of practice here," she said.

Top seeds Azarenka, Sharapova set up China Open final
Single euro-zone budget gains momentum ahead of summit

"I wouldn’t say that there was strong support for it, but there was certainly a feeling that this is an idea that should be explored in more detail," said one diplomat briefed on the discussion that took place at the gathering.

The single budget proposal was first sketched out by Herman Van Rompuy, the president of the European Council, in a paper circulated in September as part of an effort to stimulate debate about how Europe’s monetary union should be improved.

In the paper, Van Rompuy said a “fully fledged fiscal union” among the 17 countries that share the euro could involve the creation of a single treasury office and “a central budget whose role and functions would need to be defined.”

Those suggestions have since been refined into guidelines that will form the basis of discussion among EU leaders at the summit on October 18-19. The idea will also be explored among euro zone finance ministers at a meeting in Luxembourg on Monday.

There is still no clear definition of what a single, central budget would entail, but Germany strongly supports the idea and France is on board too, with turns of euro zone decision-making means it has substantial momentum.

Britain’s support, underlined by Prime Minister David Cameron on Sunday, is also significant, even it stems more from a desire to distance Britain from the problems of the euro zone than from any solidarity with the single currency club.

Secessionist gunman attack’s compound in southern Yemen, 3 injured

Yemen’s southern province of al-Dhalea on Sunday morning, leaving at least three security personnel injured, a security official told Xinhua.

The secessionist gunmen, armed with machine guns and grenades, attacked a fortified government compound in downtown al-Dhalea province, injuring at least three security personnel, the security official said, requesting anonymity.

Without any evidence of being marginalized, particularly since they lost the four-month civil war in 1994. Pro-secession protests have multiplied in the south amid a worsening economic situation in Yemen and charges of discrimination in favor of northerners.

Some factions of the pro-secession Southern Movement want autonomy for the country’s south, but more hard-line members are pressing for a return to complete independence.

Bus from Toronto overturns in New Jersey, 23 hurt

NEW YORK, 7 Oct—Nearly two dozen people were injured on Saturday when a bus traveling from Toronto to Brooklyn, New York, overturned while approaching an exit ramp on a New Jersey highway, according to New Jersey state police. Twenty-three of the 57 people aboard the bus were taken to hospitals, but none of the injuries was considered life-threatening, police spokesman Adam Grossman said.

The accident occurred about 7:40 am as the bus traveled east on Interstate 80 in Wayne Township. The bus overturned in a grassy area about 100 yards from the highway, he said.

The cause of the accident is under investigation, he said. The Star-Ledger newspaper reported that the passengers, who left Toronto at about 8:15 pm on Friday, had planned to attend a Seventh-day Adventist Church event in Brooklyn.
Steel suspension bridge across Namlin Creek

Namlin Creek that originates in Kengtung region is passing through Kengtung, Mongpyah, Tahlay and Kengkla. The creek that flows into Mekong River contributes to agricultural works in its surrounding villages by creating natural beauties. Its current is speedy. Its route is many bends. Its structure is made of rocks. Thus, the creek cannot be used in water way transport. However, small-scale hydropower can be generated from the current depending on its speedy current.

However, the small creek is a natural barrier in transportation of local people from the villages in Nayawng Village-tract of Tahlay Sub-Township. The large areas of farmlands owned by local farmers from Nayawng Village-tract are located on the opposite side of the creek. Nawkhla Village of Lahun national race and Pahsan Village of Akha national race are also located on the opposite side of the creek. Thus, the local people difficulty cross the creek by small raft for going to their farmlands. Sometimes, they faced danger of death.

In the aftermath of Tahlay Earthquake, officials reviewed that a bridge should be built across Namlin Creek for development of the region. That was why the local authorities stroke for construction of a suspension bridge near Pahok Village.

As the steel suspension bridge was constructed on 3 May 2012, the local people participated in construction tasks in their bit. On 8 May, the 300 feet long and 5 feet wide steel suspension bridge emerged across the creek.

In an interview, Lahu national villager Ko Kya U, 24 of Baythala Village said that his family has been engaged in agricultural tasks since the time of their grandparents. They went to opposite side of the creek by a raft made of tubes of motorcar. At present, not only cattle but also people and motorcycles can pass through the suspension bridge safely.

The local people can extensively engage in farming. The students from Pahsan and Lawkha villages have easy access to Basic Education High School thanks to the bridge. Likewise, the local people can make trips to Tahlay, Tachileik, Mongpyah and Kengtung by motorcyle.

Three new bus lines for Yangon

YANGON, 7 Oct—Chairman of the Yangon City All Private Bus-line Control Committee U Hla Aung disclosed that arrangements are being made to extend three bus lines for ensuring secure and smooth transportation in the press conference on 3 October.

The three bus lines are Myittha Line, (Myittha Line and Mahatha 40 (City Bus) and Mahatha 40 (City Bus). Endorsements have been put forward for bus lines of these bus lines to get NGC.

US, South Korea agree on longer range ballistic missiles

SEOUL, 7 Oct—South Korea has reached a landmark agreement with the United States to extend the range of Seoul’s ballistic missiles by more than twice the current limit to counter the threat from North Korea, the government said on Sunday. The move to significantly boost the South’s missile capabilities along with development of advanced aerial reconnaissance vehicles is likely to rattle the communist North, which has remained at odds since the 1950-53 Korean War left the peninsula divided.

It may also stoke concern in China, Japan and Russia, parts of which would be within range of the new missiles.

Under the agreement, South Korea-developed ballistic missile at the current level of 500 kilograms (1,102 lbs).

However, if Seoul chose to develop a missile with shorter ranges, it could increase the payload accordingly.

South Korea has also been allowed to develop unmanned aerial vehicles, or UAVs, with an unlimited payload weight if the flying distance is within 300 kilometres.

Man United in rampant mood

LONDON, 7 Oct—A turbo-charged start yielding two goals in the opening 15 minutes and a spectacular effort by Tom Cleverley led Manchester United to a 3-0 victory at Newcastle United in the Premier League on Sunday.

Elsewhere, Tottenham Hotspur chalked up their fourth successive league win by beating Aston Villa 2-0 with goals from Steven Caul. Liverpool’s struggles continued when they were held to a goalless draw by Stoke City at Anfield and promoted Southampton needed a last-gap goal from defender Jose Fonte, his second of the game, to rescue a 2-2 draw with Fulham. Manchester United, desperate to bounce back from last weekend’s surprise 3-2 home defeat by Spurs, made a high-tempo start at Newcastle and were rewarded in the eighth minute when defender Jonny Evans scored with a towering header from a corner.

Newcastle had a lucky escape four minutes later when keeper Steve Harper was robbed as he tried to dive in vain as Danny Welbeck on the edge of the penalty box and the United striker slid the ball wide of an empty net.

Harper then dived full-length to deny man of the match Wayne Rooney but Patrice Evra made it 2-0 when he nodded in a corner at the near post.

Newcastle raised their game in the second period and twice went close to pulling a goal back in the 50th minute.