NAY PYI TAW, 26 Nov—At the invitation of His Excellency U Thein Sein, President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, and wife Daw Khin Khin Win, His Excellency Mr. Truong Tan Sang, President of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, and wife Madam Mai Thi Hanh will pay a state visit to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar in the near future.—MNA

President U Thein Sein visits Maha Muni Buddha Image

NAY PYI TAW, 25 Nov—President U Thein Sein who was in Mandalay visited Maha Muni Buddha Image in Mandalay together with Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Vice-Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, Deputy Speaker of the Amyotha Hluttaw U Mya Nyein and Union ministers this morning.

The President and party paid homage to the Buddha Image and offered flowers, meals, water, light and joss sticks.

They offered gilded robes to the Buddha Image and made cash donation.

They signed visitors’ book and viewed round the pagoda.

The President cordially greeted pilgrims and store-keepers who open shops at the stairway of the pagoda.—MNA

Tokyo Skytree

TOKYO, 25 Nov—The 634-meter-tall Tokyo Skytree marked on Thursday its six-month anniversary since opening, still drawing more visitors than expected as a new metropolitan tourist spot.

About 3.28 million people had visited Skytree’s 350-meter-high observation deck as of Wednesday, while some 27.92 million people had visited Tokyo Skytree Town, a new commercial complex featuring the landmark tower in Tokyo’s Sumida Ward.

Tobu Tower Skytree Co. revised upward its annual estimate of visitors to Skytree Town to 44 million from 32 million.

“We didn’t expect many people to visit here on weekdays,” said a spokesperson for the Skytree operator.

Meanwhile, Tokyo Skytree is still having trouble transmitting TV signals, which has resulted in poor reception at many households.

Tokyo Skytree was supposed to take over from Tokyo Tower in transmitting TV signals next January, but the switch is expected to be postponed to May.—Kyodo

Noteworthy amounts of rainfall

Ye (1.57) inches
Bilin (0.94) inch
Launglon (0.87) inch

Chief Minister’s Cup Inter-Township Open Men’s Football Tournament wraps up

At the final match, Dawei Township Team won over Myeik Township Team.

After the final match, region level officials presented awards to best players and second and first prize winning teams, and chief minister championship trophy to Dawei Township football team. —MNA

Skytree marks 6 months since opening

President U Thein Sein paying homage to Maha Muni Buddha Image in Mandalay.

MNA
Mandalay, 25 Nov — As Mandalay City is becoming increasingly urbanized, civil development plans are underway in accord with the characteristics of a big city. So far, 90 per cent of construction of 25-storey Mandalay Zaygyo Condominium project has been completed. The project is being developed at a place between 27th and 28th streets and 84th and 86th streets in Chanayethazan Township, Mandalay.

Zaygyo plaza is six-storey high and the remaining 19 out of 25 storeys are apartment floors. Works for availability of electric and water, natural disaster risk and fire preventive measures are being carried out. Now the finishing touches are being put to the building, and works are being stepped up to ensure timely completion of the project. — Kyemon

25-storey Mandalay Zaygyo Condominium project sees 90 per cent completion

Rehabilitation tasks in quake-hit areas set to complete within one hundred days

MONYWA, 25 Nov — In his address at the ceremony to donate cash and kind for quake victims held at the Hluttaw hall, here, on 19 November, Sagaing Region Chief Minister U Tha Aye said that the 6.8 magnitude earthquake and aftershocks caused damage to religious edifices, school buildings, hospitals and houses in the upperparts of Kyaukmyaung Sub-township near the third floor of the Ayeyawady. He vowed to put all-out efforts in rehabilitation tasks, bringing about the situation which is better than before in one hundred days. Renovation of school buildings would be top on the list of priorities with the use of cash donations by wellwishers, followed by reconstruction of hospitals, houses and office buildings, he added. Collaborative efforts of the locals, donors, regional authorities concerned, Tatmadawmen, and members of police force and fire brigades were being made in accord with the motto: “Replace the earth bricks with the concrete ones”.

He informed those present that repair works for quake-hit Ayeyawady Bridge (Yandana Theinga) were underway starting from the south-east corner of the bridge, there was no damage to bole piles of the bridge.

FMI to organize internationally-recognized marathon on 27 November 2013

YANGON, 25 Nov — According to the 20th annual general meeting of FMI Co., Ltd, arrangements are being made to organize an internationally-recognized marathon on 27 November 2013.

As a Cooperate Social Responsibility programme, FMI Co., Ltd will conduct the marathon in cooperation with the Yangon City Development Committee. Moreover, the company had arranged to organize a Myanmar Library Festival from 1 to 3 February in 2013.

“The marathon will be the very first internationally-recognized one that can bring Yangon fame and benefit. Myanmar will be included in the map of marathons. Myanmar Library Festival will be also an important one”, FMI Co., Ltd Chairman U Thein Wai said.

Photo shows chilies scattering on the ground to dry off at a village in Meiktila where chilli growers get a good price for their produce.

Kyemon

Donate Blood

Quake damage of Mingun village in Sagaing

SAGAING, 25 Nov — The 6.8 magnitude earthquake caused damage to religious edifices in Mingun village of Mingun Station in Sagaing Township.

“According to the data collected, a crack appeared on the south-east corner of Pahtodawgyi Pagoda, a ten-foot long and seven-foot wide huge stone fell down on the ground, a pole that supports the Bell tilled to the northern side, concrete crusts of the umbrella of Mya Thein Tan Pagoda fell down on the ground, some parts the statues of lion in the corner of the pagoda were damaged, the foundation of the ground floor of Dhamma Nada Centenary Building had a crack in it, crasts on the ceiling of the cave in the compound of Settawya Pagoda fell down on the ground, an umbrella of Ngapag Pagoda slightly tilled to the one side and a diamond orb of the pagoda fell down on the ground and a crack appeared on the pagoda’s girth, a diamond orb of Poh Zedi fell down on the ground, an umbrella of Kaunghmudaw Pagoda tilled to the one side and a crack appeared on the pagoda’s girth”, Mingun village administrator U Thein Nyunt Swe said.

Arrangements are being made to renovate the quake damage with the collaborative efforts of personnel from authorities concerned. — Kyemon

Vegetable vendors doing a brisk trade in Mandalay

Mandalay, 25 Nov — As seasonal fruit and vegetables are plenty in some regions of Shan State and PyinOoLwin starting from the early November, they are being transported to the new kitchen crop market in Mahaaungmye Township, and vendors are doing a lively trade in locally-produced fruit and vegetables.

Fruits and vegetables transported from these regions arrive in the market every evening.

As various kinds of kitchen crops are plenty in the market and sold at falling prices, the market crowded with local people is bustling with life from 6 pm to 8 am the next day. About 2000 vendors from Mandalay, Amarapura, TadaU, Kyaukse and Sagaing are swarming all over the new kitchen crops market. — Kyemon

Maintenance works on Yangon-Mandalay expressway

NAV PYI TAW, 25 Nov — Deputy Minister for Construction U Soe Tint inspected road works being carried out along Yangon-Mandalay Expressway on 21 November morning.

The deputy minister looked into approach road to conduit which was under repair between mile post Nos (363/3) and (363/3) near Tag纽带 aroundabout at Pannint-Tag纽带 road section and maintenance works along the expressway.

On his arrival at Meiktila (Theegon) tollgate between mile post Nos (284/4) and (284/5), he oversaw the collecting of vehicle tolls and running of vehicles. — Kyemon

Maintenance works on Yangon-Mandalay expressway

Donate Blood
**New corruption scandal rocks Brazilian government**

Brazil’s President Dilma Rousseff participates in the ceremony of investiture for the new President and Vice-President of the Supreme Court, ministers Joaquim Barbosa and Ricardo Lewandowski, in Brasilia on 22 Nov, 2012. — Reuters

**Bangladesh garment factory fire kills 120**

Dhaka, 25 Nov — At least 120 people were burnt to death as a fire swept through a garment factory on the outskirts of Bangladesh’s capital, the chief of the fire brigade said on Sunday. The fire at the nine-story factory in the Ashulia industrial belt started on the ground floor late on Saturday and quickly spread, trapping hundreds of workers.

“Monday, 26 November, 2012

**Indonesia proposes to buy more rice from Myanmar**

Yangon, 25 Nov — Indonesia has proposed to buy 300,000 tons of rice from Myanmar in addition to the 200,000 tons, local media quoted the Myanmar Rice Industry Association (MRIA) as reporting on Friday.

Indonesia first agreed to buy 200,000 tons, of which 5,000 tons have been exported, said the Weekly Eleven News.

The trading of the 200,000 tons of rice is to be done in a year starting February under a memorandum of understanding (MoU) signed between Myanmar Rice Industry Association (MRIA) and the Perum BU-LOG Indonesia National Food and Logistic Agency in January.

From 2001-2002 to 2005-06, Myanmar exported a substantial amount of rice to the Indonesian market. But after 2005-06, rice export to Indonesia was almost none.

According to statistics, in the nine months’ period (April-December) of the fiscal year 2011-12, Myanmar exported only 202,000 tons of rice to Indonesia.

In the first seven months (April-October) of the fiscal year 2012-13, Myanmar exported 706,625 tons of rice to foreign countries, earning 275 million US dollars, the report said, expecting that more than 1 million tons could be exported this year, the volume which Myanmar achieved before 1956.

MNA/Xinhua
German expert calls for actions against climate change

**BERLIN, 25 Nov**—A German expert called for strengthened actions against global warming Friday, days before the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Doha next week. “With the current pledges made by countries and their measures, we are on the course of 3.5 or 4 degrees Celsius warming towards the end of the century,” said professor Hans Joachim Schellnhuber, director of Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research (PIK).

“We have to avoid that,” urged Schellnhuber, who is also a member of German Advisory Council on Global Change, an advisory body for German federal government. “A four-degree-Celsius-increase world would be one of unprecedented heat waves, severe drought, and major floods in many regions, with serious impacts on ecosystems and associated services,” warned a report conducted by PIK and Berlin-based Climate Analytics for the World Bank.

In Copenhagen Climate Change Conference 2009, the target of global warming by 2100 was set at below 2 degrees Celsius, compared with the level in the pre-industrialization time. Representatives from nearly 200 countries will gather at Doha next week for the 18th Conference of Parties to United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

“We have technical means for the goal of 2 degrees Celsius, we have probably even the money for doing that, but we do not have the political will so far,” said Schellnhuber. At the Climate Change Conference 2011 in Durban, South Africa, parties agreed to start from 2013 the second commitment period of Kyoto Protocol, and only under a new treaty for emission reduction currently.

A protocol, another legal instrument or an agreed outcome with legal force under the Convention applicable to all parties, was also decided to be put no later than 2015 and to be implemented from 2020. The following two climate change negotiations this year in Bonn, Germany and Bangkok, Thailand, however, failed to see progress in agreement on climate protection.—Xinhua

Nokia’s imaging head quits to join Tata’s Jaguar Land Rover

**HELSONK, 25 Nov**—Nokia’s long-time imaging chief Damian Dinning has decided to leave the loss-making cellphone maker at the end of this month, the company said in a statement.

The strong imaging capabilities of the new Lumia smartphone models are a key sales argument for the former market leader, which has been burning through cash while losing share in both high-end smartphones and cheaper handsets.

Nokia’s Chief Executive Stephen Elop has replaced most of the top management since he joined in late 2010 and Dinning is the latest of several executives to leave. Dinning did not want to move to Finland as part of the phonemakers’ effort to concentrate operations and will join Jaguar Land Rover to head innovation in the field of connect cars, he said on Nokia’s imaging fan site PureView-club.com.—Reuters

Fighting Sandy debris-removal crooks: There’s an app for that

**NEW YORK, 25 Nov**—A devastating storm like Sandy can bring out the crooks—and not just opportunistic looters and burglars. Officials dealing with the destruction in the US Northeast say one of their biggest headaches is debris-removal fraud committed by greedy contractors who inflate their share of the millions in cleanup funds doled out by federal agencies.

But new digital technology created by private companies and municipal task of documenting every last fragment of debris or broken tree branch to prove to Federal Emergency Management Agency auditors that the money was properly spent.

Ray Jovino learned his lesson after 2011’s Hurricane Irene, which caused nearly $16 billion in economic damage across eight northeastern US states.

As assistant director of the bureau of equipment and inventory for Long Island’s Nassau County, Jovino remembered all too well the messy months of paperwork that consumed his office after Irene felled nearly 2,500 trees in his area. “The first thing they asked for were the pictures of every tree that went down in the storm,” Jovino said, in reference to FEMA.

County officials, unfamiliar with federal regulations, had simply written down the locations of the trees, which wasn’t good enough.—Reuters

Mexico postpones approval of large-scale GM corn fields

**MEXICO CITY, 25 Nov**—A top Mexican government official said on Thursday that the long-awaited but highly controversial approval of genetically modified (GM) corn fields on a commercial scale will drag into next year. Mariano Ruiz, a deputy agriculture secretary, said in an interview that the regulatory approval process won’t be finalized under the outgoing government of President Felipe Calderon, but instead will fall to his successor to see through sometime next spring.

President-elect Enrique Pena Nieto of the Institutionally Revolutionary Party is set to take office on 1 December. Ruiz said he does not expect approval to be approved for four to five months but that the new government led by Pena Nieto is likewise considering in its support for the introduction of large-scale GMO corn cultivation in Mexico.

“Think we are in agreement generally over the importance of having this instrument, and that farmers have the tool of genetically modified organisms,” said Ruiz. “But that like they say, the devil is in the details,” he added. Scientists recognize Mexico as the birthplace of corn, and opponents of GM corn have argued that genetically modified varieties pioneered by companies like Monsanto will contaminate native strains and irrevocably harm the grain’s biodiversity.

Ruiz said the government still had to designate so-called “centers of origin” where GM corn cultivation will be banned as well as set other safety regulations. Mexico, Latin America’s second-biggest economy, plants 7.2 million hectares (17.8 million acres) of corn annually to grow mostly white corn, which is used for human consumption, including the country’s staple tortilla-las. Domestic corn production this year will total nearly 22 million tonnes, according to agriculture ministry data.—Reuters

A corporate logo is displayed at the Nokia flagship store in Helsinki on 29 Sept, 2010.—Reuters

China conducts flight landing on aircraft carrier

**HAIKOU, 25 Nov**—China has successfully conducted its first flight landing on its aircraft carrier, the Liaoning, naval sources said. A new J-15 fighter jet was used as part of the landing exercise.

After its delivery to the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) Navy in May, the aircraft carrier was under a series of sea trials, as well as precision-guided bombs.—Xinhua

This undated photo shows staff members checking a carrier-borne J-15 fighter jet on China’s first aircraft carrier, the Liaoning.—Xinhua

Science & Technology
Spectrum winners will have to pay by 1 December: DoT

NEW DELHI, 25 Nov — Winners of recently held 2G spectrum auction will have to make payment, either in full or at least 33 percent of the due amount, 1 December, the Department of Telecom said today. “...the last date for payment is 1 Dec, 2012. If the payment is not received by the last date, the EMD (earnest money deposit) will be forfeited,” DoT said in the notice.

Recently, the government concluded auction of GSM spectrum (1800 MHz band airwaves frequencies) earning a total of Rs. 9,407.64 crore against a minimum potential revenue of Rs. 3,000 crore. As per the auction result, Telenor-promoted Telegwins Communications won spectrum in six telecom circles and will have to pay maximum in the total amount at Rs. 4,018.28 crore, followed by Videocon Telecommunications at Rs. 2,221.44 crore, Idea Cellular Rs. 2,031.31 crore, Vodafone Rs. 1,127.94 crore and Bharti Airtel will have to pay Rs. 8.67 crore. Vodafone won spectrum most of the circles. This include: Jammu and Kashmir, Assam, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand (East), Uttar Pradesh (West), Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal, Haryana, Bihar, Kerala, Orissa, North East, Punjab and Kerala. Idea Cellular deposited the highest EMD of Rs. 1,306.75 crore. The DoT had set a target of Rs. 1,096 crore, Videocon Telecommunications Rs. 648 crore, Vodafone Rs. 229 crore and Bharti Airtel Rs. 102.75 crore.

Spectrum winners have been given option to opt for deferred payment under which they can pay 33 percent upfront by 1 December and the rest in instalments after two year moratorium. In case these companies opt for deferred payments then Telegwins will have to pay Rs. 1,326.03 crore upfront, Videocon Rs. 713.08 crore, Idea Cellular Rs. 670.33 crore, Vodafone Rs. 372.22 crore and Bharti Airtel Rs. 2.86 crore. Government will give option to companies whose licences were cancelled to adjust entry fee (paid for licences in 2008) in the amount they have to pay as per their preference, a DoT official explained.

“They can set-off entire amount from initial set-0f payment or from the gross amount they have to pay. Based on their indication, we will re-calculate their instalments amount,” the official said. Uninor, in which Telenor had majority stake, paid Rs. 1.658 crore for licences in 2008. Videocon (then Datacom) gave around Rs. 1,500 crore and 13 licences of Idea Cellular cost the company Rs. 1,168 crore.

German business regains confidence

BERLIN, 25 Nov — German industry and trade business confidence rose for the first time after six successive months of decline, Munich-based Ifo institute reported on Friday.

Based on a monthly survey of 7,000 firms in manufacturing, construction, wholesaling and retailing, Ifo published its business climate index for November 2012, showing companies were more satisfied with the current situation and less pessimistic about the future. The index, transformed mean of the balances of business current situation and expectations, climbed from 100 in October to 101.4 in November, the first rebound since March 2012. “The German economy is holding up in the face of the euro crisis,” said Ifo President Hans-Werner Sinn.

It was to the surprise of some economists, who had expected the index to decrease again in November to under 100. Earlier on Friday, German Federal Statistical Office (Destatis) confirmed its initial report that German economy slowed further in the third quarter of 2012, with a quarter-on-quarter growth rate of 0.2 percent, 0.1 percentage point lower than the previous three months.

The index for business satisfaction of current situation increased from 107.2 in October to 108.1, the first gain since June 2012. While the expectation index for the coming six months rose by 2.0 points to 95.2, a slight recovery since March this year.

Extra prenatal choline doesn’t help kids’ brains

NEW YORK, 25 Nov — Taking extra choline during pregnancy does not improve babies’ language and memory skills, according to a new study, “I think eating the recommended amount of choline, which is just about a half of a gram a day for pregnant women, would probably do you well,” Dr Steven Zeisel, the senior author of the study and a professor at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, told Reuters Health. “Going to high levels doesn’t always give you improvement.”

The results contrast with earlier studies in animals showing that a choline boost in utero improves rodents’ performance on memory tasks. Companies claim that choline pills support “brain health,” along with the health of other organs, and sell choline supplements over the counter for about $9 for 100 250-milligram capsules. Choline is an essential nutrient found in meat, eggs and milk, and during pregnancy and breastfeeding, large amounts of choline are delivered to the baby through the mother. Zeisel said it’s possible that the women in the study who didn’t take a choline pill were getting enough from their diet.

Earlier studies have found that pregnant women with very low levels of choline in their diet have a higher chance of delivering a baby with a birth defect report of 25 Sept, 2009). And adults who eat a choline-rich diet perform better on memory tests. To see if adding extra choline during pregnancy can offer any benefits to babies, Zeisel and his colleagues asked 99 pregnant women to take six pills every day, beginning when they were 18 weeks pregnant and continuing until three months after the baby was born.

Fifty of the moms received fake pills containing corn oil, while 49 received pills with 833 milligrams (mg) of phosphatidylcholine, a form of choline.

German business regains confidence

Finnish app store startup

Blaast bets on Android in Asia

Malaysia and Bangladesh have launched Blaast service for basic cellphones. Google’s Android has become the dominant smartphone platform over the last quarters, controlling around 2/3 of smartphone sales globally.

Models costing less than $200 have boosted Android demand, especially in emerging markets.

Business

Nurses can help improve vaccination rates

NEW YORK, 25 Nov — More elderly and at-risk adults get their flu and pneumonia vaccines when non-physician personnel...
All artifacts stolen from Ancient Olympia Museum recovered

ATHENS, 25 Nov — Greek police said on Saturday that all the artifacts which had been stolen from the Ancient Olympia Museum in February have been recovered.

Three Greeks were arrested on Thursday, a case which had shocked Greece and two more were still at large, according to an earlier report.

On 17 February this year, masked perpetrators broke into the museum at the birthplace of the Olympic Games, immobilized female police officers and removed several valuable antiquities.

Upon suggestion of the arrested suspects, all the stolen antiquities were found in a bag buried in a rural area in the nearby port city of Patras.

“Today is an extremely important and happy day for the Ministry of Culture and the archeological community,” Secretary General of the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs, Culture and Sports, Lina Mendoni said during a press briefing in Athens.

“Despite the most difficult economic backdrop, we do not compromise security, neither protection of our cultural heritage,” Citizen’s Protection Minister Nikos Dendias added, praising the arrest of the robbers and the recovery of the artifacts as a great success.

“Amid a wave of negative publicity and reality for Greece and Greek peoples we were registered and verified, as if a part of our heart was missing. Now it is back in place,” Maria Panagopoulou, resident of a village near the ancient Stadium of Olympia, told Xinhua in a telephone interview. The robbery at the Ancient Olympia Museum had shocked Greeks. It was the first time perpetrators had broken into the museum.

In January, robbers who have still not been traced, had stolen a painting by Spanish artist Pablo Picasso and other valuable artworks from the National Art Gallery in Athens.

The two incidents increased worries that the debt crisis which has hit Greece hard since 2009, has weakened security measures at museums and archeological sites.—Xinhua

Alabama shooter kills one sheriff’s deputy, wounds another

NEW YORK, 25 Nov.— A man shot and killed one Alabama sheriff’s deputy and critically wounded another when they went to his home near Fairhope on a report that he was acting aggressively toward family members, authorities said Saturday.

The shooter, Michael Jansen, also was killed in the exchange of gunfire on Friday afternoon, the Baldwin County Sheriff’s Office said in a statement.

Baldwin County Sheriff Huey Mack told reporters that the deputies were called to a report that Jansen had “been confrontational with some family members” and were speaking with him at his home near Fairhope, about 15 miles southeast of Mobile.

“While the deputies were on scene and talking to the individual, the individual produced a handgun and began firing at the deputies,” Mack told reporters. A third deputy at the scene was not wounded.

The two deputies suffered multiple gunshot wounds and were taken to USA Medical Center in Mobile, where Deputy Scott Ward was pronounced dead and the second deputy, who has not been identified, was listed in critical condition, the sheriff’s office said.

Ward served as a sheriff’s deputy for 15 years. “I’m very proud of him, it’s a big loss,” Mack told reporters. “But he was doing his job and we’ll pull together in a time like this and we’ll honour his memory by carrying on.”

The shooting is being investigated by the Baldwin County Major Crimes Task Force, he said.

Mauritania’s Abdel Aziz returns home after gunshot treatment

NOUAKCHOTT, 25 Nov— Mauritanian President Mohammed Ould Abdel Aziz returned home on Saturday after more than a month of medical convalescence in France, calming fears concerning the state of his health and uncertainty over who was managing the country in his absence.

Abdel Aziz, an ally of the West in its fight against al-Qaeda in Africa, flew to Paris on 14 October after soldiers opened fire on his undisclosed location as he returned to the capital Nouakchott from his country residence.

The government and Abdel Aziz himself have said the shooting was accident.

However, many in the coup-prone country had questioned the official version of the shooting. And his delay in returning home after being discharged from hospital last month had also raised questions about who was really in charge.

Thousands of his supporters, some arriving on camels, awaited his arrival at the airport carrying images of the president and banners welcoming him home.

“I was a bit worried, it’s true. But now we are reassured that this is a man determined to finish the mission that God has given him. And we wish him good luck,” said Mariet Oumar Ndaiye, one of his supporters.

Abdel Aziz greeted government ministers and top military officials on the airport’s tarmac but made no statement. He travelled into Nouakchott in the back of a roofless car, shaking hands and waving at the crowds that lined the road.

“It was important to come and see the president, because we heard lots of rumors,” said Allassane, a student who traveled to the airport for Abdel Aziz’s arrival.

“The opposition said he was incapable of running the country, that he’s paralysed. That’s why we came here, to make sure,” he said.

Straddling black and Arab Africa on the continent’s west coast, Mauritania, a country of 3.2 million people, has been hit by two coups since 2005.—Reuters

Italy centre-left picks candidate for next prime minister

ROSE, 25 Nov— Italian centre-left voters head to the polls on Sunday to choose the candidate who will be the leading contender to succeed Mario Monti as prime minister after a general election in March.

Opinion surveys show Democratic Party leader Pier Luigi Bersani is front-runner among five candidates, followed by youthful Florence mayor Matteo Renzi, who has vowed to shake up Italy’s political establishment if he is chosen.

Voting booths will be open from 8:00 to 20:00 local time (07:00 GMT to 19:00 GMT) with results due around midnight (23:00 GMT). About 3-million party and non-party voters are expected to take part.

Bersani may fail to secure the 50 percent he needs for a first-round victory, which will mean a second round run-off will be held on 2 December to decide who will lead an alliance that is well ahead in opinion polls for the next election.

In a second round Bersani is likely to pick up the votes of third-placed left-winger Nichi Vendola, the openly gay governor of the southern Puglia region. The party vote will eliminate a major element of uncertainty in Italian politics ahead of the national poll to choose a successor to Monti’s technocratic government.

While the slick and dynamic Renzi, 37, is much more popular across the general population, savvy career politician Bersani, 61, is favored by party supporters who will decide the primary.

Both men reject the idea encouraged by international markets that the respected and sober Monti should return after the vote to continue his economic policies that have so far included unpopular spending cuts, tax rises and labour reform.—Reuters

Photographers take pictures of maple leaves in a botanical garden in Nanjing, capital of east China’s Jiangsu Province, on 24 Nov 2012. XINHUA

Artists from China perform at the opening ceremony of 2012 Abuja Carnival in Abuja, the capital city of Nigeria, on 24 Nov 2012.—XINHUA

Secretary of the Italian PD (Democratic Party) Pier Luigi Bersani delivers a speech during a political rally with European Socialists in Paris on 17 March 2012. REUTERS
Industry Ministry claims champion in women’s volleyball tournament

NAY PYI TAW, 25 Nov— At the meeting hall No 2 of Nay Pyi Taw Sports Training Camp on 23 November, Union Minister for Sports U Tint Hsan delivered a speech at the concluding ceremony of Fitness Center Training Course No 1/2012.

The Union Minister presented completion certificates to the trainees and viewed use of sports gear by the trainees.

The Union Minister also attended the final match and prize presentation ceremony of the 6th Nay Pyi Taw Inter-Ministry Women’s Volleyball Tournament at the Paunglaung Gymnasium where Ministry of Industry beat Ministry of Defence with a 3-2 result.

After the final match, the deputy ministers of the ministries presented first, second and third prizes to the respective teams and winners. The Union Minister awarded the championship shield and duplicate shield to Ministry of Industry team.

Myanma Alinn

Deputy Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw U Nanda Kyaw Swa back from Germany

YANGON, 25 Nov—At the invitation of Hans Seidel Foundation of Germany, Deputy Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw U Nanda Kyaw Swa and Pyithu Hluttaw Legal Affairs and Special Cases Assessment Commission Member U Win Thein who attended the meeting on Federalism in Europe, Asia and Beyond held in Welberg Cruz of Barbaria State in Germany arrived back here by air this evening.

They were welcomed at the Yangon International Airport by Yangon Region Hluttaw Speaker U Sein Tin Win, Deputy Speaker U Tin Aung and officials from Hluttaw Office.

MNA

Chief Justice of the Union leaves for Japan to cooperate in judicial sector

NAY PYI TAW, 25 Nov—At the invitation of the Ministry of Justice of Japan, Chief Justice of the Union U Tun Tun Oo left here for Japan by flight yesterday evening to cooperate in judicial sector.

The Chief Justice of the Union was accompanied by Kachin State High Court Chief Justice U Tu Ja, Yangon High Court Judge Daw Thin Thin Nwe, Director-General U Sein Than of Supreme Court of the Union and officials.

MNA

People in Loikaw plied with public service media

LOIKAW, 25 Nov—With the aim of enabling the local people to have a wide range of knowledge, Loikaw District Information and Public Relations Department opened the mobile library as part of public service media in Lawpita model village of Mahtawkuh Village-tract in Loikaw Township on 15 November.

In addition, the district department showed off the wall magazine at the hall of the village.

The staff officer of the department explained the purpose of opening the mobile library, public service media and advantages of reading.

The mobile library is kept open from 9 am to 1 pm daily to disseminate knowledge to the bookworms and students.

Myanma Alinn

Milk fed to children in Bago

BAGO, 25 Nov—Bago Region Livestock Breeding and Veterinary Department and Basic Education Department jointly organized the ceremony to feed milk to students from No 14 Basic Education Primary School in Myothit-A Ward of Bago on 9 November.

The selected players of Wushu athletes was held in Nay Pyi Taw.

The sports trial for selecting Wushu players

NAY PYI TAW, 25 Nov—The sports trial for selecting Wushu athletes was held at Bahtoo Gymnasium in Mandalay on 23 November.

The selected players are to represent Mandalay Region in the second Inter-Region/State Students Festival in Nay Pyi Taw.

Students from basic education schools, Sports and Physical Education Institute (Mandalay) and Thurein Nann High School participated in the sports trial.

The selected players will be under training at Bahtoo Stadium.—Myanma Alinn
Spokespersons

We need a strategy to further promote and strengthen trust between the people and the State, between the people and the important stakeholders, and between the government and important stakeholders.

As trust is the foundation for enhanced cooperation among them, this strategy is a must for every country at present. In consequence, good governance is crucial for winning public trust. In fact, public efficiency, distribution of regional administrative power, bonds of understanding between the government and private organizations and the community organizations, administrative accountability and transparency, crisis management and rehabilitation are the vital parts of today’s reforms towards good governance.

As for a government the task of looking into the requirements of the majority is a vital mission towards establishing a modern state. Only then will there be public accepted good governance.

Additionally, good governance supports State power directly. Good governance will help create a caring and sharing society that serves as foundation for mutual trust between the government and the people. From there we will lead towards well-rounded progress. Ours is a people-centred government and its goal is the people-centred development.

Consequently, the role of spokespersons has become vital in today’s reforms and it has become inevitable for them to inform the people about the performances and accomplishments of their institutions through the media. These spokespersons on their part will have to provide people with up-to-date and correct information in an interesting and people-friendly way apart from organizing a lively press meet. This process guarantees transparency a part of good governance.

The more important thing here is the respective ministries and organizations must understand well the nature and the vitality of the government and the people. From there we will lead towards well-rounded progress. Ours is a people-centred government and its goal is the people-centred development.

Educational development...

(From page 16)

As Sagaing University was built under the special programme of the State, he hoped the university to be a best one among universities in Sagaing Region. He called for turning out of students to be good and able persons equipped with good disciplines and patriotic spirit. Not for aiming at getting a degree, it was required to nurture the students to be really educated. He urged teachers to continue their learning to be proficient in their subjects.

President U Thein Sein calls...

(From page 16)

Mandalay and Sagaing regions, senior military officers, commanders and departmental heads visited the construction site of Ayeyawady Bridge (Yadana Theinga) in Kyaukmyaung Sub-township in Sagaing Region to inspect the damages and removal of trusses. The President called on townsmen to make collaborative efforts for successful realization of the visions of the university.

The President then reported to the President on the diamond orbit which tilted to the one side hit by the earthquake on 11 November and progress of repair work.

The President made cash donations for the pagoda and signed in the visitors’ book. Next, the President viewed photos of quaker-hit pagodas and damaged religious edifices displayed in the prayer hall of the pagoda.

Then the President and party arrived back in Nay Pyi Taw via Mandalay International Airport.

Hello! Darling, I will be late tonight. No, I am not in massage spa. I am nabbed by traffic police’ coz I didn’t use Zebra crossing.
NAY PYI TAW, 25 Nov— Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw Thura U Shwe Mann called for mutual understanding among national brethren in the interests of respective regions and the nation as he met local national races from Mon and Kayin States today.

The Speaker in meeting with State Hluttaw representatives, townswelders, departmental personnel and local national races at Zwekabin Hall in Hpa-an said that he was there to see and hear aspirations and voices of races closely and together with him were chairpersons of Hluttaw committees and Union ministers concerned to immediately fulfill their needs if possible.

National brethren in Kayin State have to lead a hard life and departmental staff discharging duties there faced the same fate, said the Speaker. The path of thorn had national brethren into misunderstanding to hold weapons to fight each other, impeding the progress of the region. Today, with the rays of peace within the state, it begins to see development opportunities. Unless and until the armed conflict is ended, there would hardly be progress in ensuring peace and stability in the state, the major aspiration of the locals. The Speaker described collaborative efforts of national brethren with mutual understanding as the most realistic way of fulfilling people’s aspirations in a short time. Though the Hluttaw is featured with diversity, Hluttaw representatives are working in unity for prosperity of the Union without party attachment, dogmatism and regionalism and there is no such thing as opposition party when it comes to interests of the nation. The Speaker added that he was there to serve better the interests of the people than doing so through debate in parliament. Though it is impossible to meet all the inspirations of the people, utmost efforts will be made for what should be done as priority. He urged them to boldly speak out the requirements for stability and development of the state.

Next, local national people, townswelders and state Hluttaw representatives reported requirements of regional development and discussed ongoing measures for peace and stability within the state.

Pyithu Hluttaw Committee Chairperson U Thein Zaw, Union ministers U Aung Min, Lt-Gen Thein Hay and Lt-Gen Ko Ko Ko responded to the reports and discussions.

The Speaker coordinated essentials and urged local people to speak out boldly and frankly their very aspiration and personnel concerned to take care of their requirements with understanding. Civil servants with family spirit need to make sure local people within their assigned regions enjoy the full rights they deserve. The Speaker stressed that all the national people are responsible for development of own nation, saying good citizens make good nation.

The Speaker then cordially greeted those present. The Speaker and parliament members met with Mawlamyine State Hall in Mawlamyine, Mon State where they met local people of Mon State.

The Speaker said they were there to listen to the voices wishes of citizens directly in person though representative members know the wishes and aspirations of citizens at Hluttaw sessions, urging them to make their wishes known boldly and frankly.

Next, local people, townswelders, state Hluttaw representatives and members of political parties discussed for education, health, economic growth and conservation of cultural heritages of the region.

Pyithu Hluttaw Committee Chairperson U Thein Zaw, Union ministers U Aung Min, Lt-Gen Thein Htay and Lt-Gen Ko Ko Ko discussed future plans for development of the region.

The Speaker coordinated requirements and made concluding remarks. He then inspected upgraded Strand Road and infrastructural developments in Mawlamyine.

During the Speaker’s tour of Kayin and Mon States, some of urgent needs of local national races and requirements for regional development could be somewhat fulfilled and local national people were pleased to learn functions of parliament and efforts of the MPs in the interests of the region and nation.—MNA
10 regional leaders to meet in Uganda over DR Congo conflict

KAMPALA, 25 Nov—At least 10 heads of state from the Great Lakes Region will convene in the Ugandan capital Kampala on Saturday for crisis talks aimed at ending escalating fighting in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), a top government official said here on Friday.

Henry Okello Oryem, Uganda’s minister of state for international affairs told Xinhua by telephone that the leaders under their regional body, International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) will finalize plans for the deployment of a 4,000 strong force under the directive.

The ICGLR emergency summit comes barely three days after DRC’s President Joseph Kabila, Rwanda’s Paul Kagame and Uganda’s Yoweri Museveni on Wednesday held crisis talks here aimed at ending the conflict that has forced tens of thousands of DRC people to flee to neighboring Rwanda and Uganda.

“It will be a short meeting. It will take about four to five hours. The leaders will sit down to assess the recent developments in eastern DRC and take a decision on how to move forward to reverse the situation,” said Oryem.

Uganda as the chair of the ICGLR, a body bringing together 11 member countries, has since July been mediating to help end the fighting.

Museveni, Kabila and Kagame on Wednesday urged the M23 rebels to pull out of Goma, the major city in eastern DRC. The rebels have since rejected the directive.

Fighting in eastern DRC has internally displaced 475,000 people and forced 75,000 others to seek refuge in neighboring Rwanda and Uganda, according to a recent report by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

Uganda on Tuesday called for political dialogue between M23 and the DRC government to end the ongoing conflict in the eastern region of the country.

One Abu Sayyaf member captured in S Philippines

ZAMBOANGA, 25 Nov.—A member of rebel group Abu Sayyaf was captured by joint security forces during a raid on Friday night at a remote village of the Southern Philippine City of Zamboanga, local military said Saturday.

According to Captain Alberto Caber, spokesman of army’s 1st division, the captured suspect, identified as Walid Aming, is the fifth militant suspect arrested in the recent joint pursuit against the Abu Sayyaf by local police and military in Zamboanga and Basilan Province.

Amping, also known as Alexander Antonio and Tuna, was arrested at Talonggata village located in the west captured in S Philippines.

Gas explosion levels building, injures 18 in Springfield, Massachusetts

SPRINGFIELD, 25 Nov.—An explosion triggered by a gas leak destroyed a strip club in downtown Springfield, Massachusetts, on Friday, injuring 18 people, although none seriously, authorities said.

Springfield Mayor Domenic Sarno said the building, a Scores Gentlemen’s Club, exploded at about 5:25 pm as gas company workers, police officers and firefighters were responding to a leak in the area. The 18 injured people included nine firefighters, four Columbia Gas of Massachusetts employees and two police officers, Sarno said.

“Through God’s mercy, we are not aware of any fatalities,” Sarno told reporters, adding none of the victims suffered life-threatening injuries.

The club had been evacuated before the explosion due to the gas leak, which may have saved the lives of patrons and employees who had been inside, said Thomas Walsh, a spokesman for the city.

Images on a local CBS affiliate showed buildings with shattered windows, debris scattered in the streets and emergency services entering the area.

Witnesses described to local media a massive explosion that shook the ground and produced a huge cloud of smoke. The explosion was powerful enough to be felt in neighboring towns, Sarno told reporters. —Reuters

One killed, at least four seriously injured in Paris bar shooting

PARIS, 25 Nov.—One person was killed and at least four were seriously wounded in a bar shooting in southeastern Paris on Friday afternoon, local media reported.

The shooting occurred at 13:00 local time (1200 GMT) in a bar in Orlyville.

The initial death toll was reported to be two, but it was later put to be one. Police said that a car pulled up to the bar around lunchtime, a man got out of the car and started shooting.

News channel BFMTV, citing preliminary investigation, said that the dead man was a worker who had lunch at the bar with his colleague who suffered serious injuries. Police were investigating the shooting.

A burnt-out BMW car suspected of being the getaway car was found shortly afterwards in a nearby city.

It was reported that a man with “suspicious behavior” was arrested near the burnt car and put into custody.

Russian Navy modernization in full swing: commander

MOSCOW, 25 Nov.—Russian Navy has planned to fully upgrade all of the four fleets by 2020, Navy Commander Victor Chirkov said on Friday.

According to Admiral Chirkov, the Black Sea, Baltic, Northern and Pacific fleets have been modernizing vessels, armament, as well as coastal and social infrastructure.

“In (Black Sea port) Novorossisk, the port facilities for new ships and submarines have been under construction. I hope we’ll complete them by 2020,” Chirkov said.

Currently, Russian Black Sea Fleet rents its base in Ukraine’s Sevastopol and uses Novorossisk as a backup port. In 2014, part of the Fleet will be relocated to Novorossisk.

According to the Admiral, the Northern Fleet plans to build a base for the new-class submarines of Borey and Yasen types.

At the Pacific Fleet, the facilities to base helicopter carriers of Mistral class and new submarines are being built, while at the Baltic Fleet, bases for new warships and submarines are also being upgraded. Two Mistral helicopter carriers will be put in service at the Pacific Fleet in 2014 and 2015.

Chirkov also said the navy had upgraded their air forces at Baltic, Northern and Pacific bases.

Russia has been designing an aircraft carrier and planned to complete the work by 2020, according to Chirkov.

A female job seeker looks for vacancies at a job fair held in Yinchuan, capital of northwest China’s Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, on 24 Nov, 2012. The job fair provided 8,500 vacancies and attracted more than 15,000 applicants.—Xinhua

Debris from a bomb blast lies in Wardak province on 23 Nov, 2012.—Reuters

Afghanistan truck bomb kills two, foreign troops among 70 wounded

MAIDAN SHAHR, 25 Nov.—A suicide truck bomb killed two people and wounded more than 70 in volatile eastern Afghanistan on Friday, officials said, with several foreign troops among those injured.

The Taleban claimed responsibility for the bombing in Maidan Shahr, the provincial capital of Wardak Province, 35 km (22 miles) southwest of the capital, Kabul, but it was unclear what the target was.

A spokesman for the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) said fewer than six coalition troops had sustained minor injuries in the bombing close to the provincial governor’s office.

The United States has a sizable troop contingent based in Wardak Province, where a twin suicide bombing targeting a NATO base killed eight civilians and four Afghan policemen in September.

Wardak saw the worst single incident suffered by foreign forces in the 11-year war when the Taleban shot down a transport helicopter last year, killing 38 troops, 30 of whom were American, mostly elite Navy SEALS.

Air Force One of US President Barack Obama, centre, is seen passing through the clouds as it flies past heavy smoke rising from the building site of China's Shangri-La Hotel near the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games' venues during a photo session for the International Olympic Committee (IOC) at the Grand Hyatt in Beijing, China on 28 Oct, 2009. The hotel is hosting some 600 delegates and dignitaries from the IOC and the National Olympic Committees (NOCs) from around the world during the 123rd IOC session on 29 and 30 Oct, 2009. It is the first meeting of the IOC since the death of former head and current honorary president Juan Antonio Samaranch.

File photo taken on 18 May, 2011 shows the scenery of Tai’erzhuang ancient city in Zaozhuang, east China’s Shandong Province. Tai’erzhuang ancient city was approved to be the national 5A-level tourist area on 22 Nov, 2012. Xinhua

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File photo taken on 18 May, 2011 shows the scenery of Tai’erzhuang ancient city in Zaozhuang, east China’s Shandong Province. Tai’erzhuang ancient city was approved to be the national 5A-level tourist area on 22 Nov, 2012. Xinhua
Nine killed in flyover collapse in Bangladesh

DHAKA, 25 Nov—At least nine people have been killed and dozens of others injured after three girders of an under-construction flyover collapsed in Bangladesh’s southeastern Chittagong port city, police and firemen said on Sunday.

They said the girders of the flyover collapsed in Chittagong, some 242 km southeast of capital Dhaka, at around 7:30 pm local time Saturday evening. Fireman Md Farhaduzzaman told Xinhua that rescuers had pulled six bodies from under the debris of the girders.

An official with the Chittagong Medical College Hospital police camp who preferred to be unnamed said three more died during treatment.

Bangladesh Army troops were called to assist rescue operation, which began around 9:30 pm on Saturday, along with Rapid Action Battalion, Bangladesh Border Guard and police personnel.

In the rescue operations, angry people demonstrated and set ablaze the flyover-constructing materials after the incident.

Police reportedly fired several rounds of tear shells as protesters vandalized several vehicles. Some 10 motorcycles, including several of the journalists, were also set on fire.

Earlier in June, a rickshaw-puller sustained injuries as a girder of the same flyover collapsed. Two local firms are building the 1.4-km-long flyover.

China tightens measures on reopening of suspended mines

BEIJING, 25 Nov—China’s workplace safety authorities on Saturday required tougher standards on reopening coal mines in production suspension in the wake of a deadly coal mine accident.

Some coal mines were ordered to suspend production due to safety problems, but they illegally resumed production without tackling the safety problems, said a notice by the production safety committee under the State Council, or the cabinet.

The coal mines which have failed to meet the safety standards should not be reopened and those who abuse their power to lower overhaul standards would be punished, the notice said.

A deadly coal mine accident occurred on Saturday at the Xiangshui Coal Mine in Puxian County of the coal-rich Liupanshui City, Guizhou Province, killing 18 people, injuring five and trapping another five after a gas and coal outburst.

Key suspect in Philippines’ worst massacre caught

MANILA, 25 Nov—A key suspect in the Philippines’ worst mass killing that claimed 58 lives was arrested Saturday in the country’s southern province of North Cotabato, police said on Sunday.

The suspect, Bong S. Andal, was the alleged operator of the backhoe used in burying the mass murder victims in Salman village, Ampatuan town, Maguindanao Province on 23 Nov, 2009. He was captured on Saturday on the National Highway in Cotabato by a composite team composed of operatives from the Cotabato Police Provincial Office.

Bong Andal did not resist when he was detained, making him the 106th suspect to fall. He was caught after local villagers provided information of him to authorities.

Chief Director General of the Philippine National Police (PNP) Nonato Bartolome said on Sunday, “The arrest of Andal, and other suspects now in custody manifests the firm resolve of the PNP to arrest and prosecute all suspects behind the mass murder.”

Five killed, one injured in firing in Peshawar, Pakistan

ISLAMABAD, 25 Nov—At least five people were killed and one was injured in a firing incident in northwest Pakistan on Saturday, reported local media Dawn.

Earlier local media Express said that five people were killed and one got wounded when unknown gunmen opened fire at their vehicle in Peshawar, capital city of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province.

But police in Peshawar denied the firing incident and said that the firing incident actually took place in the neighbouring tribal area of Khyber Agency bordering Afghanistan on Saturday afternoon.

When the bodies of the victims were shifted back to the Regi area of Peshawar, where they lived, the family members staged a protest, said a police officer in charge of the Regi area. Police are investigating into the case, he said.

Filipino-Chinese couple shot dead in Metro Manila

MANILA, 25 Nov—A Filipino-Chinese couple was shot dead by two unidentified armed suspects early on Saturday in Philippine capital Metro Manila, local police said later that day.

The victims, identified as Ning Ting Wong, 70, and his wife, Quency Wong, were attacked by two gunmen riding motorcycle in tandem near their plastic factory in Tenejeros village in Malabon City at around 6:00 am, Malabon City police station said.

The suspects allegedly robbed the couple of the payroll money amounting to around 100,000 pesos (about 2,439 US dollars) for their employees.

The wife sustained gunshot wound in her head, while her husband was hit in his chest. Both were declared dead on arrival when they were rushed to the Manila Central University Hospital, the police added.

According to the police, robbery was probably the motive behind the killing, and they were hunting the suspects.—Xinhua

Indian Air Force fighter aircraft crashes in western state, pilot safe

NEW DELHI, 25 Nov—An Indian Air Force combat aircraft crashed in the western Indian state of Gujarat on Saturday, defence sources said. However, the pilot of the MiG-21 Bison aircraft managed to eject safely as it crashed in the fields near Naliya air base in Kutch in Gujarat, the sources said, adding that the mishap happened when the plane was on a routine sortie.

A probe has been ordered into the incident, they said. Some nine Indian Air Force officials were killed in a mid-air collision between two choppers in the state in August this year.

With this development, Bartolome instructed PNP units to press manhunt operations against the remaining 92 suspects still at large, even as he noted the efforts of Special Investigation Task Group Maguindanao in shifting manhunt operations to high gear.

On Friday, another suspect in the massacre was arrested as he mingled with families and friends of some victims during the 3rd year commemoration of the carnage in Ampatuan town, Maguindanao.

Xinhua
Oil rig worker dies of injuries from Black Elk explosion in Gulf

NEW YORK, 25 Nov—One of the men burned last week in an explosion and fire on an oil platform in the Gulf of Mexico died on Friday of his injuries, an official said, bringing the confirmed death toll from the disaster that killed 11 people to 13.

Avelino Taponeria, 49, a welder from the Philippine pines working on the Black Elk Energy rig, died in a New Orleans hospital on Friday morning, according to a statement from the Philippine Ambassador to the United States. He died shortly after his wife and three children arrived from Manila.

In the wake of the 16 November accident, which killed one other worker and left another missing, US regulators ordered Black Elk to take immediate steps to improve safety at its offshore platforms.

The explosion and fire occurred when workers were welding a pipe on the deck of West Delta Block 32 platform, which sits in 56 feet of water about 17 miles to the south of Grand Isle, Louisiana.

The accident evoked memories of the deadly 2010 Deepwater Horizon disaster that killed 11 people and triggered the worst oil spill in US history.

A spokesman for Black Elk did not immediately return an e-mail from Reuters requesting comment.—Reuters

Fresh cold front sweeps China, dropping temperatures

BEIJING, 25 Nov—A fresh cold front moving eastward will bring moderate to heavy snows to west China, dropping temperatures along the way, the National Meteorological Centre (NMC) forecast on Saturday.

Moderate to heavy snow will hit the eastern parts of the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau and some areas in Xinjiang and Inner Mongolia on Saturday, while certain areas in Qinghai and Gansu, as well as Tibet Autonomous Region, will experience temperatures drops from 4 to 6 degrees Celsius in the next three days, the centre said.

The cold front will also bring winds of level 4 to 6 to Xinjiang, Inner Mongolia and central Gansu.

While the northern part of China is frequently beset by cold fronts, the southern regions have been pelted by persistent rains. The NMC cautioned that farmers in the south should take corresponding measures against wet weather.

Two road accidents leave six dead, 14 injured in Ukraine

KYIV, 25 Nov—Six people died, including two children, and 14 others were injured in two separate traffic accidents in eastern Ukraine, authorities reported on Friday.

In one case, which occurred at 5.30 pm local time Thursday (1530 GMT), four people were killed and seven others injured when the minibus they were riding in collided with a car in Dnepropetrovsk region, according to the country’s Emergencies Ministry.

The driver of the car, who was a Russian citizen, admitted to driving drunk. Two other drivers were later detained, police said.

In another accident in Lugansk region, two people died and seven others were injured after a bus carrying 10 people went off the road on Friday, police said. At around 5.50 am local time (0350 GMT), the passengers on the bus were going to work at a nearby coal mine.

The causes of both accidents are under investigation.—Xinhua

New York triple-murder suspect posed as retired cop

NEW YORK, 25 Nov—Neighbours of the man charged with murdering three New York shopkeepers, a man who could have told that he had worked as a retired police officer.

“He was the kind of guy who you could tell had watched ‘The Godfather’ too many times,’’ said Ben Elchonen, who lives in the same Queens neighborhood. “He had an Italian accent and claimed to be a cop, maybe even a detective.”

Perrone was identified after police circulated a picture taken from a security camera near the scene of the third attack.

A rifle and 22 caliber ammunition consistent with shell casings found at the crime scenes were discovered in a duffel bag Perrone was seen carrying in the surveillance video, police said.

An attorney who represented Perrone at his arraignment could not immediately be reached for comment.—Reuters

Senior Chinese legislator meets Russian parliamentarians

MOSCOW, 25 Nov—Senior Chinese legislator Chen Zhi met Russian parliamentarians here on Thursday, with both sides pledging to strengthen bilateral ties. Chen, vice chairman of the Standing Committee of China’s National People’s Congress (NPC) and chairman of the All-China Women’s Federation, said the China-Russia comprehensive relations of strategic cooperation and partnership had maintained positive and stable development which was facilitated by leaders of the two countries.

The visiting Chinese legislator held separate talks with Valentina Matviyenko, chairman of the Federation Council, or upper house of the parliament, and Ludmila Slivetsova, vice chairman of the State Duma, or lower house of the parliament.

Calling Russia “a major and the most significant strategic partner of cooperation,” Chen said China was willing to fulfill consensus reached by leaders of two countries following their mutual visits and implement the blueprint of China-Russia relations for the next decade. Meanwhile, the two giant neighbours should “further deepen their political and strategic mutual trust, enhance pragmatic cooperation in all fields, strengthen their cooperation in the international arena” so as to push forward the bilateral ties to new heights, Chen said.

In addition, deepening bilateral women’s exchanges served to strengthen the “traditional friendship” of the two countries, Chen said, adding China would like to further promote China-Russia women’s exchanges.—Xinhua

Two new metro stations to open in St Petersburg

ST PETERSBURG, 25 Nov—St Petersburg’s metro network will have two new stations serving the city’s southern part next week.

The City Transport Committee has announced that the new Bucharestskaya and Meshchanskaya stations will open to the public on 27 December.

St Petersburg currently has five lines totaling 65 stations.—Xinhua

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Lady Gaga found fans in her garage in the middle of the night

Mumbai, 25 Nov — Many filmmakers wish to work with Kareena Kapoor, but she has her eyes set on one director — Zoya Akhtar, who has scripted the actress’ forthcoming film Talash.

“I am grateful to the directors who have cast me and that means a lot. (There are) Actors that I have worked with double times, so I consider myself lucky. But I personally love Zoya’s (Akhtar) work. I would love to work with Zoya,” Kareena told IANS.

Earlier, reports indicated that Zoya was working on a script and intended to cast Kareena and her cousin, actor Ranbir Kapoor in the movie. However, to this, Kareena said: “She is wonderful. I hope things fall in place. I think Zoya is writing a script, but nothing is concrete right now.”

Meanwhile, Kareena believes the “audience has become very sharp and they are liking different films.”

PTI

Kate Winslet’s Titanic red gown up for auction

Los Angeles, 25 Nov — The iconic red ‘jump dress’ that Kate Winslet’s character Rose DeWitt Bukater wore in Titanic is slated to go under the hammer along with Orlando Bloom’s ‘Legolas’ bow from The Lord of the Rings trilogy at an auction here on 15-16 December.

The ‘Drama Action, Romance - The Hollywood Auction’ by Profiles in History also features the original Gort helmet from sci-fi classic The Day the Earth Stood Still. Winslet’s exquisite dress was designed by Deborah L Scott. This costume featured in one of the most memorable scenes of the movie when Rose and Jack meet for the first time on the windswept deck of the Titanic. Jack, played by Leonardo DiCaprio, finds a distraught Rose leaning off a railing and stops her from leaping to her death.

The dress is expected to fetch USD 200,000 - USD 300,000. While the bow was used by Bloom as ‘Legolas’ throughout the entire The Lord of the Rings trilogy. The bow was presented to Elizabeth Taylor.

PTI

Zayed Khan gets nostalgic over uncle Feroz Khan’s song

Mumbai, 25 Nov — Actor Zayed Khan got nostalgic listening to DJ Aqeel’s remix version of Feroz Khan’s song “Oh GALERA! In Rio + My beautiful fans are wearing leather & bandanas in the sun, bad asses, gorgeous smiles & fists in the air! I HEAR U! “I’m sending you hamburgers, fries and coke. I love you monsters. (sic)”

PTI

PTI

Elizabeth Taylor has a new Barbie doll dedicated to her

NEW DELHI, 25 Nov — Toy giant Mattel have honoured the late actress Elizabeth Taylor and her charity by creating a unique new doll, which comes with her signature black hair and a glamorous white dress and is named ‘White Diamonds’ after Elizabeth’s best-selling perfume.

A red satin ribbon can be seen pinned onto the dress, which features Elizabeth’s dedication to helping those living with HIV/AIDS, and the Barbie comes with accessories such as gold jewellery, white sunglasses and a miniature replica bottle of her famous fragrance.

The Elizabeth Taylor White Diamonds Barbie doll is available on BarbieCollector.com for $150.

Elizabeth, who died in March 2011 from congestive heart failure, was recently named the highest-paid dead celebrity by Forbes and is said to have earned a staggering $210 million last year alone from the auctioning of her jewellery, costumes and artwork. — PTI

PTI

Kya dekhte ho, surat tumhari, nostalgic listening to DJ Aqeel’s remix version of Feroz Khan’s song “Oh GALERA! In Rio + My beautiful fans are wearing leather & bandanas in the sun, bad asses, gorgeous smiles & fists in the air! I HEAR U! “I’m sending you hamburgers, fries and coke. I love you monsters. (sic)”

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Bayern, Dortmund claim victories in German Bundesliga

BERLIN, 25 Nov — Frontrunner Bayern Munich humiliated Hannover 5-0 owing to a faultless performance while defending champions Dortmund came from behind to defeat Mainz 2-1 at the 13th match day of Bundesliga on Saturday. Record champions Bayern Munich return to winning ways following the hammering victory over chanceless Hannover, which were unable to make any impact on the scoreboards. The Bavarians caught a bright start as Frenchman by Phillip Lahm. Thirteen minute following a cross scissor-kick at the 25th he scored with a sideways the home sides tally when he used Mario Gomez, who was fielded after a free kick cross by Tori Kroos to increase the lead to four with 63 minutes on the clock. Finally, substitute Mario Gomez, who was fielded after a long-range strike opened the game to overtime but there was no winner in third.

Heat overcome Cavaliers to remain unbeaten at home

MIAMI, 25 Nov — The NBA champion Miami Heat staged a thrilling fightback to keep their unbeaten home record alive, beating the Cleveland Cavaliers 110-108 on Saturday. The Heat, down by 11 at halftime and by seven with just under two minutes remaining, stormed home thanks mainly to Ray Allen who scored the last seven points to push the Heat to 10-3 on the season and 6-0 in Miami. Allen coaxed in a lay up and drew a foul with 1:32 remaining for a three-point play and then gave the Heat the lead with 18 seconds left with a three-point-er. Cavaliers guard Jeremy Pargo had a chance to send the game to overtime but Dwyane Wade blocked his late shot.

Netherlands sweep 3 golds in ISU World Cup speed skating event

MOSCOW, 25 Nov — The International Skating Union (ISU) World Cup speed skating event kicked off in Kolomna, Russia on Saturday, with the Netherlands winning three gold medals. In the 1,500m Ladies Division A, Linda deVries from the Netherlands was timed in 1:58.31 for the gold medal. Czech skater Karolina Erbanova and Ayaka Kikuchi from Japan ranked second and third respectively. Moritz Geisreiter from Germany won in the 5,000m Men Division B clocking 6 minutes and 21.61 seconds. He is followed by Canadian skater Jordan Belchos and another German athlete Robert Lehmann. In the 1,500m Ladies Division A, Dutchwoman Marrit Leenstra clocked 1 minute, 55.03 seconds edging Yekaterina Shikhova of Russia by 0.49 seconds. Defending overall World Cup champion Christine Nesbitt from Canada clocked 1:56.16 for the third. Svet Kramer led a Dutch sweep of podium places in the 5,000m Men Division A. The Olympic champion clocked 6 minutes, 10.62 seconds to mark his second straight victory in the discipline this season.

Hatton retires again after ninth round knockout

LONDON, 25 Nov — Britain’s Ricky Hatton announced his retirement from boxing for a second time after his comeback ended in a ninth-round knockout defeat by Ukrainian welterweight Vyacheslav Senchenko in Manchester, England on Saturday. Britain’s 34-year-old two-weight former world champion had lost 4-1/2 stone in preparation for his first fight in 3-1/2 years and 20,000 rauces fans turned up at the MEN Arena to see his return to the ring in his home city. He seemed to heading for a points win but began to tire in the later rounds and the 35-year-old Senchenko, himself a former world champion, unleashed a fierce left hook to the body. Hatton hit the canvas and failed to beat the count leaving the Ukrainian, who only lost his world title to American Paulie Malignaggi in April, as the only man to beat him in England. “I needed one more fight to see if I still got it —and I haven’t,” Hatton told a post-fight news conference. “I found out tonight it isn’t there no more. “I can look at myself in the mirror and tell myself I did my best, but there is always an excuse to find.”
Obama visits bookstore, promotes “Small Business Saturday”

New York, 25 Nov—President Barack Obama, in a bid to show support for small businesses, took his daughters on an early Christmas shopping trip on Saturday as the US retail sector swings into high gear this holiday season.

Promoting “Small Business Saturday,” the third annual event that encourages consumers to support independently-owned local shops, Obama took his daughters Sasha and Malia to “One More Page Books” in Arlington, Virginia, a suburb of Washington, DC.

“Preparation,” said Obama, while talking to the store owner at the front counter and looking at his Blackberry, apparently checking books while his daughters stood at his side. “That’s how I shop.”

Over the last two decades, small businesses have created two of every three US jobs. To try to spur job growth, the Obama administration says it aims to cut taxes for small businesses and expand entrepreneurs’ access to financing.

Both Main Street merchants and large retailers will find out soon if the so-called fiscal cliff that threatens to produce tax increases and automatic spending cuts in January will find out soon if the spending cuts will subdue shoppers and hold back spending this holiday season.

Congress and Obama are about to negotiate on a deal to avert the roughly $600 billion in tax increases and spending cuts set to start piling on the economy at the beginning of 2013.

 Asked by reporters what is needed to cushion the economic impact of the looming fiscal cliff, Obama declined to answer, saying “we’re doing Christmas shopping.”

President Malia Obama said her children’s books that will be given as Christmas gifts to family members.

Last year, more than 100 million Americans shopped locally on Small Business Saturday, according to an estimate by American Express.

Turkey expects NATO Patriot missile decision within week

Istanbul, 25 Nov—Turkey expects NATO to make a decision about deploying surface-to-air Patriot missiles along its southern border with Syria within the next week, Defence Minister Ismet Yilmaz said on Saturday.

Turkey asked NATO for the Patriot system, designed to intercept aircraft or missiles, on Wednesday after weeks of talks about how to shore up security on its 900-km (560-mile) border as the conflict in Syria deepens.

NATO said it would discuss the request “without delay” but the move has riled Syria, which called it “provocative”, as well as its allies, including Russia and Iran, who are hostile to any development that they perceive could be a first step towards implementing a no-fly zone.

“We asked for Patriots from NATO taking into account the critical situation that emerged on our border with Syria... The aim is for the protection of the widest possible area in Turkey,” Yilmaz told reporters. “We expect the NATO Council to make its decision within the week,” he said.

Turkey is reluctant to be drawn into a regional conflict but the proximity of Syrian bombing raids to its border is straining nerves. Ankara has repeatedly scrambled fighter jets along the frontier and responded in kind to stray Syrian shells that have crossed into its territory.
President U Thein Sein calls on quake victims to redouble their efforts without desperation

Sending of remark by the President to the Speaker of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw regarding the Bill to amend the Auditor-General of the Union Law

1. The Speaker of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw sent a message to the President regarding "the bill to amend the Auditor-General of the Union Law" approved by Pyidaungsu Hluttaw on 23-10-2012 in accordance with Section 105 of the Constitution to be signed by the President so that the bill can be enacted.
2. The translation of the full text of “the bill to amend the Auditor-General of the Union Law” is as follows:-

1. The Law shall be known as the Law to amend the Auditor-General of the Union Law.

2. The phrase, “occasionally submitting report on unusual circumstance at the session of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw, or the Pyithu Hluttaw or the Amyotha Hluttaw regarding the auditing of the Union budget accounts”, stated in Section 11 (a) of the Auditor-General of the Union Law shall be substituted with the phrase, “submitting a report once a year at least and occasionally submitting report on unusual situation at the session of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw, the Pyithu Hluttaw and the Amyotha Hluttaw regarding the auditing of the Union budget accounts.”

3. The phrase, “submitting a report on the action of the Auditor-General of the Union to the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw through the President”, stated in Section 11 (j) of the Auditor-General of the Union Law shall be substituted with the phrase, 

(See page 8)