Pyithu Hluttaw Deputy Speaker meets Minister of State for Foreign Affairs and Commonwealth Affairs of Britain

NAY PYI TAW, 13 Dec—A delegation led by Rt. Hon. Mr Hugo George William Swire, Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the Britain, called on U Nanda Kyaw Swa, Deputy Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw at the Pyithu Hluttaw Affairs Building here this afternoon.

During the meeting, they discussed matters on related to international parliamentary tasks, works in Myanmar parliament and promoting cooperation between parliaments of the two countries. Also present at the meeting were Chairman of Public Accounts Committee U Thurein Zaw, Chairman of Guarantee, Pledges and Undertakings Vetting Committee U Win Sein, Secretary of Public Accounts Committee U Maung Toe, Secretary of Hluttaw Rights Committee Dr Soe Yin, Member of Legal Affairs and Special Cases Assessment Commission U Than Tun and officials from the Hluttaw Office.

Myanmar team waves the national flag as they leave Nay Pyi Taw.

Photo Aye Min Soe

ASEAN-India car rally can promote tourism

The car rally was organized by ASEAN and Ministry of External Affairs of Government of India to mark the 20th year of the ASEAN-India relations, and the convoy passes through nine countries covering a 7,816km stretch, in 23 days starting from Nov 26. Meanwhile, the countries where the convoy wind through got the good chance to promote their respective tourism industry, letting the convoy drive past their tourist attractions and showing their hospitality.

Participants of the car rally had visited tourists attractions in the countries they travelled before they reached Myanmar. Though they experienced some challenges, they enjoyed wonderful trip as the arrangements for the car rally and accommodation for the participants were very systematic in other countries, said Hsu Pan Hitwar, an actress and one of the participants from Myanmar. Myanmar team won the Friendship Award during the trip in Indonesia, she added as she looked with pride at what the Myanmar team had achieved.

“The car rally also promotes the tourism in the countries we travelled. For example, we visited Angkor Wat in Cambodia,” said Wai Lu Kyaw, an actor, one of the participants from Myanmar.

“But when we are driving in Myanmar, we feel that we are showing bad condition of roads in Myanmar to other participants,” says Wai Lu Kyaw, as he stands near his Mahindra vehicle before checking in the Zabuthiri Hotel in Nay Pyi Taw, “we should drive to tourist attractions in Myanmar including Kyaikhtiyo Pagoda, Shwedagon Pagoda and Bagan to promote tourism of our country.”

“’The car rally does not mean just driving across countries,” he added.

Myanmar sent eight representatives including four celebrities and media representatives to the car rally which will be flagged down in Delhi on 20 December by the Prime Minister Manmohan Singh in the presence of ten Heads of State from the ASEAN countries.

(By A M Soe)

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Information Team
Press Release (12/2012)
14 December 2012
1st Waxing of Nadaw 1374 ME

Releasing medical records of four children with suspected health problems caused by acid

1. According to the request of Chairperson Daw Aung San Suu Kyi of Investigation Commission formed regarding Lapadaungtaung Copper Mining Project in Salingyi Township of Monywa District of Sagaing Region, four children with suspected health problems due to the exposure to acid were sent to Yangon Children’s Hospital and medical check-ups were made.

2. The four children arrived at Yangon Children’s Hospital on 11 December 2012, and received necessary medical check-ups by specialists. Their medical records revealed as follow:-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>remarks/diseases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ma Yun Wadi</td>
<td>one year and ten months</td>
<td>Cerebral Palsy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mg Kaung Htet Zaw</td>
<td>eight years</td>
<td>Cerebral Palsy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ma San Yu Maw</td>
<td>two years and four months</td>
<td>Cerebral Palsy, Brain Tumour surgery was given five years ago, Loss of vision occurred gradually.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ma Zin Mar Swe</td>
<td>16 years</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. According the aforementioned examination results, there is no symptoms of exposing to acid, it is learnt.
Myitha river crossing bridge: east and west meets in Gangaw

Kalay, 13 Dec — Myitha suspension bridge links east Gangaw and west Gangaw which are separated by Myitha river. Thanks to the new bridge, locals from villages in west Gangaw and national races from Chin State (South) will be able to visit east Gangaw by bikes.

Myomya ward administrator gave an account of the bridge, an important infrastructure for regional development that it was the third time for construction of the river crossing bridge. The previous bridges had collapsed in overflow of Myitha river. The present bridge was higher than previous ones. Construction works started at the early of 2012. It is 700 feet long and eight feet wide. The bridge thronged with the collaborative efforts of the State, townships development affairs committee and local people. With the emergence of the new bridge, flower, onion, garlic and other agriculture produce will be able to be transported to other parts of the region via Gangaw, thereby contributing towards socio-economic status of local people. — Kyemon

Illegal teak, stimulant tablets seized in Ottwin Township

Ottwin, 13 Dec — According to a tip-off, a team of police members led by Sub-inspector Aung Kyaw U Tin Maung Nyunt of Minginnyo Ward in Toungoo for illegal possession of teak, and the driver and the conductor for possession of stimulant tablets.— Kyemon

Japanese donor contributes to construction of new school building in Meiktila

Meiktila, 13 Dec — The opening of new school building for Basic Education Primary School No (131) in Inbinwa village of Yeyaw village-tract in Meiktila Township took place at the school on 9 December. The new school building was built with the contribution of wellwisher Mr. Takao Yamamoto of Japan. The Japanese wellwisher donated K 4.5 million for construction of new building plus school furniture, tubewell and water tank. The wellwisher had already spent more than K 50 million on social and education sectors in Meiktila including construction of eight primary schools and school for the blind, and clothing and cash assistance for Nyaungkai Orphanage. He vowed to more make donations for primary schools in the township. — Kyemon

Philanthropic efforts of Save the Aged in Nyaungdon

Nyaungdon, 13 Dec — A group of doctors from Save the Aged gave health care services to the elderly and made cash donations at Ward-9 in Nyaungdon recently. They provided primary schoolchildren with light refreshment at Myaynu BEPS in the township and presented cash donation for the school.— Kyemon

AFC qualifier back home

Yangon, 13 Dec — Myanmar U-19 women’s football team comprising seven-member coach-manager team and 23 players led by Daw Miyat Miyat Oo that was qualified for AFC Championship-2013 arrived back, here, on 11 December by air. They were welcomed back at the Yangon International Airport by MyanmarFootball Federation President U Zaw Zaw and executives.

Yadanarbon FC owner Dr Sai Sam Tun and responsible persons of Myanmar stood first in Group B, beating Vietnam 2-1 and India 8-0, and making a one-all draw with China Taipei. At the play-off stage, Myanmar beat Thailand by one goal to nil.

At the final stage, Myanmar will meet Asian football giants—Democratic Korea and China.

Electricity within reach of locals

Yangon, 13 Dec — At the upgrading ceremony of Myoma Basic Education High School, Yamethin was upgraded into high school. The branch of the school was upgraded into high school.

Myoma Basic Education High School, Yamethin

The upgrading ceremony of Myoma Basic Education High School, Ramatheth, Mandalay Region was held at the school on 5 December.

At the upgrading ceremony, schoolchildren entertained those present with songs and dances.

At the upgrading ceremony, schoolchildren viewed round wall posters, library and art room.

MWEA Chairperson and party leaves for Bangladesh

Yangon, 13 Dec — At the invitation of Washington-based Asia Foundation of the USA, a five-member Myanmar delegation led by Chairperson of the Myanmar Women Entrepreneurs’ Association Daw Wah Wah Tun left, here, by air on 8 December to attend the South Asia Women Entrepreneurs’ Association Symposium to be held in Dhaka of Bangladesh and to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with Asia Women University.

They were seen off at Yangon International Airport by Founder and Patron of the association Advisor to Myanmar Women Entrepreneurs’ Association Daw Yee Yee Myint and executives.— MNA
Putin says coming years to be turning point for Russia

**MOSCOW, 13 Dec—** Russian President Vladimir Putin on Wednesday said the upcoming years would become a turning point for Russia and the whole world.

The forthcoming years are decisive and will become a turning point not only for Russia, but also for the world, as competition for natural and human resources has been increasing,” Putin said in a state-of-the-nation address to the Federal Assembly at the Kremlin in Moscow, on 12 Dec, 2012.—**Xinhua**

Syria fires Scud missiles at rebels—US, NATO officials

**MARRAKECH, (Morocco) 13 Dec—** Syrian President Bashar al-Assad’s forces have fired Scud-style ballistic missiles against rebel targets in recent days, US and NATO officials said on Wednesday, in what US officials described as an escalation in the 20-month civil war.

The United States, European powers and Arab states bestowed their official blessing on Syria’s newly-formed opposition coalition on Wednesday, despite increasing signs of Western unease at the rise of militant Islamists in the rebel ranks.

Rebels battled Assad’s troops on the outskirts of his Damascus power base.

Their advances in the past two weeks have prompted their international allies to talk of the 20-month-old conflict finally entering a decisive phase.

In Damascus, a massive car bomb and two other explosions hit the main gate of the Interior Ministry. Lebanon’s Al-Manar television, which supports Assad’s Hezbollah allies, said four people had been killed.

“Allied intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance assets have detected the launch of a number of unguided, short-range ballistic missiles inside Syria this week,” said a NATO official in Brussels.—**Reuters**

UN nuclear agency “ready” to go to Iran’s Parchin site

**VIENNA, 13 Dec—** UN nuclear inspectors travelling to Iran would be prepared to go to its disputed Parchin military complex if the Islamic state were to allow a visit during talks in Teheran this week, the head of their delegation said on Wednesday.

Western diplomats say Iran has carried out extensive tests with possible nuclear dimensions to Iran’s nuclear programme. It says Parchin is a conventional military site and has dismissed allegations of “sanitisation” there.

Thursday’s talks in Vienna on its way to Iran on 12 Dec, 2012.—**Reuters**

**UN nuclear agency “ready” to go to Iran’s Parchin site**

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), speaks to media at the airport in Vienna on his way to Iran on 12 Dec, 2012.—**Reuters**

US defence chief in Kabul for talks on future US presence

**KABUL, 13 Dec—** US Defence Secretary Leon Panetta arrived on an unannounced visit to Kabul on Wednesday for talks with military commanders ahead of a decision on how large a US military presence to keep in the country after the NATO mission ends in 2014.

Panetta has not disclosed how large a force he thinks will be needed, but one US official has told Reuters that figures as low as 6,000 US troops were under consideration.

“The size of that enduring presence is something that the president is going to be considering over these next few weeks,” Panetta told troops in Kuwait before bording his flight to Kabul.

Panetta told reporters travelling with him that he would meet the top US commander in Afghanistan, General John Allen, to discuss options being prepared for Obama’s consideration. Obama, he said, would hopefully come to a decision “in the next few weeks”.

Obama, fresh from a re-election campaign that made clear his intention to end the 11-year-old war and bring the vast majority US forces home by the end of 2014.

There are 68,000 US troops in the country, a figure expected to gradually decline over the next two years despite concerns that the Taliban remains a resilient enemy.

A report released by the Pentagon this week noted a slight rise in Taliban attacks between April and September this year, compared with 2011. At the same time, it said the insurgency’s refuges in Pakistan, endemic corruption and the limited capacity of the Afghan state were the greatest risks to Afghanistan’s long-term stability.

Panetta, on his fifth trip to Afghanistan since becoming defence secretary last year, said he would meet President Hamid Karzai.

He expressed optimism in the growing capabilities of Afghan security forces, despite concerns in the United States that few units can fully operate without US military support.

Panetta also noted that the number of so-called insider attacks against US forces by Afghan security forces had declined, from a high of about 12 in August to two in November.—**Reuters**

Four Libyan policemen wounded in blast

**BENGHAZI, (Libya) 13 Dec—** A bomb exploded in front of a police station in Libya’s eastern city of Benghaz on Wednesday, wounding four officers, the force said.

Libya’s government is struggling to contain fighters and militias who gained power during the revolt that started in Benghaz and went onto oust Muammar Gaddafi last year.

A police official said it looked like the bomb had been buried in the ground outside the police station in the al-Fufahat area of the city and went off when a car approached.

“The two policemen inside the car were severely injured, and two others who were standing at the entrance of the building were also wounded,” the official said.

The US ambassador to Libya, Christopher Stevens, was killed in the city after Islamist gunmen attacked the US consulate and a safe house refuge in September, in the worst of a string of attacks on international convoys and official buildings. The head of police in Benghaz was killed in front of his home last month.—**Reuters**
US military’s secret mini-shuttle lifts off from Florida

While launching from Florida, the military has been landing the robotic space planes at Vandenberg Air Force Base in California. The agency is considering landing and refurbishing its X-37B space ships at NASA and Air Force bases in Florida, which has been courting new customers since the retirement of NASA’s space shuttles last year.

“We are investigating the possibility of using the former shuttle infrastructure for X-37B OTV landing operations and are looking into consolidating landing, refurbishment and launch operations at Kennedy Space Centre or Cape Canaveral Air Force Station in an effort to save money,” Bunko wrote.

“Those investigations are in an early state, and any specifics will not be known for some time,” she added.

The vehicles, which were built by Boeing, are about one-fourth the size of a NASA shuttle and use solar panels to generate power, rather than chemical fuel cells that limited the space shuttles’ time in orbit.

Neither NASA nor the Air Force has plans to upgrade the X-37B to carry people.

The OTV-3 flight had been delayed several months pending the results of an investigation into an upper-stage engine problem during an 4 October Delta 4 flight to put a Global Positioning System satellite into orbit.

The Delta 4 upper-stage is similar to one used on Atlas rockets. Both vehicles are built and flown by United Launch Alliance, a partnership of Boeing and Lockheed Martin.

The United Launch Alliance Atlas 5 rocket carrying the US military’s X-37B spacecraft lifted off from Cape Canaveral, Florida on 11 Dec, 2012.—Reuters

Microsoft ups Surface production, to sell in more stores

“We’ve increased production and are expanding the ways in which customers can interact with, experience and purchase Surface,” said Panay, but gave no details of how many extra units were being produced.

Panay did not mention names of retailers that will sell the Surface, but separately office equipment retailer Staples Inc said it would stock the tablet from Wednesday.

He said the Surface would also be on sale to retailers in Australia from mid-December, with more countries trying to follow in the next few months.

Since launch in late October, the Surface has only been sold by Microsoft itself, in its own brick and mortar stores in the United States and Canada and online in the United Kingdom and Germany.

The only Surface model available now is officially called Surface with Windows RT — runs a version of Windows created to work on the low-power chips designed by ARM Holdings, which dominate smartphones and tablets but are incompatible with old Windows applications.

It starts at $499 for the 32 gigabyte version plus $150 for a thin cover that doubles as a keyboard. A larger, heavier tablet — called Surface with Windows 8 Pro — will be introduced in January, running on an Intel Corp chip that works with all Microsoft’s Windows and Office applications. Microsoft plans to price the new Surface from $899 for a 64 gigabyte version.

The world’s largest software company also said it would keep its chain of ‘pop-up’ holiday stores open into the new year and will convert them into permanent retail outlets or what it called “specialty store locations”.—Reuters

Sales staff demonstrate the Microsoft Surface during the opening of Microsoft’s retail store in New York’s Times Square on 25 Oct, 2012.—Reuters

Autonomy spurs questions on looming accounting overhaul

NEW YORK, 13 Dec—The scandal at Autonomy, a UK software group bought last year by Hewlett-Packard Co, has some accountants wondering about the wisdom of new, global standards in the pipeline that would change how companies account for revenue.

“Revenue recognition” is the most common type of corporate book-keeping. The Autonomy scandal, though still murky, allegedly involves a great deal of overstated revenue, or how much money was coming into the company from customers. That allegation has been leveled by HP, which said last month it overpaid for Autonomy and accused it of “serious accounting improprieties.”

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The dispute comes as accounting standard setters grapple with new standards for recognizing revenue. Some accountants fear these standards, set for completion by mid-2013, could mean a step backward in fighting accounting abuses. The goal of the new, global approach is ambitious. If completed as planned, the standards would for the first time put companies in the United States and in more than 100 other countries under the same revenue account- ing rules. Inconsistency on this is widespread now and often a source of disagreements.

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Fed set to expand its monetary stimulus

WASHINGTON, Dec—The Federal Reserve is expected to announce a fresh round of bond buying on Wednesday as part of its efforts to support a fragile economic recovery threatened by political wrangling over the government’s budget.

The central bank looks certain both to extend its purchases of mortgage-backed debt and replace another expiring stimulus programme with a new bout of money creation.

Policymakers are also likely to repeat a pledge to keep buying bonds until the labour market outlook improves substantially. A further 7.7 percent in November from 7.9 percent in October was driven by workers exiting the labour force, a fact certain to disappoint the Fed.

Lilly is currently testing a breakthrough treatment, known as Operation Twist, draws to a close, officials look set to replace it with a fresh $45 billion per month in mortgage buying. Unlike those in Twist, which were funded by sales and redemptions of short-term debt, the new Treasury purchases will further expand the Fed’s $2.8 trillion balance sheet.

Economists also expect the central bank to continue buying $40 billion per month in mortgage-backed securities as announced in September, keeping the monthly pace of total asset purchases at $85 billion — a figure the Fed highlighted in its last policy statement.

“We want to see continued improvement in labour markets in the near term, and monetary policy should encourage faster economic growth to achieve that objective,” Eric Rosengren, the dovish president of the Boston Federal Reserve Bank, said last week. The central bank will announce its decision around 12:30 pm (1730 GMT), and Fed Chairman Ben Bernanke will discuss it at a news conference at 2:15 pm (1915 GMT).—Reuters

Industrial output soars 8.2 percent in October, inflation jumps

NEW DELHI, Dec—A big surge in manufacturing output pushed India’s industrial growth to its highest in more than a year in October, a sign that Asia’s third largest economy may have turned a corner that strengthens the RBI’s case against a rate cut.

The Reserve Bank of India has kept interest rates on hold since April because of stubborn inflation, defying calls from business and politicians for help in fighting a slump that has dragged the economy toward its slowest growth in a decade. The index of industrial production (IIP) grew 8.2 percent annually in October, data released by the Central Statistics Office showed on Wednesday, well above the 4.5 percent forecast by a Reuters poll.

October factory and mine output showed the strongest growth since June 2011, after IIP growth spent most of this year close to, or below zero percent. However, the industrial index is a volatile indicator that often lingers violently.

Economists said the rebound was largely due to a low base a year earlier, when religious festivals closed many factories. This year’s sharp slowdown prompted Prime Minister Manmohan Singh in September to push through some of the boldest reform measures of his eight-year tenure despite political opposition, trying to jolt the economy back to more rapid growth.—Reuters

ENBD aims to double small business lending in 2013

DUBAI, Dec—Emirates NBD ENBD.DU expects lending to small businesses to double and top $1 billion dirhams ($272 million) next year as Dubai’s largest bank diversifies away debt.

Emirates NBD, which acquired Dubai Bank in 2010, will see revenue propped up by lending to SMEs, he said. “We are seeing lot of action in food and beverage, travel and tourism, oil field services and construction.”—Reuters
**Venezuelan president Chavez’s recovery ‘complex and difficult’: VP**

**CARACAS, 13 Dec—**The recovery of Venezuela’s President Hugo Chavez will be “complex and difficult” following a fourth round of cancer surgery, Vice President Nicolas Maduro said on Wednesday.

“Certainly, the surgery was complex, difficult and delicate, which indicates to us that the post-surgery process will also be complex and difficult,” Maduro said.

On Tuesday, Chavez underwent six hours of surgery at the Medical-Surgical Research Centre in Havana, Cuba, after doctors detected a recurrence of cancerous cells in his body.

In a national radio and television broadcast, Maduro, who Chavez named as his successor prior to leaving for Cuba, said President Chavez faced a “difficult” recovery from cancer surgery, and that senior officials were in permanent contact with Chavez’s medical team in Havana.

Maduro said he will continuously inform Venezuelans of Chavez’s recovery process. Cilia Flores, Venezuela’s Attorney General, and Jorge Arreaza, Science and Technology Minister and the president’s son-in-law, travelled to Cuba to remain by Chavez’s side, said Maduro.

During the broadcast from the government palace in the capital Caracas, Maduro was accompanied by Rafael Ramirez, Energy and Petroleum Minister, and National Assembly President Diosdado Cabello, who had been in Cuba for the surgery.

**Philippine, US military to sign pacts on terrorism, disaster response**

**MANILA, 13 Dec—**Top military leaders from the US and the Philippines will meet here on Thursday to discuss security issues and sign five agreements relating to the fight against terrorism and disaster response.

Philippine Armed Forces spokesman Col Arnulfo Marcelo Burgos said on Wednesday that US Pacific Command Chief Adm Samuel Locklear and Philippine Armed Forces Chief Gen Jesse Dellosta will hold meeting at the military’s general headquarters in Manila.

“They will reaffirm their commitment to the strategic partnership between the two countries’ armed forces,” Burgos said in a briefing.

Col Nilo Perfecto, chief of the international affairs division in the Armed Forces, said Locklear and Dellosta will sign five documents on various issues. These issues include changing the composition of the Mutual Defence Board, technology transfer and the creation of counter-terrorism working group and humanitarian and disaster response working group.

**Man charged over threat to Northern Ireland first minister**

**BELFAST, 13 Dec—**A man was charged on Wednesday night with threatening to kill Northern Ireland’s First Minister Peter Robinson, as loyalist protests passed off peacefully for the second day in a row following a recent wave of violence across the province.

Loyalists have rioted for seven of the last 10 days, and made an attack on police, since a decision by nationalist city councilors earlier this month to remove the British flag from Belfast City Hall, for the first time in a century.

The 34-year-old was charged with making threats to kill and improper use of a public electronic communications network, a spokeswoman for the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) said.

The threat was made indirectly by phone against Robinson, who leads the pro-British Democratic Unionist Party (DUP), a third-party, police said. He is expected to appear before a court on Thursday.

Threats were also made on Tuesday against two other DUP members—British member of parliament Jeffrey Donaldson and Edwin Poots, a member of Northern Ireland’s parliament—by militant Irish nationalists.

Police have not disclosed whether the threats against Robinson were made from a dissident or loyalist source.

So far police have arrested 40 people in connection with the most widespread pro-British street violence for years and 29 police officers have been injured.

A policewoman escaped injury when a loyalist mob attacked her car on Monday and threw in a petrol bomb while she was still in the vehicle.

**Nine Iraqis killed in Iraq’s violence**

**BAGHDAD, 13 Dec—**Nine people were killed and seven wounded in separate bomb and gunfire attacks, mainly targeting security members, in central and northern Iraq on Wednesday, the police said.

In Iraq’s northern city of Mosul, some 400 km north of the Iraqi capital of Baghdad, two off-duty policemen were shot dead by gunmen at a marketplace in the city’s northern district of al-Hadbaa, a local police source told Xinhua on condition of anonymity.

Separately, gunmen stopped a bus carrying passengers in western Mosul and shot dead a young man aboard, but a police force arrived and exchanged fire with the attackers who killed one of the policemen before they fled the scene, the source said.

In central Iraq, two roadside bombs struck a car carrying three soldiers in Abu Ghraib area, some 20 km west of Baghdad, killing two soldiers and wounding the third, a local police source anonymously told Xinhua.

In a separate incident, another roadside bomb explosion near a police patrol in Abu Ghraib killed a policeman and wounded two others, the source said.

In Abu Ghraib, a roadside bomb went off near a civilian car wounding four people aboard, two of whom were off-duty soldiers, the source added.

Insurgent attacks continue in the once volatile Sunni Arab area in west of Baghdad that stretches through Anbar Province to Iraq’s western borders with Syria, Jordan and Saudi Arabia.

**US targets entity, persons linked to Mexican drug lord**

**WASHINGTON, 13 Dec —**The US government on Wednesday blacklisted one entity and three individuals linked to Juan Jose Esparrozaga Moreno, a leader of Mexico’s Sinaloa drug cartel.

The Department of Treasury targeted Desarrollos Everest, SA de CV, a real estate development company based in Culiacan, Mexico, alleging it is co-owned by Maria Guadalupe Gastelum Payan, a wife of Moreno who had been added to the black list for her role in her husband’s illicit business.

Residencial del Lago, a residential community in Culiacan owned by the company, was targeted as well. The Treasury also moved against Jorge Enrique Esquerda Esquer, Julio Cesar Estrada Gutierrez, and Carlos Alberto Leon Santiesteban, all Mexican nationals, for their involvement in businesses targeted by Washington.

The action bars American citizens from doing business with the designees and freezes all of their assets under US jurisdiction.

“Since July, OFAC (Office of Foreign Assets Control) has exposed numerous entities in Esparragoza Moreno’s corporate network, including gas station companies and real estate development firms operating in the Mexican states of Sinaloa and Jalisco,” said Adam Szubin, director of the Treasury’s OFAC.

“As we continue to target this organization, we expect to severely disrupt its operations,” he said in a statement.

US presidents identified Moreno and the Sinaloa cartel as significant foreign narcotics traffickers in 2003 and 2009 respectively.

Moreno, who has been active in drug trafficking since the 1970s, is wanted in both the US and Mexico, and the US State Department is offering a reward of 5 million dollars for information leading to his arrest, while Mexican authorities are offering 30 million pesos (2.4 million US dollars) for information leading to his capture. Internationally, the Treasury has designated more than 1,200 businesses and individuals linked to 97 drug kingpins since June 2000.—**Xinhua**
Schoolgirls under training for Inter-School Band Contest

**Mawlamyine, 13 Dec**—Students from Basic Education High School No 8 are under training as of 1 November so as to take part in the Inter-School Band Contest to be held in Nay Pyi Taw.

They are now being trained at Yamanya Sports Ground in Phettan Ward of Mawlamyine in Mon State. The Band of Myanmar Police Force Headquarters provides training to the schoolgirls with the assistance of physical training teachers. Altogether with the Band, a total of 272 students from Mon State will take part in the 12 sports events together with those of 12 region and state teams.

**Winners awarded in Great Wall National Badminton Championship**

**Yangon, 13 Dec**—The prize distribution of the 13th Great Wall National Badminton Championship 2012 held at National Badminton Gymnasium in Lanmadaw Township on 9 December.

**Vice-President of Myanmar Badminton Federation U Mya Thaung and U Ba Hlaing, executives and the secretary presented prizes to winners in the open men’s single event, open women’s single event, open men’s doubles event, open women’s doubles event and senior mixed doubles event.

Deputy Director U Zaw Win of Sports and Physical Education Department and President of the federation U Maung Maung Swe gave prizes to winners in the senior men’s doubles event and women’s doubles event, senior men’s single event and women’s event.

**Later, Managing Director U Maung Maung Swe of Great Wall Asia Construction Co President Myanmar Badminton Federation presented K 20 million as training cost to the training committee of the federation.**

**Two unlicensed luxury cars, one motorcycle seized in Mawlamyine**

**Nay Pyi Taw, 13 Dec**— According to the campaign to seize illegal luxury cars and motorcycles, the combined team made a surprise seizure of the cars and motorcycles driven from Mawlamyine to Yangon under the supervision of the Commander of Mon State and Mawlamyine District Police Forces.

From 180231 November, SIP Maung Maung Htwe and party of Mawlamyine Traffic Police Force seized one unlicensed motorcycle driven by Thant Zin, 26 near the roundabout in Mandalay Ward, one luxury car from Lu Thant, 38 of Shwegroupon Bus Line of Bilin Township and another luxury car of Nya Zar, 34 near Nagayon Buddha Image on detour in Hme Ward in Mawlamyine.

Thus, Mawlamyine Daingwunwun police station opened files of lawsuit against them.

**Stimulant tablets worth K 800 million seized**

398,000 W brand/stimulant tablets in 119 packets in paper boxes covered with mustard leaves, weighing 35.82 kilos worth K 800 million.

Lashio Police Station No 1 opened a file of lawsuit against the drug possessors.

**Bogyoke Statue committee formed**

**Taungdwingyi, 13 Dec**—A ceremony to constitute Bogyoke Aung San Bronze Statue committee was held at Sasana Beikman in Taungdwingyi of Magway Region on 6 December afternoon.

Those present elected U Soe Min as Chairman, U Aung Thet as Secretary and 15 executives of the bronze statue committee.

The committee will solicit donations and seek advice from both intellectuals, intelligentsia and legal advisers for the statue.—**Mya Amin**

**Farmland management law, rules discussed**

**Hispaw, 13 Dec**— The multiplier course on farmland law and vacant, virgin and fallow land management law and rules was opened at the hall of Township General Administration Department in Hispaw on 30 November with a view to broadening the horizons of the local farmers for land management and their rights of applications.

On the occasion, Hispaw Township Administrator U Myo Tint Zaw and Head of Kyaukme District Settlement and Land Records Department U Soe Tin explained the purpose of conducting the multiplier course. After that, Head of Township SLRD U Aung Pyo Thaw gave lectures on farmland management and rules to the trainees.

**The moral instructions lie in the books.**
Regional development

The concept of regional development is based on the development of specific regions. It is generally undertaken where regional differences exist and where a particular is to be developed. The major objective of the regional development is to remove regional disparities in respect of economic and social development and bring out the region at par with other regions of the country. It is a significant means to remove regional backwardness, meet regional aspirations and demands, make optimum and judicious use of regional resources, solve regional problems and involve local people in plan formulation and implementation.

It may also help in conserving the environment and cultural heritage of a particular region. Development of a country is directly related with the development of that country’s main region or state. And the development of a state is the development of townships in that state while the development of a town is the development of wards and villages in that town. So, the development of these villages and wards has a direct relation with the higher individual income of people in that villages and wards.

Enjoying higher individual income is a key to the development of whole country. So, higher individual incomes rely on economic freedom, transactional costs and share percentage on GDP. Citizens should have economic freedom in doing their businesses. Unnecessary transactional costs need reducing. People should have rights to enjoy a particular share percentage on natural resources in the country.

Coordination meeting for smooth running of trade and finance held

NAY PYI TAW, 13 Dec—“The Ministry is making reforms for economic development and smooth trades. The ministry will make cooperation with the Ministry of Finance and Revenue for car import,” said Union Minister for Commerce U Win Myint, at a coordination meeting for smooth running of trade and finance, at the Ministry yesterday morning.

In his speech, Union Minister for Finance and Revenue U Win Shein said that ministries’ undertakings need to be correct as being the undertakings of the government. The reforms or organizations holding different views build up a relationship and this relationship bears expected outcomes. Dynamics of a trusted individual or organization raise no concern and need monitoring. So, the trust could drastically cut effort and cost in social economic and political engagements. The actual trust could foster healthier inter-personal and inter-organizational relationship.

Mainly, there are two kinds of trust: political trust and social trust. Support for the government and policies of the government and for the government’s capacity, fairness and honesty of a political leader could engender the political trust. Being sure by the public that the public office holders would definitely answer to their demands and perform duties even if they are not regularly monitored is the political trust. It is good for the state. So, the political trust depends on unspoken popular sentiment towards the government and its mechanism. The political trust could exist not only for the political system and the political institution but also for the individual politician. The political trust in the organization is macro-trust and case-oriented. The political trust in the individual is micro-trust and is based on personality cult.

Experts meet to adopt framework for accommodation provision

NAY PYI TAW, 13 Dec—Expert Group Meeting on Options for Housing Sector kicked off at Kumudra Hotel here yesterday morning under Housing Advisor (UN-Habitat) Programme.

Deputy Minister for Construction U Soe Tint speaking on the occasion said the meeting is meant to contribute to adoption of framework for accommodation supply compatible with the policies of national level comprehensive development scheme before national level housing policy could be adopted on a nationwide scale, stressing the importance of housing sector for economic performance of a nation. Also present on the occasion were departmental heads, personnel from UN Habitat, representatives from region/state governments, and Nay Pyi Taw, Yangon and Mandalay Development Affairs Committees and invited scholars.

Silver Tiger Luxury showroom opens

NAY PYI TAW, 13 Dec—Silver Shine International Co., Ltd of Myanmar and Alvogen IP Co. of US signed MoU on technical cooperation in advanced pharmaceuticals production at Sedona Hotel yesterday afternoon. It was attended by Yangon Region Chief Minister U Myint Swe, UMFCCI Vice-President Dr Maung Maung Lay and officials from Silver Shine International Co., Ltd and Alvogen IP. Managing Director U Pe Hlaing of Silver Shine International Co., Ltd and Asia Pacific Regional Director Mr Peter Keil signed the MoU and exchanged the notes. A ceremony to open Silver Tiger Luxury followed at U Wisara Road in Kamayut Township. Region Minister for Agriculture and Livestock Breeding U Soe Min and Managing Director of Silver Tiger Co. Ltd U Tin Latt opened the showroom and the region chief minister unveiled the signboard of the showroom.—MNA

What is trust?

As enthusiasm and plans of political leadership of developed and developing countries are unprecedented, people have to question themselves whether representatives they elect would leave them in uncertainties or would be reliable after winning the election. It makes clear that trust is one component in legitimacy and sustainability of a political system.

If any extent of doubt is favourable for the strong democracy, why is the trust such important for the good governance? How could individual public office holder and the political structure like the government sow the seed of trust for development? How does the trust interrelate with new social, political and economic requirements demanded by the globalization? We need to know satisfactory definition of trust and kinds of trust.

The trust is an interpersonal and inter-organizational structure. The trust is established when different individuals are to be in accord with the laws, rules and regulations. There are variances in the amount of trust and fines based on special and regular car imports. Departmental heads and officials held discussions on classification of car brands in importing cars.—MNA

Min Bahtoo

Trust in reform

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The political trust is inspired by motivation. The stimulated political trust can be divided into reason-flavoured partisan and instilled public morals. Political trust can not flourish and practical in a political vacuum with no goal and no motivation. Here, there is no difference between mutual trusts among members of civil society, otherwise known as social trust, and political trust in nature. Having connectivity and mutual trusts among the public allow to ensure social trust in the society. If people are not willing to participate in social activities, it is believed that people lack positive attitude towards government mechanism. Social trust is also of importance in earning the significant public trust on the government, not regarding the government’s performance.

Although political trust and social trust are intertwined, there arise different views on it. There are many questions whether the reinforcements of social capital and social trust can allow political trust and whether the governments that earned politically public trust allow social activities, improving social capital; and how to integrate social trust with political trust to be able to establish sustainable and effective political system.

Climate of opinion will produce a flood of answers. Enhancement in social trust can improve political contributions, thereby assisting in political trust and democratization process. Everyone has to accept this point in general.

In fact, today’s governments in the world are using various stimulus measures to overwhelm the public through power and earn more public trust socially with the use of political, economic and social tools. Tasks of cracking down on factors that can lead to loss of trust politically and transforming administrative apparatus will stimulate the public such as separation of power to the grassroots, utilization of technology that can bolster up the information and services, formulation of advantageous economic policies, fight against corruption and curbing crimes are being carried out. More than accepting the advices of civil societies who establish mutual trust with the people and creating more flexible and workable configuration for them are being carried out. Its very important for countries in crisis and in the post-crisis era to strive for political confidence politically and socially.

(To be continued every Friday)

Trs: HKA+YM

OPINION

This is to satisfy the thirst for water!

But, this is for the thirst for knowledge!

Thein Tun

New Light of Myanmar
The 9th month of Myanmar lunar calendar called Nat-taw is the second month of Myanmar cold season “Hei man” in Pali meaning winter. Though it is pronounced “Na daw” its spelling has two words “Nat” and “Taw”. “Nat” is a derivative from Pali word “Nathā” meaning “a resplendent being worthy of veneration”, while “Taw” means royal or respectable. Nat generally applies to all spiritual beings, devas, gods, goddesses, and all spirits. Who deserve worship by human beings for their favour.

So Nat-taw means the month for worshipping nat-spirits.

If the climate is normal, Nat-taw is a chilly month, musty and grey, with the scent of wild flowers particularly Thanith orchid [Bulbophyllum auricorum] the designated flower of this month. It is one of the most important category of royal flowers in the monarchic days. Diana is its astrological name with the symbol of an archer holding a bow and an arrow. As nat worship or animism predated Buddhism and Myanmar Buddhism tolerates all faiths and beliefs, nat worship stays and coexists with Buddhism till today. Nat shrines in the inner and outer compounds of Shwezigon Pagoda at old Bagan bear strong evidences to the nat worship managed and guarded by the Myanmar people since old days.

The Maha Giri Nats

The two brick niches at the old Tharapa Gate of old Bagan have the idols of two Maha Giri Nat spirits—the Elder Brother in the right and Younger Sister in the left niche. They tell their tragic story that happened in their birth place Tagaung, up country.

Maung Tint Dei a mighty blacksmith with his apprentices was producing all kinds of iron weapons and implements. The king of Tagaung was worried that green coconut with offerings was kept at every house to propitiate them as Eintwins nat [The Guardian Spirits of the house]. Since then a yearly festival is held on Mt. Popa in 9th month which thus came to be called Nat-taw month.

Successive Myanmar kings could not and would not stamp out nat spirit worship. They only forbid sacrifice of lives, animals and offering of intoxicants. Therefore Myanmar people offer green coconut, flowers, milk, butter and honey. They also make offerings of rice, sweet cakes to Maha Giri nat spirits. It is believed that green coconut has healing effect upon fire burns.

Ganesha or Maha Pein-hne Festival

In lower Myanmar, Mon kings held Maha Pein-hne Festival at their courts. Hindu Brahmanism and Vedic culture came to Myanmar before Buddhism. Mon kingdoms in lower Myanmar came into contact with Hindu religion and culture much earlier than the royal kingdom in upper Myanmar. Therefore Hindu deities, Vishnu, Siva, Brahma, Saka, Gane-
sha etc were worshipped by many at that time. In late Toungoo Dynasty kings Thanbawdwin and Bayint Naung adopted Mon culture in court ceremonies. Hence Ganeshu [Maha Pein-hne] worship formed an annual festival in Nat-taw together with local nat spirit festivals. Besides, Brahma priests were raja gurus who conducted all royal ceremonies and festivals. Thus the elephant headed deity, Ganeshu of Hindu origin became Maha Pein-hne deity in Myanmar. It is also believed that Ganeshu showed his might and power by persuading his followers such kind of favours as power, might, health, longevity, prosperity, good rain, good harvest and protection from all dangers which ruling class covet most. So all Myanmar national kings annually held Ganesh festival in Nat-taw month. The court and public paid honour and tribute to the images in the shrine. The two nat spirits offered their service of guarding the capital city against all enemies. Hence their Images were enshrined at the Tharapa Gate. As nat idol shrine was forbidden to keep in household, a green coconut with offerings was kept at every house to propitiate them as Eintwins nat [The Guardian Spirits of the house]. Since then a yearly festival is held on Mt. Popa in 9th month which thus came to be called Nat-taw month.

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The Festivals of Nat-taw

(from page 9)

For the holding of the first Writers’ Day, a lead- ing committee was formed with six members namely Thakhin Kodaw Hmaung, U Pe Maung Tin, Dr Ba Han, U Lin, Deedok U Ba Cho and Pathamakaw Kyee Pe. The 15-member Executive Committee included U Tin, U Ba Nyunt, Myoma Say a Hein, U Kaung, U Thein Han, U E Maung, Dr Htin Aung, U Than Tin, U Po Chain, U Htun Pe, U Thein Maung, Thakhin Tin Maung Gy, U Htun Myint, Daw Chit and Daw Yee Kyein. With due celebration, the first Writers’ Day was ob served on the full waxing moon day of Nat-taw. The then Adipadi Government of Myanmar headed by Dr Ba Maw contributed K 10000 to the E.C. Committee for the Writers’ Day. In the afternoon at Myaing Theatre at Kandawgyi Lake, Bahan, Yangon, the ceremony was held where some veteran writers and school masters by turn spoke about Myan mar literati of historic fame such as Anun ta Surya, Shin Maha Thilawunthu, Shin Maha Rathathaya, Nat Shin Naung, Navadai, Letwai Thondara, U Paw U, Ma Mya Galay, Hlaing Hteik Khaung Tin, Achoke Tan Saya Pe, U Ponnya, U Kyin U etc. Some recited their poems. At the gathering of writers, literary topics were discussed and Myanmar tra ditional refreshments were served. At Myaing Theatre U Ponnya’s play Wizaya pyazat was staged in which some writers enacted amuse- tingly.

In the post independ ence time Myanmar Writers’ Day is observed and commemorated without fail. Successive Myanmar governments, whether civil or military gave whole heart ed support for celebrating Myanmar Writers’ Day. The Government raised the Day to the state level by awarding titles to distinguished writers, paying homage and support to veteran writers of 80 and above in age, giving prizes to writers of literary competitions under different genres and categories. Since 1993, many private wellwishers and NGOs be gan to patronize writers by awarding cash and kind to their prize winning literary works. On the independence day every year, the Govern ment issues announcement of recipients of state award of titles and honours under different genres—Buddha Sasana promotion, excellent performance in the field of administration, social wel fare works, sciences, Arts, technology, invention, etc. Writers of live long standing are awarded by the President of the State the title “Sithu”. The present govern ment has declared that mass media including writers was the fourth column, after the three columns of the Exec utive, the Legislature and the Judiciary upon which Myanmar Parliament is built for the just and efficient run ning of democracy in the Myanmar Union.

In the months follow ing the Writers’ Day, writ ers are invited by township writers’ associations to give talks to the public or to hold discussions with the audience. The themes and topics are quite extensive ranging from literacy to educational, domestic and international affairs. Myanmar communities abroad also invite Myan mar writers to give them talks in their respective residing countries.

Nat-taw is not only the month of nat spirit festivals but it also is the month of the festivals of literary ac tivities.

National Objectives of 65th Anniversary Independence Day for 2013

1. All the national people to live together in the Union through thick and thin
2. All the national people to constantly safeguard non-disintegration of the Union, non-disintegration of national solidarity and perpetuation of sovereignty
3. All the national people to participate in the tasks for bringing about genuine, eternal peace putting an end to the armed conflicts
4. To make relentless efforts, in building a modern, developed and democratic nation, in order to better serve public interest, to ensure poverty reduction and bring about rightful legislative, administrative and judicial pillars

Europe nears deal to make ECB chief bank watchdog

Spain’s Economy Minister Luis de Guindos listens to Austria’s Finance Minister Maria Fekter (R) during an European Union finance ministers meeting in Brussels on 12 Dec, 2012.—Reuters

BRUSSELS, 13 Dec—European governments neared a deal on Wednesday to give the European Central Bank new powers to supervise banks across the bloc after Germany signalled a readiness to compromise on key elements of the new system.

Schaeuble had clashed openly with his French counterpart Pierre Moscovici over key elements of the plan, but with time running out to meet a year-end deadline, they narrowed their differences, raising hopes of a breakthrough.

An agreement on a common bank supervisor is a crucial first step towards a broader “banking union”, or common eurozone approach to dealing with failing banks that in recent years have dragged down countries like Ireland and Spain.

“From what I have, we have a good chance to reach a deal today,” Schaeuble told journalists ahead of a meeting in Brussels with his European Union peers.

“My intention is that we find a solution to the banking union on time before Christmas,” Moscovici told his colleagues in the meeting that “all the parameters” for an agreement were “in place. Even if the bloc is able to settle most of its differences on Wednesday, other difficult issues remain.

At a summit in June, EU leaders pledged that once a common bank supervisor was in place, the bloc’s rescue mechanism would have the power to directly recapitalise struggling institutions.

Countries like France, Italy and Spain are keen for those powers to be in place as soon as possible. But Germany, worried it could be forced to foot the bill for struggling banks across the bloc, is not in a rush.

In introductory remarks at the meeting, Schaeuble tried to kill any discussion about bank recapitalisations and said it could take more than a year for the new supervisor to be fully up and running. In the longer-term, there is disagreement about how the burden of winding down failed banks should be shared.

A compromise document put forward by rotating EU President Cyprus, and obtained by Reuters on Tuesday, won broad backing at the meeting from the ECB and member states.

In recent weeks, Germany had argued against giving the ECB supervisory responsibility for all 6,000 European banks, concerned the new system could become unmanageable.

Reuters

Medical treatments given to monks at Mandalay General Hospital

N A Y P Y T A W, 13 Dec—A team led by Social Affairs Minister Dr Win Hlaing of Mandalay Region Government encouraged the injured monks and people at Mandalay General Hospital yesterday afternoon and gave medical treatments to them. Till 12 December, 18 monks and three people were receiving treatment in Mandalay General Hospital and ten monks in Kandawgwa Hospital. Today, three monks have discharged from Mandalay General Hospital and returned home as they recovered from their injuries. So, there are 15 monks and three persons in Mandalay People’s Hospital and ten monks, in Kandawgwa Hospital.

U Tikkhañana, who sustains burns in Letpadaungtaung incident, leaves for Bangkok to receive medical treatment

Government sends 1 million baht to Bangkok General Hospital in advance

N A Y P Y T A W, 13 Dec—U Tikkhañana, aged 64 from Khawthandi Village Tawya Monastery of Mintaingbin Village in Monwya, who sustained burns in the Letpadaungtaung incident was transferred to Yangon General Hospital from Mandalay General Hospital on 10 December.

He is not in a critical condition. The monk left Yangon General Hospital of his own accord this morning to receive medical treatment in Bangkok of Thailand. Due to his financial problem, the government remitted 1 million baht to Bangkok General Hospital in advance.

The monk together with his cousin Medical Superintendent Dr U Win of Mandalay General Hospital left for Thailand on Tuesday to receive the medical treatment.

Medical treatments given to monks at Mandalay General Hospital

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MNA

Night scene in Yangon
One cop killed in attack by leftist rebels

**Phillippines**

**MANILA, 13 Dec—**A policeman wounded while another was killed in an attack by leftist rebels on Wednesday, the Philippines' national police said.

Sobaban said two policemen tried to fight back but were shot by the rebels. Senior Police Officer 3 Mancito Rabang died while Senior Police Officer 2 Pablo Acosta was injured. The rebels seized eight high-powered firearms and fled aboard a van. Authorities discovered the vehicle later in an area not far from the police station. Sobaban said government troops, backed by helicopter gunships, have deployed to track down the fleeing rebels. This is the second time this week that NPA rebels launched an attack in Palawan.

Last Tuesday, the NPA rebels burned the backhoe owned by the Citi Mining Corporation in Sofronio, a town in the capital. The rebels allegedly burned the backhoe to punish the company officials who refused to pay revolutionary tax.—**Xinhua**

Pakistan extends Afghan refugee stay for six months

**ISLAMABAD, 13 Dec—**Pakistani Prime Minister Raja Pervez Ashraf on Wednesday announced a six-month extension in the legal stay of Afghans refugees in the country, the PM office said. Pakistan had issued Proof of Registration (PoR) Cards to Afghan refugees which was to be expired on 31 Dec, 2012.

There are still 1.6 million registered Afghans in Pakistan, the UN refugee agency said. Pakistani officials said that some 1 million unregistered Afghan refugees also live in the country.

"Prime Minister Raja Pervez Ashraf has extended by six months the Pakistan, Afghanistan and UNHCR trilateral agreement on repatriation of Afghan Refugees which was scheduled to expire on 31 Dec, 2012," a statement from the PM office said.

The trilateral was made at a high-level meeting held in the Prime Minister’s Secretariat on a presentation made on Management and Repatriation Strategy/Policy for Afghan refugees living in Pakistan.

The prime minister also decided to constitute a committee held by Minister for States and Frontier Regions Engr. Shaukatullah to monitor the repatriation of Afghan refugees, the statements said.

The meeting was informed that only 0.2 million Afghan refugees could be repatriated by the end of 2012 and there were still 1.6 million registered and 1 million unregistered Afghans residing in Pakistan.

The meeting was also attended by Minister for Interior Rehman A Malik, Minister for Information and Broadcasting Qamir Zaman Kaira, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Nawabzada Malik Amad Khan and other senior officials.—**Xinhua**

Malaysia’s Sabah state to woo more Chinese tourists

**KOTA KINABALU, 13 Dec—**Malaysia’s Sabah state is attracting more Chinese tourists who prefer places of natural beauty to crowded cities following the local government’s efforts to boost tourism.

The Sabah state, a part of East Malaysia on the Borneo Island, is famous for its beautiful beaches, tropical islands, rainforests and the Mount Kinabalu, one of the highest in Southeast Asia. It is often referred to as “Land Below the Wind” by seafarers in the past to describe lands south of the Typhoon belt.

It remained much unknown to Chinese tourists when Zhang Haixiang’s Shenghong International Travel Service began to introduce it to the Chinese market.

“By that time, Hong Kong and Shenzhen were the only two Chinese cities that had direct flights to Sabah,” he told Xinhua.

Things changed quickly. Chinese tourists arrival in Sabah has experienced double-digit growth in the past two years, according to Allen Chia, senior research manager of Sabah Tourism Board.

More than 160,000 Chinese tourists arrived in Sabah during the first 10 months of 2012, more than the total number of last year, Chia said.

Now, apart from the chartered flights from various Chinese cities to bring in tourists, local players like AirAsia have introduced commercial flights between Chinese cities and Kota Kinabalu, the capital city of Sabah.

Sabah, together with other famous tourism attractions in the region such as Bali, Indonesia and the Maldives, are becoming appealing to more Chinese tourists as many of them are turning to vacation-style travel after getting tired of sight-seeing tours, Zhang said.

Zhang’s company has brought 50 newly-wed couples from all across China for honey moon in Sabah, where the bride and the bridegroom choose to wear Malay costumes.

Sabah, the second largest state in Malaysia with a moderate population of 3 million, heavily relies on tourism as a major contributor to the economy. It didn’t take too long before the state government realized the opportunity from the Chinese market.—**Xinhua**

Five children killed in wall collapse in Indian capital

**NEW DELHI, 13 Dec—**In a tragic incident, five children were killed and one more sustained serious injuries in a wall collapse in the Indian capital on Wednesday, a senior police official said.

“The accident happened when at Dallipur village near Mayur Vihar in the east of the national capital around 10 am when the six children were playing in a vacant plot. An under-construction boundary wall collapsed and all the six children got trapped under the debris on the plot,” the official said.

Fire brigade officials and local people rushed all the victims to a nearby hospital where five children were declared dead while another is battling for his life, he said, unwilling to be named.

A probe has been ordered into the incident, the official added.

A couple pose for photos as they wait to solemnize their marriage at the Singapore Registry of Marriage, on 12 Dec, 2012. A total of 541 couples applied to solemnize their marriage in Singapore on 12 Dec, 2012, hoping that the “triple 12 day” will bring them good luck. **Xinhua**

Some fishermen reportedly went missing about 100 nautical miles east of Bishag in southern Philippine province of Surogu del Sur. He said, Empepad said there were 35 survivors that his task force has rescued and the test system have been put into operation to analyse emission data from a vehicle and record the vehicle number through a remote sensoring equipment without interrupting the traffic.—**Xinhua**

Philippines seeks Indonesian help to find missing fishermen

**MANILA, 13 Dec—**The Philippine government has coordinated with Indonesia in search and rescue operations for some missing fishermen who could have been drifted to its waters during the height of Typhoon Bopha (local name: Pablo) last week, a military official said on Wednesday.

Navy Capt Robert Empepad, commander of Task Force Maritime Search and Rescue, said that Indonesia has sent a ship to an area where Filipino fishermen could have drifted and Jakarta also approved a Philippine reconnaissance flight.

“When we assessed the situation, there’s a possibility that some of our missing fishermen are drifted to Indonesian waters,” Empepad said in a briefings.

Some fishermen reportedly went missing about 100 nautical miles east of Bishag in southern Philippine province of Surigao del Sur. He said that in the previous day, there were 35 survivors that his task force has rescued from the waters since the weather disturbance hit central and southern parts of the country.

National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council Executive Director Benito Ramos, in the same briefing, said that of the 890 people who were missing, 313 of them were fishermen. He added that the official number of deaths recorded by the agency now stands at 740, or 26 higher than the previous day.

Most of the fatalities or 683 are from Compostela Valley and Davao Oriental, the two hardest-hit provinces. Bopha also displaced nearly 6 million people and damaged about 14 billion pesos (341.96 million US dollars) worth of crops, infrastructure and property.—**Xinhua**

Afghans receive winter relief supplies donated by German government for displaced people in Kabul, Afghanistan on 12 Dec, 2012. More than 800 displaced families received winter relief supplies on Wednesday.—**Xinhua**

*New Light of Myanmar*
Ministry of Information
Information and Public Relations Department
Invitation for open tender
of Information and Public Relations Department to buy Equipment

1. Information and Public Relations Department under the Ministry of Information will buy the following working equipment:
   - Nikon 180x200mm lens EDIDX VR II
   - Nikon SB700 Speed Light Flash Gun
   - Nikon Super Wide Lens 10 to 24mm
   - Nikon Battery Packs ENEL 3e
   - CF Memory Card small card 4 GB
   - SD Memory Card (small card) 4 GB
   - Aluminium Ladder (three steps)
   - Aluminium Ladder (two steps)
   - Sony External Flash HVL-F20 AM
   - Card Reader All in one
   - Sony Lens DT 18 to 250 mm
   - Nikon Digital Camera D7000 Only Body 2 pieces

2. The open tender applications are to be taken out from the Office No 7 of the Ministry of Information in Nay Pyi Taw from 09:30 to 16:30 hours during the period from 12-12-2012 to 20-12-2012 during the office days.

3. The open tender applications are to be submitted in front of the members of the tender committee at the Office No 7 of the Ministry of Information in Nay Pyi Taw from 09:30 to 16:30 on 21-12-2012. The tenders submitted after the designated date will not be considered.

4. The form of open tender and detailed information may be enquired at the following address:
   Procurement Committee
   Ministry of Information
   Office No. 7, Nay Pyi Taw
   Tel: 412327, 412323

Govt launches probe into Wal-Mart lobbying report

NEW DELHI, 13 Dec—The government announced an inquiry into lobbying practices by Wal-Mart Stores Inc. (WMT.N) on Wednesday after a report that the giant retailer had pressured U.S. lawmakers to help gain access to foreign markets.

Wal-Mart disclosed in a report to the U.S. Senate that it had paid $25 million over four years to lobby American lawmakers to help gain access to overseas markets, including India.

The report spurred opposition lawmakers, who oppose Wal-Mart’s entry into India, to call for an inquiry into whether any lobbying was spent in India, even though the disclosure filing only referred to lobbying activities in the United States. “The government has decided to have a probe by a retired judge into the media reports pertaining to Wal-Mart’s lobbying,” Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kamal Nath told parliament.

Former Brazil coach Dunga joins Internacional

Brazil’s coach Dunga reacts during the 2010 World Cup quarter-final soccer match against Netherlands in Port Elizabeth on 2 July, 2010.

Reuters

RIO DE JANEIRO, 13 Dec—Dunga took charge of Porto Alegre club Internacional on Wednesday, his first coaching job since leading Brazil at the 2010 World Cup in South Africa.

“I work with me, you have to be committed, you have to have the will to win,” he told reporters after being presented by the club with which he started and ended his playing career.

“I never left Inter, I was always here as a fan. Inter opened their doors to me when I was 14 years old and now I’m ready to pay them back.”

Dunga’s four years with Brazil between 2006 and 2010 are his only previous experience as a senior coach. He succeeded Carlos Alberto Parreira after the 2006 World Cup and won the Copa America one year later, followed by the Confederations Cup in 2009.

Under his leadership Brazil developed a physical, counter-attacking based game which was unpopular with many fans and their World Cup campaign ended with a 2-1 quarter-final defeat by the Netherlands.

Dunga also alienated the media with what they called his siege mentality.

“Inter have a strong tradition,” he said. “Inter fans will accept everything, except when players don’t give everything for 90 minutes.”

Paris, 13 Dec—Michel Bastos rescued a point for Ligue 1 leaders Olympique Lyon as they were held to a disappointing 1-1 home draw against struggling Nancy on Wednesday.

The Brazilian winger, who earned his side a 1-0 win at neighbours St Etienne last weekend, fired home from just outside the box with six minutes to go to cancel out Jersiel’s opener.

Lyon stay top on 35 points from 17 games, three ahead of Paris St Germain after the capital side were hammered 4-0 away on Tuesday. The two sides will clash at Parc des Princes on Sunday. Olympique Marseille are third on 33 points after scoring form lifted Lyon to top spot, failed to convert a pass from Bastos six minutes before the break.

Olympique Lyon’s Michel Bastos celebrates his goal against AS Nancy Lor raine during their French Ligue 1 soccer match at the Stade Gerland in Lyon on 12 Dec, 2012.

Reuters

Bastos grabs late point for Lyon

Lyon’s strong showing in recent weeks has seen them clinch third place in the table, a position they have occupied for much of the season. They have won four of their last five league matches and are now looking to secure their third consecutive victory.

Bastos’ goal was a well-timed strike that found the back of the net with just under 20 minutes remaining in the game. The forward, who has been in fine form this season, has now scored his 10th goal of the campaign,.contributing significantly to Lyon’s success.

Bastos celebrates his goal against AS Nancy Lor raine during their French Ligue 1 soccer match at the Stade Gerland in Lyon on 12 Dec, 2012.

Reuters

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Dunga also alienated the media with what they called his siege mentality.

“Inter have a strong tradition,” he said. “Inter fans will accept everything, except when players don’t give everything for 90 minutes.”

The “worst defeat of all is when you get home and think you could have done better. Everybody has to be committed.”

As a player, Dunga was a feisty, defensive midfielder with a spiky haircut and almost permanent snarl who played in three World Cups. He captained the side who won the tournament in 1994 and led them to second place four years later.

His club career took him to Corinthians, Vasco da Gama and Santos in his homeland, Ps, Fiorentina and Pescara in Italy, VfB Stuttgart in Germany and Japan’s Jupilo Iwata.

Inter won the Club World Cup in 2006, beating Barcelona in the final, and are twice South American champions and three times Brazilian championship winners.

They finished 10th in this year’s Brazilian championship. During the second half, “I think it’s the turning point in the game because we have never lost after taking the lead,” he said. “I admit my team did not play at their usual level but we were not the only ones to be poor tonight.”

Nancy moved up to 19th after a fifth draw in a row. In Bastia, where the game was played behind closed doors, Mathieu Valbuena deservedly put Marseille ahead with a superb volley from just inside the box in the 15th minute.

André Ayew doubled the lead in the penalty spot on 70 minutes after goalkeeper Landry Norbon obtained a yellow card. His younger brother Jordan, level in eight appearances, also welcomed back striker Andre-Pierre Gignac six weeks after he suffered a broken foot.—Reuters
Charlie Sheen unhappy with no thank you from Lindsay Lohan

NEW DELHI, 13 Dec—Charlie Sheen is unhappy that Lindsay Lohan never thanked him for giving her a reported $100,000.

The Anger Management star generously helped out his Scary Movie 5 co-star when he heard she was having financial difficulties after not being paid for one of her projects but Charlie admitted he is unimpressed that the 26-year-old actress accepted money from him but didn’t acknowledge it.

He told Entertainment Tonight: “She got shorted and I found out, so I said: ‘Here’. I’m still waiting for a text to say ‘Thank you’. Anything you know? Meanwhile it has been revealed Lindsay is struggling to pay her rent and has been scraping together all the money she can in order to pay $8,000 per month for her Beverly Hills mansion in Los Angeles. Lindsay signed the contract for the luxury home in February, when it was believed her career was getting back on track and she was earning more money, but a source has revealed that once her finances hit trouble she resorted to calling on her friends to help pay her way.

Although the Mean Girls actress tried to break her lease in order to move out earlier and not pay the penalty, the owners have warned her the penalty would cost more than if she was to stay and pay, resulting in Lindsay telling friends she plans to move to New York next February once her contract has ended.

Earlier this month Lindsay’s bank accounts were seized by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) after she failed to pay her tax debts, with the government previously claiming she owes $233,904 for 2009 and 2010.

Actress Jennifer Lawrence named ‘most desirable’ woman

Vergara of ‘Modern Family’ fame, down to No 12, while reality star Kim Kardashian plummeted to No 98.

The poll surveyed 2.4 million readers asking who they would choose as a prospective partner, them to vote on which celebrities they would choose as a prospective partner, according to the website, which is owned by News Corp.

The top 99 are then compiled into the annual poll.

Rounding out the top five were actress Mila Kunis, model Kate Upton, R&B star Rihanna and “Crazy, Stupid, Love” actress Emma Stone.

Bassil said that lots of publicity often correlates to higher desirability ranking from men, but too many headlines can leave men looking elsewhere.

The most notable drop was socialite Kardashian, who fell 90 places from last year’s No 8 ranking.

“Kim Kardashian is petering off and basically dropping off the list at this point even as she’s become more visible,” Bassil said.

Youth also appears to have taken a backseat in men’s tastes as this year’s rankings feature a handful of women over 40.

“We’ve seen that in-creasingly over the past two or three years,” Bassil said. “Like most things in life, attractiveness is ex-tending into middle age ... Who knows? In 20 years we could see 60-year-olds on the list.”

Those over the age of 40 on the list include US First Lady Michelle Obama, 48; comedienne Sarah Silverman, 42; actress Lucy Liu, 44; and British actress Rachel Weisz, 42.

Legendary sitarist, composer Ravi Shankar dead at 92

LOS ANGELES, 13 Dec—Sitarist and composer Ravi Shankar, who helped introduce the sitar to the Western world through his collaborations with The Beatles, died in Southern California on Tuesday, his family said. He was 92.

Shankar, a three-time Grammy winner with legendary appearances at the 1967 Monterey Festival and at Woodstock, had been in fragile health for years and last Thursday underwent surgery, his family said in a statement.

“Although it is a time for sorrow and sadness, it is also a time for all of us to give thanks and to be grateful that we were able to have him as a part of our lives,” the family said. “He will live forever in our hearts and in his music.”

In India, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh’s office posted a Twitter message calling Shankar a “national treasure and global ambassador of India’s cultural heritage.”

“An era has passed away with ... Ravi Shankar. The nation joins me to pay tributes to his unsurpassable genius, his art and his humility,” Singh added.

Shankar had suffered from upper respiratory and heart issues over the past year and underwent heart-valve replacement surgery last week at a hospital in San Diego, south of Los Angeles.

The surgery was successful but he was unable to recover. “Unfortunately, despite the best efforts of the surgeons and doctors taking care of him, he was not able to withstand the strain of the surgery. We were at his side when he passed away,” his wife Priti and daughter Anoushka said.

Shankar lived in both India and the United States. He is also survived by his wife Bina and two children.

Hug Jackman changes mind, wants James Bond role after all

LONDON, 13 Dec—X-Men star Hugh Jackman says he will take on the role of James Bond when Daniel Craig gives up.

The 44-year-old actor said that he would like to play the iconic British secret agent in the future. Jackman, who plays ex-convict Jean Valjean in Les Miserables, previously turned down the role of Bond but said he has some regrets over his decision.

“Was just the thing about Daniel is that he is, what, 62 now, isn’t he? He is falling apart at the seams. So I just keep telling him, ‘I’m ready, whenever you want to let him go’. The good thing is I also have a British passport,” he said.

Jackman, who turned down the lead in 2006’s Casino Royale to focus on the X-Men franchise, said, “At the time it was wrong for me but when I saw Daniel in the movie I thought I should have been more interested, because it was great. But I am great mates with Daniel and, you know, no-one could have played Bond better,” he added.
Benzema limps out of Real’s Cup match at Celta

**Soccer**

**London, 13 Dec**—Arsene Wenger appeared ahead of next week’s second Leg of the Champions League group stage against Sevilla at the Emirates Stadium. He was forced off in the first half after sustaining an injury to his knee. The injury occurred during the 25th minute of the match and he was replaced by Karim Benzema. Benzema was injured during Real Madrid’s 4-1 victory over Eibar in the Copa del Rey second round. He was substituted after 70 minutes due to an apparent knee injury. Benzema’s absence will be a blow to Real Madrid as he is one of their top scorers this season with seven goals in seven appearances.

**Pressure mounts on Wenger in denial**

**London, 13 Dec**—Arsene Wenger appeared for a interview with the media ahead of Arsenal’s trip to Middlesbrough in the Premier League on Sunday. He was asked about the recent victory over Manchester United and the pressure on him as manager. Wenger said, “You feel embarrassed when you don’t give everything. I feel the team did fight and will be more disappointed and frustrated.” He also said, “I cannot fault the effort. We have put the effort in (and) have given absolutely everything until the last minute. It was a typical English Cup game and Bradford got on top of us in the end. We missed three penalties — that’s a lot to take.”

English bookmakers reacted with a far less charitable verdict, giving odds of 4/1 that Wenger will be the next Premier League manager to lose his job. William Hill quoted odds of 66/1 that Arsenal, who have not won a trophy since the 2005 FA Cup, will not win another under Wenger.

**Vidic poised for Man United return against Sunderland**

**Manchester, 13 Dec**—The Man United manager, Sir Alex Ferguson, said Wednesday he was confident with his team’s chances against Sunderland, who have won their last three Premier League matches. Ferguson said, “I look forward to the derby win. It has been a real confidence booster for us.”

Scarpa banned for three months for visiting Ferrari

**Cycling**

**London, 13 Dec**—Last year’s Giro d’Italia winner Michele Scarponi has been handed a three-month retroactive ban for visiting banned sports doctor Michele Ferrari, his team head, on Wednesday. The Italian Olympic Committee (CIO) has prescribed the suspension after Scarponi was found to have been present at Ferrari’s clinic in Italy. The cyclist had claimed that he was visiting the clinic for a medical check-up, but the CIO said that the visit was unauthorized.

**Lampre-Isd’s Michele Scarponi (R) of Italy climbs during the 169 km 15th stage of the Giro d’Italia from Busto Arsizio to Pian di Resinelli on 20 May, 2012.**—Reuters

**Lampre-Isd’s Michele Scarponi (R) of Italy climbs during the 169 km 15th stage of the Giro d’Italia from Busto Arsizio to Pian di Resinelli on 20 May, 2012.**—Reuters

**New Light of Myanmar**
Brazil’s Corinthians reach Club World Cup final

**FRANKFURT, 13 Dec—**

German football league (DFL) and clubs from the top two tiers on Wednesday agreed on a tighter set of security measures after a sharp rise in violence and pressure from politicians to act. The DFL and the 36 clubs from the top two leagues voted in favour of tougher stadium checks, increased crackdown on flares and smoke bombs and tougher sanctions, video monitoring, and better-trained security staff.

“Professional football is coming out as a winner today,” DFL President Reinhard Rauball told reporters. “All 16 points were accepted with a wide majority. Germany’s football culture is not threatened by this. “It is good news that the DFL is in a position to make its own homework,” said Rauball, relieved to have avoided an intervention from politicians after Germany’s interior ministry had urged the DFL to act. Many fans, some 500 of whom had peacefully demonstrated outside the Frankfurt hotel where the meeting took place, have accused the DFL of spoiling their football experience and having had little input in drafting the concept.

“This is not a decision against fans but a decision in favour of football and its future,” said Rauball. The concept, which also includes home teams reducing or providing no tickets to away spectators at high-risk games, has triggered weeks of protests among fans. They remained silent for the first 12 minutes of every Bundesliga game in the past two weeks, chanted against the plan and pledged more protests even after the vote. The country’s football association (DFB) also welcomed the decision. “It is an important sign for football and the majority of peaceful fans that the majority of German licensed clubs voted in favour and showed unity,” said DFB President Wolfgang Niersbach. “We need guidelines with everyone involved but we also need guidelines along which we can orientate ourselves.”

German football is struggling to contain growing violence with 2011-12 season figures released last month hitting a 12-year high despite a financial boom and the world’s highest average match attendance. The report said the 2011-12 season had the highest number of criminal proceedings in 12 years, almost double the amount of the previous year.

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Union Defence Minister meets British delegation

NAY PYI TAW, 13 Dec — Union Minister for Defence Lt-Gen Wai Lwin received a British delegation led by Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs Rt. Hon. Hugo George William Swire at the minister’s office, here, this morning. They held discussions on matters related to bilateral cooperation. MNA

Union A&I Minister looks into Myogyi multipurpose dam project

NAY PYI TAW, 13 Dec — Union Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation U Myint Hlaing visited Singaing quality strain farm of Seed Division of Agriculture Department in Singaing Township of Mandalay Region yesterday.

On his inspection tour of Myogyi Dam in Ywangan Township of Shan State, the Union minister called for timely completion of the whole project in parallel with irrigation system that would benefit 33,000 acres of farmlands in Meiktila plain, thereby contributing towards Meiktila plain greening project.

Upon completion of the project, regional development through job creation could be realized for Ywangan Township and its vicinity with the use of 30 megawatts electricity generated by the dam.

Next, the Union Minister inspected construction of power tunnel and related structures and spillway, and equipment to be used in generating electricity. MNA

British Minister calls on Union Minister for Foreign Affairs

NAY PYI TAW, 13 Dec—Union Minister for Foreign Affairs U Wunna Maung Lwin received British Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs Rt. Hon. Hugo George William Swire at the ministry, here, at 9 am today.

Promotion of bilateral relations and cooperation between the two countries were discussed during the meeting. — MNA

Utility jade, gems and pearl sales-2012 concludes

NAY PYI TAW, 13 Dec—The five-day sales of utility jade and gems ended today at the Mani Yadana Jade Hall, attracting 2794 local merchants and 41 foreign merchants.

A total of 1520 lots of jade were put on sales in Myanmar kyats and 205 lots of gems and 334 lots of pearl in US dollar through the tender system during the sales of utility jade, gems and pearl lots for 2012 which kicked off on 9 December.

Secretary of the central committee for holding the sales Managing Director of Myanmar Gems Enterprise U Thein Swe and personnel from the Myanmar Gems Entrepreneurs Association supervised the sales when local and foreign merchants had competed to buy the utility jade lots through the open tender system this morning.

After Union Minister for Mines Dr Myint Aung visited the sales through the tender system during the sales of utility jade, gems and pearl lots for 2012 which kicked off on 9 December.

State television blamed the blast on “terrorists” - its term for rebels - and showed footage of soldiers walking by a partly collapsed building, with rubble and twisted metal on the road.

The attack follows three bombs at the Interior Ministry on Wednesday evening, in which state news agency SANA said five people were killed, including Abdullah Kayrouz, a member of parliament from the Syrian Social Nationalist Party.

Apart from gaining territory in the outskirts of Damascus in recent weeks, rebels have also made hit-and-run attacks or set off bombs within the capital, often targeting state security buildings or areas seen as loyal to Assad, such as Jaramana, where twin bombs killed 34 people in November. — Reuters

Russia says Syrian rebels might win; car bomb kills 16

BEIRUT, 13 Dec—Syrian rebels are gaining ground and might win, Russia’s deputy foreign minister said Thursday, in the starkest such admission from a major ally of President Bashar al-Assad.

“One must look the facts in the face,” Russia’s deputy-run RIA quoted Mikhail Bogdanov as saying. “Unfortunately, the victory of the Syrian opposition cannot be ruled out.”

Bogdanov, who is a member of parliament from Middle East affairs, said the Syrian government was “losing control of more and more territory” and that Moscow was preparing plans to evacuate Russian citizens if necessary.

Advancing rebels now hold an almost continuous arc of territory from the east to the southeast of Damascus, despite fierce army bombardments designed to drive them back.

A car bomb killed at least 16 men, women and children in Qatana, a town about 25 km (15 miles) southwest of Damascus where many soldiers live, activists and state media said.

The explosion occurred in a residential area for soldiers in Qatana, which is near several army bases, said Rami Abdelrahman, head of the pro-opposition Syrian Observatory for Human Rights.

He put the death toll as 17, including seven children and two women. State news agency SANA said 16 people had died.

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Ayeyawady River conservation and all-round development tasks discussed

NAY PYI TAW, 13 Dec—“Conservation of Ayeyawady River will be carried out. Local people will have the rights to consume the electricity generated from the River,” said Union Minister for Transport U Nyan Tun Aung at a briefing of Ayeyawady River conservation and all-round development tasks.

Experts gave suggestions on systematic studies on river conservation ways and seeking least environmentally damaging ways. Director-General Dr Har Yin Naing Tiyan of Department of Meteorology and Hydrology Department discussed that the project would prevent the region from the flood. The climate in the central region would be better.

Union Minister also said that the maintenance of the River would be carried out without blocking the river. Electricity would be generated from the project. Media should make reviews and suggestions. It would not be implemented if people don’t accept it. MNA

Utility Jade, Gems and Pearl Sales in progress at Mani Yadana Jade Hall in Nay Pyi Taw.—MNA

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