NAY PYI TAW, 18 Dec — President U Thein Sein and party left Dawei by special flight yesterday and arrived at Kawthoung Airport where they were welcomed by departmental officials and members of social organizations.

The President and party observed development of Kawthoung from the viewing platform in Kawthoung. The President met with departmental officials and gave instructions on development of Kawthoung.

Next, the President and party visited Bayintnaung Hillock where the statue of King Bayintnaung stands, and oversaw Bayintnaung bridge and development of Kawthoung.

In meeting with departmental officials at the guest house in Kawthoung, the President said that Kawthoung was only a township. It did better in administration. Accordingly, it had been promoted into a district level. Kawthoung was a gateway to the southernmost part of the country. The lack of gate security might pose a danger to security, economic and social sectors. Import of commodities to Kawthoung from Thailand could have advantages and disadvantages. It needed to prevent the dangers for the country. Myanmar had to export marine products-fishes to Thailand as raw materials. Coal-fired power plant (8 megawatt) had been built in Kawthoung. Only two mega watt was used. The officials needed to seek the ways for development of businesses by manufacturing value-added products with the use of surplus electricity.

Union Level and Region level alone were not enough. Necessary departmental staff had been appointed for regional development. So, staff needed to have qualifications. The region would lag in development if it had no qualified staff. To achieve the goals required the collaboration of departmental officials concerned and deputy commissioners. At the district/township levels, weekly and monthly coordination meetings were to be made regularly under the leadership of District General Administration Department Office. All participations could achieve much more success than the individuals.

The President called for adhering to the existing laws to ensure the rule of law in the region. He said there would be trade of contrabands in the border area while urging them to show accountability. The President said the staff are responsible to ensure the development and the rule of law of the region.

The President and party then left Kawthoung for Myeik.

Myanmar to participate in US Shows

NAY PYI TAW, 18 Dec—Myanmar’s entrepreneurs are invited to take part in International Consumer Electronics Show-2013 and The International Builder’s Show to be held in Las Vegas in the United States of America.

The International Consumer Electronics Show-2013 will be held from 8-11 January 2013 in Las Vegas. The cars, computers, handsets, electronics and electrical appliances are put on display by manufacturers and dealers.

The International Builder’s Show will be held from 21-24 January. All-in-one modern products of construction in the world are exhibited at the show.

It is a great chance to meet construction entrepreneurs from every corner of the world.

Nyi Nyi Thabyay
**MTF looks for talented tennis youngsters**

**Yangon, 18 Dec** — The first tennis demonstration took place at Theinbyu Tennis Court on 8 December. The President of Myanmar Tennis Federation spoke on the occasion. The tennis demonstration aimed at generating the awareness of tennis sports among students totaling 975 from 12 basic education schools in Yangon Region and ILBC and ISY private schools and nurturing the talented young tennis players to be internationals. Arrangements have been made for organizing tennis demonstrations in States and Regions.

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**Historic Sandawshin Pagoda Festival on 23 December**

**Sitwe, 18 Dec** — Historic Sandawshin Pagoda Festival will be held on a grand scale from 23 to 28 December (from 10th Waxing of Nadaw to the Fullmoon Day of Nadaw) in Paungtaw Township of Rakhine State. The festival is annually held in the month of Nadaw. It is learnt that Buddha’s sacred hair relics were enshrined at the historic pagoda built on Nilar Pavata Hillock, southernmost of Myay-ngu-kyun in the township, in the time of King Sanda Thuriya of Dhanyawady era.

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**Flying sparks from the pump set fire to the coconut oil factory**

**Mawlamyine, 18 Dec** — A fire broke out at a coconut oil factory on fish farm street in Zeyarthiri ward in Mawlamyine, Mon State at about 12.30 pm on 14 December. The fire started when flying sparks ignited the coconut oil in the filtration tank. According to the information given by phone, two administrative vehicle and ten fire engines rushed there and 50 auxiliary fire brigade members managed to bring the blaze under control at about 2 pm.

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**Self-reliant book corner in Myoma Market**

**Nay Pyi Taw, 18 Dec** — A self-reliant book corner is being kept open at a shop near Nay Kyal Min Bus Line in Myoma Market in Zabuthiri Township, here, starting from 16 December. A ceremony to donate publications to the book corner called “Doh Kyemon” was held on 16 December, attended by the President Nayaka Sayadaw of Pyunkapraya Maha Vihara Monastery in the township, the township administrator, officials of Nay Pyi Taw Development Affairs Committee and readers. Those who want to donate books and other publications to the book corner may contact Ph: 09 428319049 and 09420745138.

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**MNL friendslies against 8-ranked Malaysian team coming soon**

**Yangon, 18 Dec** — Football clubs of Myanmar National League that are in preparation for 2013 football season will play friendly matches against T-Team, one of Malaysian Super Leagues, on 20, 22 and 24 December, here. According to an arrangement made by the Malaysian football agent that is dealing with transfer of footballers between MNL clubs and foreign football clubs, T-Team will play friendly matches against Yangon United FC at the latter’s football ground on 20 December, Magway FC at Thuwunna Youth Training Centre 22 December and Kanbawza FC at Thuwunna Youth Training Centre on 24 December. T-Team was ranked eight in Malaysia Super League 2012. Former YUFC head coach trains the Malaysian club comprising native players and two former premier league players.— Kyemon

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**Myanmar Traditional Boxing Challenges in Mandalay**

**Mandalay, 18 Dec** — The opening of a two-storey building (Tharaphi Hostel) with an accommodation capacity of 200 trainees was held at Central Institute of Civil Service (Phaunggyi) in Hlegu Township of Yangon Region on 15 December. Member of Union Civil Service Board Dr Win Myint and CICS Acting Rector U Tun Kyi formally opened the new building and viewed round it.

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**New building for CICS (Phaunggyi)**

**Yangon, 18 Dec** — Myanmar traditional boxing challenges were organized at the football ground at the corner of 35th and 71st streets in Maha Aungmyay Township, here, at 7 pm on 16 December. At the three-round challenges, Myaypyay Mike (Myaypyay) knocked his rival Chat Hein (Patmasein) out in the second round. The match between Pale Pyu (Paleik) and Khine Thu Win (Patmasein) ended in knockout in the first round and Pale Pyu won the match. Thargyi Nannaw (Paikkyone) won by a second-round knockout Shoelay (Sagarin). At the four-round challenge, Aye Dapwnit (Mattaya) won by second-round knockout 5k (Shwe Kyarpyu). Three five-round challenges ended in a draw. The five-round challenge between Aung Aung (Mandalay) and Saw Tin poke (a) Shaung (England) ended in knockout in the first round.— Kyemon
Even without Congress, Obama could act to restrict guns

The National Rifle Association, the largest gun rights group with 4 million supporters, relies largely on its ability to influence lawmakers in order to block legislation. Obama’s appointees at the US Justice Department have been studying ideas since the 8 January, 2011, shooting of US Representative Gabrielle Giffords of Arizona and 18 others at a public meeting. Giffords survived but six people died.

Christopher Schroder, who ran the Justice Department’s review, said it looked at possible legislation to send to Congress as well as action the administration could take itself. “You always look at both, because if you can do it administratively it’s certainly a less involved process,” said Schroder, who has since returned to a professorship at Duke Law School. — Reuters

Clinton gets accountability report on Benghazi attacks

WASHINGTON, 18 Dec — Secretary of State Hillary Clinton on Monday received an official review of the September attack on a US diplomatic mission in Benghazi, Libya, setting the stage for testimony on an incident that prompted a political furor and sharp questions about security at US diplomatic facilities overseas.

The State Department said Clinton – who is convalescing after suffering a concussion last week — received the report from the Accountability Review Board formed to probe the attack which killed US Ambassador Christopher Stevens and three other Americans. “The ARB has completed its work. Its report has gone to the secretary this morning. She now has it,” State Department spokeswoman Victoria Nuland said.

Obama is likely to consider the report in combination with possible new laws. — Reuters

Mexican new president outlines nuanced fight against violence

Pena Nieto, 46, said Mexico’s struggle over the last six years showed a multi-pronged approach is needed to get violence off the streets of Latin America’s No 2 economy.

“We’re going to plan policy and the institutional changes over the medium and long term, and also every specific decision and operation,” the president told a news conference. “Security and justice policy is not going to be focused on reacting.” Pena Nieto said the military would continue to patrol Mexico’s streets until a new militarized police force, initially be 10,000 strong — public spaces, Pena Nieto said. “It’s a more fully articulated vision than that of the previous government,” said Javier Oliva, a security expert at the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM). “Pena Nieto’s government is looking to anticipate events and will try to correct the previous government’s mistakes.”

Even without Congress, Obama could act to restrict guns

Mexico’s President Enrique Pena Nieto delivers a speech during the II Extraordinary Session of the National Council of Public Security in Mexico City on 17 Dec, 2012. — Reuters

The battle in Yarmouk raged for days in the devastating Yarmouk Palestinian refugee camp. The battle in Yarmouk, which has always cast itself as a symbol of the Palestinian struggle, sponsoring several guerrilla factions. The National Rifle Association, the largest gun rights group with 4 million supporters, relies largely on its ability to influence lawmakers in order to block legislation.

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Mind-controlled robotic arm gets closer than ever to human limb

**Science & Technology**

**Science**

London, 18 Dec—Researchers in the United States have developed a robotic arm controlled directly by thought with a level of agility closer than ever to a normal human limb.

Jan Scheuermann, a 52-year-old man who was diagnosed with a degenerative brain disorder 13 years ago and is paralyzed from the neck down, was able to operate the robotic arm with a level of control and fluidity not seen before in this type of advanced prosthesis.

Experts are calling it a remarkable step forward for prosthetics controlled directly by the brain. Other systems have already allowed paralyzed patients to type or operate the robotic arm via a computer running a complex algorithm to translate the signals that mimic the way unimpaired brain controls healthy limbs. “These electrodes are remarkable devices in that they are very small,” Michael Boninger, who worked on the study, told Reuters. “You can’t buy them in Radio Shack.” But Boninger said the way the algorithm operates is the main advance. Accurately translating brain signals has been one of the biggest challenges in mind-controlled prosthetics. “There is no limit now to decoding human motion,” he said. “It gets more complex when you work on parts like the hand, but I think that, once you can tap into desired motion in the brain, then how that motion is effected has a wide range of possibilities.” It took weeks of training for Scheuermann to master control of the hand, but she was able to move it after two days, and over time she completed tasks such as picking up objects, orienting them, and moving them to a target position— with a 91.6 percent success rate. Her speed increased with practice.

The researchers plan to incorporate wireless technology to remove the need for a wired connection between the patient’s head and the prosthesis. They also believe a sensory loop could be added that gives feedback to the brain, allowing the user to tell the difference between hot and cold, or smooth and rough surfaces.

“This bioinspired brain-machine interface is a remarkable technological and biomedical achievement,” said Grégoire Courtine at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Lausanne, who was not involved in the study. “Though plenty of challenges lie ahead, these sorts of systems are rapidly approaching the point of clinical fruition,” Courtine said in a comment piece in the Lancet linked to the study.—Reuters

**Twitter offered Instagram $525 million deal**

**Tech**

San Francisco, 18 Dec—Weeks before he assembled a $1 billion offer from Facebook Inc, Instagram CEO Kevin Systrom had verbally agreed to sell his photo-sharing company to Twitter Inc for $252 million in March—but then called off the deal, according to a New York Times report citing unnamed sources. Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg ultimately acquired Instagram after pushing through a cash-and-stock deal just weeks before Facebook’s May initial public offering. The transaction closed in September at a $715 million valuation, reflecting Facebook’s stock drop since the offering.

During negotiations with Instagram, Twitter executives had handed Systrom a term sheet outlining the details of the proposed deal, the Times reported, but Systrom later told California state regulators under oath that his company had not received any “formal offers or term sheets” from potential buyers aside from Facebook. Relations between Twitter, Instagram and Facebook have soured since Facebook successfully acquired Instagram. Earlier this month Instagram shut off a functionality that allowed Twitter to display Instagram pictures, while Twitter introduced its own photo colour-filters to compete with Instagram. A spokeswoman for Systrom declined comment. Twitter could not be immediately reached for comment.—Reuters

**Japanese women enamoured of “Mr Right” love game apps**

Tokyo, 18 Dec—After being saved from kidnapping, you discover you’re the daughter of the prime minister and your life is in imminent danger. You are introduced to a handful of handsome bodyguards, and must decide who you want to protect you 24 hours a day.

That’s the scenario for one of several role-playing “love games” currently popular in Japan, allowing women to safely spend time with their choice of Mr Right without actually dealing with their choice of Mr Right— even as marriage rates in Japan fall.

In the game, you’re the lone woman, and the attention of all the guys is on you, “han-kura,” a 37-year-old office worker who uses that alias on a blog dedicated to these games. The role-playing games are based on characters typical of Japanese manga comics, with all the men slender and elegant. The player becomes the heroine and chooses an ideal mate from several “knights in shining armour” characters, developing a relationship through the choices they make in the storyline.

The games, which can be played on smart phones, are especially popular with working single women in their 30s who feel they don’t have the time or energy for a real relationship due to their demanding work schedule, said Kana Shimada, a novelist who uses that alias on a blog dedicated to these games. The researchers plan

Tokyo, 18 Dec—Google may not face any major repercussions from the Federal Trade Commission’s (FTC) two-year-old anti-trust investigation into its web search business, the Wall Street Journal reported, citing people familiar with the matter.

The FTC might drop the investigation sometime this week based on voluntary changes Google will make to its search practices, rather than making the company sign a formal settlement called a consent decree, the Journal said.

The web search investigation examined whether Google tweaks its search results to disadvantage rival search engines and other specialized searches. Google will probably still be required to sign a consent decree for a separate federal investigation into the licensing of mobile-techology patents it acquired when it took over phone maker Motorola Mobility, the Journal said. An end to the federal probe into Google’s search business would allow the company to avoid getting mired in anti-trust investigations like rival Microsoft Corp endured in the early 2000s.

The European Commission, which is also probing Google, is expected to announce a decision next month. The FTC declined to comment to the Wall Street Journal and could not be reached for comment by Reuters outside of regular business hours. Google could not be reached for comment by Reuters outside of regular business hours.

Google could emerge unsathed from federal web search probe

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India sees stake sale target on track, Oil in January

New Delhi, 18 Dec— India is looking at new ways to attract investors to sales of shares in state-run industries and large offerings in Oil India (OILS.NS) and power company NTPC (NTPC.NS) are set to come in the next few weeks, a top finance ministry official said.

The budgeted forecast for GDP growth in the 2012/13 fiscal year was 7.6 percent, but growth was just 5.4 percent in the first half of the year. Finance Minister P Chidambaram recently projected growth of between 5.5 and 6 percent for the year.

The government has struggled to contain the deficit, which has swelled because of costly oil subsidies and sluggish tax revenues, prompting global ratings agencies to warn of a possible credit downgrade.

Until last week the government’s divestment plan was struggling, but it got a boost from a $1 billion offering of miner NMDC Ltd (NMDC.NS). It is on track to meet a budget target of $5.5 billion by the end of March. D.K Mittal, Secretary, Financial Services and Disinvestment, told the CNBC television network.

Mittal said the Oil India offering will happen in January and will be quickly followed by NTPC by early February.

Investor interest in stake sales was muted last year extending the offering time to allow the shares of state-run firms beyond market hours so that more institutional investors from Europe and the United States could participate in the stakes.

On Saturday, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh said India will speed up the sales to revive the stock market and will push ahead with reforms aimed at spurring an investment recovery in the flagging economy. The ministry is also looking to offshore stakes in Steel Authority of India Ltd (SAIL.NS), NALCO (NALU.NS) and Bharat Heavy Electricals Ltd (BHEL.NS). Mittal gave no timeline on these, but the economic times report said they were likely to be part of the renewed push.

However, he ruled out any plans to sell state-run aircraft maker Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd, while speaking to CNBC TV-18. “We do have a few issues to be put through the IPOs but I think we have still not completed the process. And as you are aware, IPOs do take a longer time so I don’t expect anything to hit within this financial year,” he said.—Reuters

Nikkei at eight and a half month high on weak yen, most Asian shares drop

Tokyo, 18 Dec—The Liberal Democratic Party of Japan’s election triumph drove the yen to a 20-month low against the dollar that propelled the Nikkei stock average .N225 to a 8-1/2-month closing high on expectations Japanese firms will have much better export earnings.

But regional bourses succumbed to profit-taking from last week’s rally as investors wound down positions ahead of the holiday season amid worries that Washington won’t avert the “fiscal cliff” of tax hikes and spending cuts that could hurt “fiscal cliff” of tax hikes and spending cuts that could hurt

WASHINGTON, 18 Dec— Setting the clock ahead for daylight savings time may set the stage for a small increase in heart attacks the next day, according to a US study— which suggests that sleep deprivation may be to blame. Researchers at two hospitals in the US state of Michigan, whose findings appeared in the American Journal of Cardiology, reviewed six years of records and found that they treated an average of 15 cases of heart attacks on the Sunday when the United States switched to daylight savings time. That compared to 13 on a typical Sunday.

“Nowadays, people are looking for how they can reduce their risk of heart disease and other ailments,” said Monica Jiddou, the study’s lead author and a cardiologist at William Beaumont Hospital in Royal Oak.

“Sleep is something we can potentially control. There are plenty of studies that show sleep can affect a person’s health.”

A 2008 Swedish report, for instance, found that the chance of a heart attack increased in the first three weekdays after the switch to daylight savings time, and decreased the Monday after the clocks returned to standard time in the afternoon.

Jiddou told Reuters Health that her team wanted to see if their respective hospitals experienced the same increase and decrease in heart attacks seen in the Swedish study. For the new study, she and her colleagues reviewed records for the 328 patients who were diagnosed with a heart attack during the week after a time change between 2006 and 2012, and for the 607 heart attack patients who were treated two weeks before and after the time shifts.—Reuters

Yazaki opens auto parts factory in Cambodia

Phnom Penh, 18 Dec— Japanese auto parts maker Yazaki Corp opened a wire harness factory in Cambodia on Monday, which President Yashuiko Yazaki said will create about 600 jobs in the country immediately.

The $24 million plant is the company’s first in the country and it received approval from the government last week. The factory will be a major shopping complex that will include hospital facilities. Yazaki said the new plant will use “sophisticated technologies and is expected to employ as many as 2,000 people by 2012.

Government statistics show only 15 Japanese companies invested in Cambodia from 1994 to 2009 with a total capital of $147 million, but investment is picking up with five companies making investments worth $35 million in 2010 and 19 making investments worth $66 million in 2011.

Kyodo News
**Dialogue with Russia is possible, says Georgian special envoy**

**TBILISI, 18 Dec—** Georgia’s special envoy on Russian issues, Zurab Abashidze, said on Monday dialogue is possible between the South Caucasus country and its northern neighbour.

Briefing the media here, Abashidze said his meeting on Friday with Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Gregory Karasin in Geneva on Friday was a positive step.

“Dialogue with Russia is possible, says Georgian special envoy”

**Wellington, 18 Dec—** The international search for 10 fishermen missing off Samoan waters last week has been suspended, New Zealand maritime rescue officials announced on Tuesday.

The search involving a New Zealand air force P3 Orion and a French naval Guardian aircraft had covered around 5,000 square kilometres without finding any sign of the men, said a New Zealand Defence Force statement.

**Cayman Islands’ ruling party fails to reach consensus on oust premier**

**GEORGETOWN, 18 Dec—** Members of the Cayman Islands’ ruling party failed to reach a consensus on Monday to oust Premier McKeeva Bush, who was arrested last week on suspicion of corruption, a party official said.

Key members of the United Democratic Party met on Monday to determine if they would withdraw their support for the embattled leader, said Elhio Solomon, who represents the party in parliament. But the meeting ended without an agreement by the party to call on Bush to step down, he told Reuters. Solomon said some members who would like to see Bush resign had reached out to opposition leaders about trying to force Bush from office through a no confidence motion in parliament.

**US Senate takes up $60 billion Sandy bill amid charges of waste**

**WASHINGTON, 18 Dec—** The US Senate on Monday began debating a $60.4 billion aid bill to rebuild communities devastated by Superstorm Sandy amid criticism by conservative groups who said the measure was loaded with wasteful, non-disaster spending.

The Democratic-controlled Senate is looking to pass the disaster aid bill this week. But Republicans, wary of its huge price tag in the midst of tense debt and deficit negotiations in Washington, are likely to try to rack back some of its provisions through amendments.

Meanwhile, the House of Representatives is taking a slower, more painstaking approach to analyzing the Obama administration’s request for funding to rebuild coastal communities largely in New York and New Jersey, repair transportation infrastructure there and provide other aid.

**Mexico announces new security strategy**

**MEXICO CITY, 18 Dec—** Mexican President Enrique Pena Nieto on Monday announced a new security strategy, which focuses on transformation of law enforcement institutions and crime prevention.

Pena Nieto, who took office on Dec 1, said a 10,000-strong militarized police force known as the national gendarmerie would be created. The military would continue to patrol Mexico’s streets until the gendarmerie is ready to take over.

The Attorney General’s Office would be strengthened, Pena Nieto told the Public Security National Council.

He also stressed that the new strategy has a regional focus and specific actions would be strengthened in hot spots. The government will invest 115.6 billion Mexican pesos (9.17 billion US dollars) in 2013 for crime prevention programmes.

The new strategy is different from the one used by his predecessor Felipe Calderon, who relied on the military in a war with drug cartels. Calderon’s strategy was widely seen as a failure as more than 60,000 drug-related killings occurred during his six-year term.

**Injured people receive medical treatment at a hospital in northwest Pakistan’s Peshawar, on 17 Dec, 2012. At least 17 people were killed and over 40 others injured when a blast ripped through a bus stand in Pakistan’s northwest town of Jamrud on Monday morning, reported local media ARY.**

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**International search for missing Samoan fishermen called off**

**Mexico City, 18 Dec—** The international search for 10 fishermen missing off Samoan waters since a cyclone last week has been suspended, New Zealand maritime rescue officials announced on Tuesday.

The search involving a New Zealand air force P3 Orion and a French navy Guardian aircraft had covered around 5,000 square kilometres without finding any sign of the men, said a New Zealand Defence Force statement.

**会选择性地采用这种策略**

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**When a natural disaster occurs, there is a textbook response by Congress — they cobble together an overpriced bill that isn’t paid for, there’s no accountability or oversight, and it’s filled with pork. This proposal is no different,** the group said in an email to senators.

Among spending items in the Senate bill drawing the ire of Washington conservatives is seeking $150 million for fishery disasters in Alaska and Mississippi — thousands of miles from the Sandy damage. The bill also includes a request of $50 million for the National Park Service’s historic preservation fund and nearly $9 million to replace vehicles and other equipment used by the Departments of Justice and Homeland Security.

**Even some local New Jersey politicians criticized the bill. “A full 5 percent of the appropriation request is earmarked for the replacement of federal assets, rather than rebuilding and aid efforts in the tri-state area,” New Jersey State Senator Joe Pennacchio, a Republican, said in a statement, referring to New Jersey, New York and Connecticut.**

**The three states had initially requested $82 billion in aid, although damage estimates were expected to rise over time. Some of the rebuilding costs were expected to be covered by private insurance.**

**Some lawmakers are also questioning the bill’s inclusion of infrastructure upgrades aimed at mitigating damage from future storms. For example, $5.5 billion would be allocated to the Federal Transit Administration to make transportation systems more resilient in high winds and floods, including efforts to keep tunnels from flooding.**

**Reuters**
Townsenders selected through secret voting in Taunggyi

Taunggyi, 18 Dec—Townsenders were selected in 22 wards of Taunggyi through secret voting system on 11 and 12 December for electing village administrators in Taunggyi Township of Shan State. The ceremonies were supervised by Taunggyi Township Administrator Assistant Director U Zaw Myint Thein and townsenders.

Myanmar Alinn

Publications donated to village libraries

Kengtung, 18 Dec—For the people to have easy access to reading, a ceremony to donate books and publications to village libraries, jointly established by Information and Public Relations Department and local people, was held at Princess Hotel in Kengtung on 10 December.

Owner of the hotel U Soe Shwe and family donated 158 copies of books, 344 copies of magazine and 352 copies of journals to Staff Officer (Duty) U Aung Maung of District IPRD.—Myanmar Alinn

Tax educative essay and cartoon contest organized

YANGON, 18 Dec—The Internal Revenue Department under the Ministry of Finance and Revenue and No. 3 Basic Education Department held the tax educative essay and cartoon contest organized by UNICEF and the Ministry of Finance and Revenue.

First, second and third prize winning students in the region and district level contests will be awarded on 27 December.

Myanmar Alinn

Don’t worry about rice production

YANGON, 18 Dec—Recently, some rumour spread in some townships as there was untimely rains in Yangon Region. Thus, paddy was soaked in the rains. In consequence, production of paddy would fall and price of rice rise.

On 11 December, an interview was made at Myanmar Rice Dealers Association (Paddy and Rice Brokerage) on Wadan Street in Lanmadaw Township. The rice brokerages were crowded with buyers and sellers. Buyers and sellers from Yangon, Ayeayawady and Bago regions met at the brokerages to check quality of rice. Some of them cooked rice in small pots so as to check the quality.

Chairman of Myanmar Rice Dealers Association U Aung Than Oo briefed that due to untimely rains, production of rice will not plummet down. Secretary of the association U Tin Oo explained that a large volume of rice has been flowing into the brokerages since mid-November. In Ayeayawady Region, farmers focus on Pawhsan paddy strain that fetches good price in monsoon. Ziyar paddy strain also emerges from Ayeayawady Region. Rice from wet paddy has some moisture but it does not change to yellow colour. So, the price of rice fall a little but production rate will not change. The people should not succumb to rumour of unscrupulous persons.

From January to November 2012, townships from Ayeayawady Region Pyapon, Dedaye, Bogale, Mawlamyineyin, Kyakikat, Labutta, Wakema and Myaungmya transported 13 million bags of rice to Yangon City through Bayintnaung, Insein and Pazundaung ports. In November, 1,134,675 bags of rice flowed into the city, according to the statistics.—Myanmar Alinn

Advanced medicines to be produced locally soon

YANGON, 18 Dec—According to a local pharmaceutical company, advanced medicines will be produced at home for the first ever in cooperation with a US pharmaceutical production company.

“Our company will cooperate with US-based pharmaceutical company Alvogen Co to manufacture advanced medicines in Myanmar. At present, we have signed the agreement. Necessary documents have been submitted to Myanmar Investment Commission. It’s estimated that the production will commence in early 2013,” said Admin Officer U Pe Hlaing of Silver Shine International (SSI) Co.

Most of the medicines in the market were imported from foreign countries, relying on 90 per cent of foreign medicines. If the quality medicines are produced at home, price of medicine would fall in the market.

“Mainly, technology is the most important. A plan is underway to build pharmaceutical factory in Myanmar. The US company will import raw materials to produce medicines as it is a great company. The foreign technicians will train the Myanmar staff in works,” continued U Pe Hlaing.

A surgical specialist who attended the signing ceremony of the two companies remarked that cooperation with foreign pharmaceutical companies will help develop Myanmar medical field. The US-based Alvogen Co is manufacturing quality medicines and owns its branches in over 20 countries for production and distribution of medicines across the world.

“Medicines are imported abroad. Whatever it may be, if quality medicines are produced at home, not only production cost but price of medicine will fall. At present, price of medicines at home is more expensive than that of other countries,” said specialist Dr Nyo Mie Aung.—Myanmar Alinn

Free clinic opens for families of Bayintnaung Brokerage

YANGON, 18 Dec—Highway Commodity Transport Service Entrepreneurs Association opened the free clinic for its members at B23 on Khayay Street in the compound of Bayintnaung Brokerage on 9 September.

Now, the clinic issues free treatment cards to over 300 member cars of the association.

The clinic is closed every Sunday and gazetted holidays.

On remaining days, the clinic is kept open from 1 pm to 4 pm daily.

On Saturday, the clinic is being kept open from 9 am to 4 pm for providing health care services to staff and families of NGOs in the brokerage compound, servicemen and families of Bayintnaung Fire Station and Police Station in addition to members of the association.

Myanmar Alinn

Megatron Phacoemulsification Machine donated

YANGON, 18 Dec—A ceremony to donate a megatron phaco-emulsification machine worth US$ 26000 to Eye Care Department of North Okkalapa Teaching General Hospital of Yangon Region was held at the hospital at 9 am yesterday.

At first, Medical Superintendent Dr Than Win extended greetings.

Chairman of Mya Yeik Nyo Education, Health and Culture Foundation Dr Khin Shwe explained the purpose of donation and handed over the machine to Head of Eye Care Department Dr Ko Ko Thant who spoke words of thanks.

The medical superintendant gave a certificate of honour to the wellwisher.

Thanks to donation, the hospital will be able to provide eye care services to the outreach patients.

The megatron phacoemulsification machine is effectively used for giving eye treatment.

The Foundation is placing emphasis on matters related to education, health and culture foundation.

Myanmar Alinn

Myanmar student secures award in Environmental International Child Art Contest

YANGON, 18 Dec—A Myanmar child secured the IQ Net Special Award in the 13th Environmental Inter-national Child Art Contest jointly organized by UNICEF and the International Certification Network in Tokyo of Japan.

The children of 7-15 years old from 80 countries sent 15212 works to the contest. Of them, Ninth standard student Maung Aung Thi, 14 of Institute of Education Practising High School (Kamayut) won the IQ Net Special Award.

Maung Aung Thi had secured the first prize in the contests in 2007, the honorary award in 2008, the best environmental award in 2009, the Best QJA Award in 2010 and the first prize in 2011. He has so far bagged 11 international awards in the cartoon, art, poster and computer art contests, 13 prizes in local contests at central level, five at region level and over 50 in the township and others.

Myanmar Alinn

Medical specialist added that the company will train 200 doctors and other health care workers in the next three years.

“If quality medicines are produced in Myanmar, price of medicines will fall. At present, price of medicines at home is more expensive than that of other countries,” said specialist Dr Nyo Mie Aung.—Myanmar Alinn

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Myanmar Alinn
**Create renewable energy for environmental conservation**

Myanmar, in its drive for environmental conservation, pays serious attention to conservation of forest, woodlands and takes measures in various sectors to reduce air and water pollution, control of dumping of industrial waste and conserve wildlife. In this context, it is laying down a new policy in order to be able to foster economic development in parallel with environmental conservation and to remain as a nation which offers the last area where clean food can be produced for the region.

Meanwhile, it will mobilize the participation of the people and social organizations in the tasks for environmental conservation and create renewable energy at low cost, while reviewing and amending laws and enacting new laws on environmental conservation.

Although Myanmar is blessed with substantial forest cover it is striving to transform its energy usage in spite of its plentiful oil and natural gas reserves. Being it is a signatory to the Kyoto Protocol, it has been closely following the tenets of the UN.

At a time when concrete steps are being taken to stop and reverse the activities which result in high carbon emissions that lead to climatic change and in turn beget many undesirable adverse effects, it is hearting to learn that many governments have turned green and it is hoped that the international community will remain in the vanguard in finding solutions to such complex problems.

In fifty years, the era of fossils fuels will be over and hydrogen, wind, solar and nuclear will be meeting most of the global energy needs and we are looking forward to that day.

**Myanmar Tennis team on joint-training in Cambodia**

**YANGON, 18 Dec—A** three-member Myanmar Tennis team (Men) left for Cambodia to take joint-training, hoping a victory in the 27th Southeast Asian SEA Games on 15 December.

They were seen off by officials concerned from Myanmar Tennis Federation at Yangon International Airport.

The team comprises athletes Min Min, Aung Kyaw Naing and Win Naing Oo.—MNA

**Nay Pyi Taw, 18 Dec—** President U Thein Sein met with departmental officials, members of social organizations and town-selders at Pale Yadana Hall in Dawei this morning.

Firstly, Union Ministers U Tin Naing Thein, U Soe Thein and U Hla Tun elaborated ongoing reform processes of the government and works to be done for development of Taninthayi Region in accord with laws, bylaws and rules and regulations.

In his address, the President said his team comprising Union ministers based in Mawlamyine on 15 December and performed matters related to economic, electric power, education and health sectors, upgrading of Thanbyuzayat-Phayar Thonesu road for opening of border trade centre, upgrading of the railroad which was once used in WWII and feasibility for construction of a bridge that links Mawlamyine and Bilu Island.

On their arrival at Dawei on 16 December, they coordinated matters related to education and health sectors and opening of Htee Klui trade centre near Thai border. He yesterday held talks with the Prime Minister of Thailand on sooner implementation of Dawei SEZ and deep-sea port and extension of registration process which was due to be completed on 14 December for Myanmar workers in Thailand.

Then they proceeded to Kawthoung where they inspected the develop-mental tasks and gave necessary instructions to district-level departmental heads.

The President vowed to seek ways and means for availability of electricity in Myeik District with an abundant supply of marine resources and thriving oil palm plantations which is accessible by land, water and air as it is situated at the centre of Taninthayi Region.

The country will develop only when each ward does develop.

**Shwe Ko Oo**

**Pyithu Hluttaw IR Committee Chairman receives Chinese guests**

**Nay Pyi Taw, 18 Dec—** Chairman of Pyithu Hluttaw International Relations Committee U Hla Myint Oo received a delegation led by member of Foreign Affairs Committee of Political Consultative Conference of China Mr. Zhang Jihuan (Retd Ambassador), at Hluttaw Hall, here, at 11:30 am today.

At the meeting, they had a cordial discussion on Hluttaw’s international relations, implementation of Hluttaw’s duties and further promoting relations be-tween the foreign affairs committees of the two countries.—MNA
One dead, three seriously injured in KIA attack

Nay Pyi Taw, 18 Dec—About 80 KIA attacked Kamaing Police Station with RPJs in Phakant Township at a close range. The Police Station commander and members exchanged fires with the KIA group in the compound of the station. The group destroyed the station office and withdrawn at about 5.30 am.

At about 6 am, the KIA group destroyed a 220-ft-long steel truss Mogaung Creek-crossing Bailey Bridge with two mines, about 1 furlong north of Kamaing Police Station at the entrance to Kamaing. Due to it, bridge’s steel truss was damaged, and the bridge is out of service. There are still two mines planted on the bridge.

During the attack, police corporal Tun Aye fell, and police Sub-inspector Aung Tin Oo’s wife Ma Hla Sein Nu, his mother Daw May Hmway Sein and sister Ma Tin May Aung were seriously injured. They were sent to Kamaing Subtownship hospital. Of them, Daw May Hmway Sein and sister Ma Tin May Aung were dead. Ma Tin May Aung is a blue staff from Sittway Hospital. And she and her mother have been at the police station, visiting SIP Aung Tin Oo 10 days ago.

Local military columns are chasing the KIA group.

The President then viewed the research works of the Department of Geography.

The President stressed the need to arrange field trips of students to mines and help them establish careers in potential mining joint ventures. He called for studying potentials to establish industries of all capacities and conducting research on raw materials for production of cement.

Coordination meeting between Pyithu Hluttaw speaker and legal affairs and special cases assessment commission held

Nay Pyi Taw, 18 Dec—President U Thein Sein arrived at Myeik University where he met faculty members, staff and students this morning. He was accompanied by Vice-President U Nyan Tun, Union ministers, Lt-Gen Thein Naing Win of the Office of the Commander-in-Chief (Army), the region chief minister, the commander of the Coastal Region Command and departmental heads.

He viewed theses displayed at the university and called for putting them into practice. The Union Minister for Education reported the President on the papers.

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The President then met faculty members and students at the convocation hall of the university where he heard report on the academic matters of the university presented by the acting rector and Union Minister Dr Mya Aye.

The President said his trip to Mon State and Taninthayi Region was aimed at fulfilling the needs for development of the areas.

He briefed on economic reforms of the country, advantages of rich natural resources and the need for development of human resources. He urged students to raise their thirst for education.

The President and party then viewed the development of Myeik and visited the cold storage of Pyi Phyo Tun International Co. Ltd on Pahtawpahtet island.

They left Myeik for Nay Pyi Taw in the evening.
Government strives for promoting safe... (from page 16)

migrant workers in collaboration with local and regional organizations, he added.

The Vice-President concluded his speech saying that he would like to recommend deeply to those ministers, Civil Societies, Organizations dealing with overseas employment, UN, INGOs and NGO including potential migrant workers to cooperate in a harmonious manner.

Next, Union Minister for Labour, Employment and Social Security U Maung Myint explained ongoing tasks related to migrant workers.

Then UNFPA Resident Representative Mr. Mohamed Abdel-Ahad read out the UNSG’s message on International Migrants Day and IOM Chief Mission Ms. Mariko Tomyama read out the message sent by IOM Director-General. UNFPA Resident Representative Ms. Mariko Tomyama. Union ministers presented cer-tificates of honour to ministries, Kayin State government and Myawady District General Administration Department.

After the ceremony, the Vice-President viewed round the booths on display at the ceremony. Myanmar workers have been working in 15 countries including Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, ROK, Japan and Middle East countries. Labour migration of women has been allowed since December 2011. Under the MoU between Myanmar and Thailand, issuance of passports has been issued for more than 1.2 million Myanmar migrant workers in Thailand. Plans are underway to issue official documents to the remaining undocumented migrant workers ranging from 800,000 to 1 million. Arrangements are being made to identify offspring of Myanmar migrant workers in Thailand as the citizens of Myanmar and provide them with education. More than new 40,000 Myanmar workers have been sent to Thailand under the agreement of the two countries.

More than 101,000 out of undocumented Myanmar migrant workers in Malaysia were granted passports, and plans are underway to issue more passports to the remaining more than 100,000 workers. Labour Attachés were assigned duties in Thailand and Republic of Korea to handle the issues of Myanmar workers there. For ensuring systematic management on labour migration, a nine-point policy is being implemented and formulation of a five-year work plan is being carried out.—MNA

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker receives Israeli ambassador to Myanmar

NAY PYI TAW, 18 Dec— Speaker of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw and Amyotha Hluttaw U Khin Aung Myint received Israeli Ambassador Mr Hagay Moshe Behar.—MNA

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker shakes hands with Israeli Ambassador Mr Hagay Moshe Behar.—MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 18 Dec— Speaker of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw and Amyotha Hluttaw U Khin Aung Myint received Israeli Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Hagay Moshe Behar at the hall of Amyotha Hluttaw, here, at 3:00 pm today.

Also present at the call together with the Speaker of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw were Deputy Speaker of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw and Amyotha Hluttaw U Mya Nyein and responsible persons of the Hluttaw Office.

Both sides bolded further cementing relationships between Myanmar-Israel that can bring friendships between the two parliaments, and which can build the belief of the two people. Besides, they said that the friendships show evidence that the relationships between the two countries has been cementing for 59 years. They exchanged views on matters related to bilateral cooperation, visiting to the parliaments in turn and mutual cooperation in carrying out hluttaw’s affairs.—MNA

UNFPA Resident Representative Mr. Mohamed Abdel-Ahad.—MNA

IOM Chief Mission Ms. Mariko Tomyama. —MNA

Union Minister for Labour, Employment and Social Security U Maung Myint.—MNA

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Pyidaungsu Hluttaw
Announcement No. (5/2012)
5th Waxing of Nadaw, 1374 ME
(18th December, 2012)
Sixth Regular Session of First Pyidaungsu Hluttaw summoned

Under the Section 79 of the Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, the Section 13 of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Law and the Bylaw 3 (b), it is hereby announced that sixth regular session of first Pyidaungsu Hluttaw will be convened in Nay Pyi Taw, at 10 am on 13th Waxing of Nadaw, 1374 ME (10th January, 2013), Speaker Pyidaungsu Hluttaw

Sd/Khin Aung Myint
**REGIONAL**

**Accident at China’s Baosteel plant kills two, injures 13**

**Shanghai, 18 Dec**— Two workers were killed and 13 injured when a furnace at a steel plant owned by Baosteel fell, spilling molten iron, the third fatal accident at a Baosteel plant this year.

The workers were clearing slag from the structure when the furnace fell at the plant in the Baoshan District of Shanghai, Baosteel said in a brief statement posted on its microblog site late on Monday. The plant has an annual production capacity of 100,000 tonnes, according to Baosteel’s website. Baosteel is China’s biggest listed steelmaker. Chinese media reported it was the third fatal accident at a Baosteel plant this year. In July, a heat-supply vehicle at a plant exploded, killing one person and seriously burning another.

In February, six workers were killed and three critically injured after a gas explosion at its Meishan steel plant. Shares in Baosteel closed down 0.21 percent at 4.85 yuan (0.78%) on Monday.

**Singapore operators undertake to improve dorm conditions for foreign workers**

**Singapore, 18 Dec**— Eight major operators of dormitories housing foreign workers in Singapore have formed an association to roll out benchmarks aimed at improving the living conditions at such facilities, local media reported on Monday.

Apart from differences over salaries, the bus drivers also raised issues of the poor living conditions at the Woodlands Dormitory, where typically eight to 10 workers on different shifts live in a room.

The dormitories for foreign workers in Singapore are often located in areas that is quite a distance away from local communities.

The eight companies offer over 100,000 of the estimated 150,000 bed spaces in the purpose-built dormitories, the online edition of the Straits Times reported.

The Dormitory Association of Singapore will roll out new benchmarks to uplift the industry ridden by complaints on poor living conditions, it said. The eight companies signed a document to undertake to follow the benchmarks, which cover areas such as drainage, room and sanitation facilities. It also wants to help good dorms to set themselves apart from the competition by launching an accreditation scheme based on the benchmarks in six months. The association is aiming for more operators to join the association, too.

**Indonesia ranks second in bribery table**

**Jakarta, 18 Dec**— Indonesia is ranked the second after Malaysia in a survey on paying bribes for business conducted by international anti-corruption watchdog Transparency International on executives of companies, local media reported on Monday.

The survey entitled “2012 Bribe Payers Survey” was conducted on 3,000 company executives in 30 countries who were asked whether they had been securing business contracts because their rivals bribed officials to get the contracts throughout last year.

The survey showed that 42 percent of Indonesian executives interviewed confirmed it by replying “yes.” That figure was a bit lower than 50 percent of Malaysia. In China, 27 percent of executives replied positively.

Countries surveyed by the Transparency International included Japan, South Korea, China, India, the Philippines, Germany, the United States, Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore.

Japan was ranked the best in term of less bribing practices in business with below 5 percent and Singapore comes at the top with 22 percent, local portal detik.com reported.

Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono said earlier that now investigations on corruption officials can be conducted swiftly by the government sanctioned anti-graft agency, the KPK.

**Rise in Australians using homeless services**

**Canberra, 18 Dec**— More than 19,000 people sleep without accommodation each night and 210,000, or one in 98, used specialist homeless services in 2011/12, the latest report from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) shows on Tuesday.

The report shows 128,378 people using those services were at risk of homelessness. Children under 17 made up 29 per cent of that total, with kids under 10 accounting for 17 per cent. Young people aged 18-24 had the highest level of need, with one in every 56 accessing services.

Young women in that age group had an even higher representation, at one in 42.

A major cause of homelessness in Australia was domestic violence, AIHW spokesman Geoff Neideck said. Overall, Victoria had the highest number of people needing help, followed by NSW and Queensland.

While 86 per cent of those seeking services were born in Australia, New Zealand, Sudan and UK were the top three countries for migrants needing help.

And indigenous people were over-represented in the overall count of people seeking homeless services.

**Woman rescued 22 hours after building collapse**

**Ningbo, 18 Dec**— A woman who was buried for more than 22 hours after a building collapsed in Ningbo City of east China’s Zhejiang Province was rescued on Monday morning, local authorities said. The woman, surnamed Dong, 24, was pulled out of the debris at about 10:40 am. She was taken to hospital, according to a Jiangdong District government announcement.

Dong was found by rescuers at about 7 am and received packages of glucose from doctors through the rubble.

The six-storey building collapsed on Sunday at noon in Jiangdong District after residents found cracks in the structure. They reported the situation to a local government organization.

A woman, aged 21, was pulled out of the debris around 4:50 pm but died later in a local hospital.

The building was constructed in 1989, housing 18 families. A total of 256 households living in eight nearby buildings were evacuated and have been accommodated in seven hotels arranged by the local government.

**Indonesia orders 37 Russian-made amphibian tanks**

**Jakarta, 18 Dec**— Indonesia has ordered 37 BMP 3F amphibian tanks from Russia, in addition to the 17 ones already in service with the Marine Corps.

Commander of Cavalry 1 mariner regiment of Indonesian Navy, Colonel Sarjito made the revelation at the Marine headquarters in Surabaya, East Java.

The 17 amphibian tanks were the first batch ordered from Russia in 2009, the tempo.co reported.

The new procurement order worth $100 million US dollars was awarded by Indonesian government this year with delivery scheduled to commence this year.

The BMP 3F amphibian tank is fitted with complete armament, including ground to air missiles, requires three crews to operate it. The tank carries up to seven military personnel.

**People check the quality of cumquat during a contest for cumquat in Rong’an County of Lichou City, south China’s Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, on 17 Dec, 2012. Cumquat planting has become a major income source for local farmers in Rong’an.**
Afghans turn to AK-47, fearing Taleban return or civil war

KABUL, 18 Dec— Afghan father-of-four Mohammad Nasir has a secret he’s been keeping from his family. The aid worker pulls a television box out from the living-room wall of his Kabul home. Behind it is a carved-out shelf, hiding what he hopes will keep loved ones safe when Western troops withdraw by the end of 2014 — an AK-47 assault rifle.

Arms purchases are soaring in Afghanistan, along with the price of weapons, a sign that many Afghans fear a return of the Taleban, civil war or rising lawlessness.

An assault rifle cost $400 a year ago. Today, some arms dealers are selling them for triple the price.

And it’s not just ordinary Afghans who are buying. Warlords who control militias, and former anti-Soviet mujahideen fighters are also boosting the trade.

“Whenever you turn on the TV or radio, the discussion is 2014. I’m not feeling safe now, it’s become like doomsday for Afghans,” said Nasir, 48, storing the polished second-hand rifle and slamming the TV unit back against the wall.

“People are saying security will collapse, or soldiers will join warlords or the Taleban, so we need something to protect our families when there’s a crisis.”

The brisk arms business is complicating the government’s efforts to pacify a country where the Taleban can strike virtually anywhere, ethnic tensions can easily ignite violence, and warlords are constantly jockeying for influence.

Afghanistan wants to project an image of stability ahead of 2014, a critical year when presidential elections will be held and the 350,000 Afghan security force will take over security.

Afghan authorities say they’ve had success in seizures of illegal firearms but concede that in a country that has a turbulent history, their efforts may have little impact.

The government was deeply embarrassed when Energy and Water Minister Ismail Khan, an influential former warlord, recently called on militias to rearm to protect Afghanistan after 2014.

General Mohammad Naqib Aman, a deputy of the anti-terrorism department at the Interior Ministry, denies the illegal gun trade is flourishing.

“Buying and selling of weapon, without being authorized, is illegal and they will be arrested,” Aman told Reuters. —Reuters

NATO: Patriot missiles in Turkey “purely defensive”

BRUSSELS, 18 Dec— The deployment of Patriot missiles by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in Turkey is “purely defensive,” the alliance’s secretary general Anders Fogh Rasmussen said here on Monday.

Speaking at a Press conference after his meeting with Belgian Prime Minister Elio Di Rupo, Rasmussen said NATO “has no offensive intentions whatsoever” by deploying Patriot in Turkey.

“I hope the fact that we have deployed Patriot missiles in Turkey can act as an effective deterrence so that no one would even think about attacking Turkey,” said Rasmussen.

NATO approved Turkey’s request in early December to augment its air defence against a potential cross-border attack from Syria by deploying Patriot missiles along the border. According to earlier media reports, around 600 NATO troops are expected to accompany the six Patriot missile systems to be deployed in Turkey.

Meanwhile, commenting on the current situation in Afghanistan, Rasmussen praised the contribution of Belgium to the International Security and Assistance Force (ISAF) under Nato command, in particular its air support with the presence of six F16 fighter jets.

French opposition UMP heavy weights agree to new vote to end leadership row

PARIS, 18 Dec— France’s rightwing UMP arch rivals Jean-Francois Coppe and Francois Fillon reached an accord on Monday to hold a new leadership vote, with the first round scheduled on 15 Sept. 2013.

A new election for the presidency of the UMP will take place before the resumption of the regular parliamentary session of October 2013 and will be preceded by a campaign “that would take place between July and September,” the two UMP heavyweights declared.

The agreement was announced after the two held talks on Monday evening, putting an end to the month-long bickering about the primary results of the party’s presidential election between current UMP General Secretary Coppe and former prime minister Fillon.

Coalition reigned in the right-wing conservative party since 2011 when both contenders claimed to have won the leadership vote. The dispute had plunged the UMP into an unprecedented crisis.

Fillon formed a new parliamentary wing R-UMP, and warned he would seek judicial solutions after the UMP’s Electoral Appeals Commission confirmed Coppe as the party’s president.

Former conservative president Nicolas Sarkozy was also invited to negotiate the dispute and he suggested to hold a fresh vote.

The two rivals have met for several rounds of talks in an attempt to reach a compromise to end the vote dispute.

“Besides an exit from the crisis, this agreement aims to lay the foundations of a radical reforms of UMP statutes and rules... This agreement constitute the basis for rules drafting for the primary organization following the nomination of the candidate of our party in the presidential election,” the pair said in a common statement. They also agreed on the material term of the due election which will be presented to the National Council and that a high and impartial authority “will judge the equality of resources allocated by the party to the candidates.”

Following the agreement, the newly-formed group R-UMP will be dissolved in order to forge a united front before the next parliamentary session on 15 Jan. 2013.

Coppe will keep the party’s top job until the new vote but a management team will be composed to add new posts of vice president and delegated general secretary to be officially named in the first half of the next month.

Xinhua
Jessica Simpson planning secret Hawaii wedding

LOS ANGELES, 18 Dec— The 32-year-old singer and her fiance Eric Johnson are jetting off to the tropical paradise on 21 December with a group of their closest family and friends in tow and are believed to be tying the knot in an intimate ceremony. A source told RadarOnline.com: “For the holidays, Jessica and Eric are going to Hawaii and they’ve invited a lot of their close friends and family. No one quite knows what is being planned, but family members are speculating that they could be planning a surprise wedding.”

“The insider added: “Jessica is certain though that she wants to get married before her baby is born, and isn’t bothered if she’s showing in any wedding pictures. She just wants a relaxed and intimate ceremony and has been dropping hints that the big day could be right before Christmas.”—PTI

Alicia Silverstone in PETA campaign against cruelty to ducks

LOS ANGELES, 18 Dec— Alicia Silverstone has taken part in a new PETA campaign exposing cruelty ducks and geese suffer for their feathers. The clueless actress appears as a spokesperson for animal rights organisation People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals.

In the video further alleges some ducks and geese used for down are also used for foie gras production—which involves the creatures being force-fed to fatten their livers. Alicia—who is a committed vegan and previous recipient of the Sexiest Female Vegetarian award—said: “You can help stop this suffering by purchasing only down-free products and encouraging all your friends and family members to do the same. This is one simple way to make a huge difference for animals. “Even in costumes I’ve said please don’t use any feathers anywhere. Feel great not using down and feathers—there’s no need for it at all.”

Pop star Kelly Clarkson announces engagement

LOS ANGELES, 18 Dec— Kelly Clarkson, who became the first contestant to win “American Idol” a decade ago and went on to several chart-topping successes, has gotten engaged to her boyfriend, the singer said in a Twitter message on Saturday.

Clarksom, 30, previously revealed she had been dating talent manager Brandon Blackstock since early this year.

Blackstock is the stepson of country singer Reba McEntire.

“I’m engaged!” Clarkson said on Twitter. “I wanted y’all to know!! Happiest night of my life last night!!”

She then followed that by posting a link to a photo of her canary yellow diamond engagement ring on a website. She wrote that her boyfriend helped design it and that she “can’t wait to make Brandon’s ring.”

Clarkson’s album “Stronger” hit No 2 last year on the Billboard 200 sales chart, and she in previous years topped pop charts with her songs “My Life Would Suck Without You” and “A Moment Like This.”

The Texas-born singer won the Fox television singing contest “American Idol” in the show’s debut year in 2002, and has had more success than many of the show’s stars from following years.

Clarkson has burnished an image as an artist willing to speak her mind, even confessing to feelings of loneliness.

Katie Holmes has ‘best revenge body’ of 2012

NEW DELHI, 18 Dec— Katie Holmes has been voted the celebrity with the ‘best revenge body’ of 2012. The Dead Accounts star — who split from Tom Cruise in June after six years of marriage and won full custody of their daughter Suri, six, — topped the annual fit list, compiled by Fitness magazine.

The magazine ranked the 33-year-old actress’s figure slightly ahead of 28-year-old Part of Mesinger Katy Perry’s post-break-up body, whose divorce from British comedian husband Russell Brand was also finalised last summer after just 14 months of marriage. Katie is frequently spotted attending spinning classes in New York at the popular celebrity exercise centre Soul Cycle, and also maintains her petite curves by sticking to a diet rich in vegetables and fruit.

Katie recently revealed that she comes from a health conscious family and said that her family even goes running together before tucking into their Thanksgiving dinner.

She said: “Many years ago, my dad started this tradition where we all do this run in the local park. It’s a three mile run called the Turkey Trot. There’s even a prize, which I haven’t won yet. But it’s really fun.”

The actress has always kept fit and even ran the New York City marathon in 2007. Blake Lively was awarded ‘best legs’ in the poll, while Jennifer Lawrence was voted ‘best curves’.—PTI

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The actress has always kept fit and even ran the New York City marathon in 2007. Blake Lively was awarded ‘best legs’ in the poll, while Jennifer Lawrence was voted ‘best curves’.—PTI
Everton's Fellaini banned for three matches

London, 18 Dec—Everton’s Marouane Fellaini has been banned for three matches after being charged by the FA with violent conduct, the Premier League club said on Monday.

The Belgium international appeared to headbutt Stoke City’s Ryan Shawcross in Saturday’s 1-1 draw between the two sides. Everton said the player and the club had accepted the charge and Fellaini would now be banned for their league fixtures against West Ham United, Wigan Athletic and Chelsea.

Referee Mark Halsey said he saw two further incidents involving Fellaini and Shawcross, neither of which he deemed to be violent conduct.

“I apologise completely to Ryan Shawcross, my team mates and to our fans at the game,” Fellaini said after the match.

Nadal’s calibre would be missed

The absence of a player of Nadal’s calibre would be an impact. In any other era expectations of an immediate golden year, has not played a match since a shock Wimbledon upset three weeks later, as year-end world number one, but Federer’s grass court brilliance deprived Murray of the title.

Murray began it with a trip to Leeds bear pit

Murray began it with a trip to Leeds bear pit himself fit during Major League Soccer’s off-season. He has sensibly lowered his expectations of an immediate return home tired and trophyless. Having flown halfway to London from California, his New Year’s resolution was to win a new Y ork derby. "I am not sure both parties want to have this second comeback. I think Thierry needs rest. He is about to become a father and I think he will want to enjoy the break," Wenger said. He’s been reluctant to comment on the possibility of Henry’s return and said last week there was nothing to report.—Reuters

Golden year for Murray, regrets for Nadal

London, 18 Dec—For Andy Murray 2012 marked a golden milestone, for Novak Djokovic it was an emphatic reminder of his status as the world’s best male player, and for Roger Federer and his army of fans it was proof that the old master’s magic still sparkles.

Serena Williams used her second half of the year to demonstrate that she continues to be head and shoulders above her rivals in the women’s game, whatever the rankings suggest.

Of the sport’s marquee names, only Rafa Nadal will reflect on the past year with regret after six months out with a knee injury, and all eyes will be studying the 11-times grand-slam winner’s form once the new season swings into action.

Nadal, one of four different winners of the men’s grand-slam titles this year, has not played a match since a shock Wimbledon defeat by Lukas Rosol.

He hopes to return at the Australian Open although he has sensibly lowered expectations of an immediate impact. In any other era the absence of a player of Nadal’s calibre would be impossible to void to fit yet such is the quality at the top of the men’s game that the Mallorcan’s extended lay-off merely took a little gloss off what was otherwise a vintage year.

Murray began it with a new coach in Ivan Lendl but still without a grand-slam title on his CV having lost in his first three major finals without taking a set.

The Scot became Britain’s first male Wimbledon singles finalist since Bunny Austin in 1938 but Federer’s grass court brilliance deprived Murray of the title.

Three weeks later Murray returned to the All England Club lawns like a man on a mission and he rode a wave of national euphoria to thrust Federer in the Olympic singles final.

Fuelled with belief, Murray then strode into New York and when a fifth shot at a grand-slam final duly arrived he rose to the occasion to beat Djokovic in a five-set epic.

It was a setback for Djokovic but the Serbian, who began the year by beating Nadal to retain the Australian Open title in the longest-ever men’s grand-slam final, finished it off as year-end world number one for the second season running.—Reuters

Southerners will be the shiniest shoes

New York, 18 Dec—Red Bulls head of global soccer Gerard Houllier said Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger had not yet contacted him over a loan return for striker Thierry Henry.

Henry has been photographed at Arsenal’s matches this season. Sparking speculation he could return to the Emirates, as he did in January 2012, to keep himself fit during Major League Soccer’s off-season.

Used by Wenger as an impact player from the bench, Henry netted late winners against Leeds United in the FA Cup and Sunderland in the Premier League.

“Now, we have not had any formal request from Arsene Wenger to loan Thierry Henry,” Houllier told Canal Plus in France.

“I am not sure both parties want to have this second comeback. I think Thierry needs rest. He is about to become a father and I think he will want to enjoy the break,” Wenger himself has been reluctant to comment on the possibility of Henry’s return and said last week there was nothing to report.—Reuters

Wiggins targets Giro and Tour de France double

London, 18 Dec—Bradley Wiggins has targeted winning the Giro d’Italia and defending his Tour de France crown back to back next year.

Britain’s first Tour de France winner was named BBC Sports Personality of the Year on Sunday and immediately set his sights on emulating an incredible 12 months which also saw him romp to gold in the time trial at the London Olympics.

“I’ve always wanted to win a second Tour,” Wiggins was quoted as saying in the Guardian on Monday. “I was the defending champion. I want to try and win the Giro d’Italia and win the Tour de France behind it. People say it can’t be done, winning two Tours. So let’s have a go at it.”

Very few riders have managed to win both the Giro and the Tour de France

Benitez must lift Chelsea for trip to Leeds bear pit

London, 18 Dec—Having flown halfway around the world to return home tired and trophyless from the Club World Cup in Japan, Chelsea’s weary band of jet-setters are unlikely to be savouring a League Cup visit to Leeds United on Wednesday.

A trip to Elland Road and Leeds was once an intimidating prospect for any side, from their glory days under Don Revie in the late 1960s and early 1970s to becoming the last winners of the old first division in 1992.

The fallen giants play a more humble trade these days thanks to the financial implosion that engulfed the Yorkshire club.

Now mired in mid-table Championship (second division) mediocrity and desperately searching for the golden ticket back to the Premier League, Leeds are seeking a hat-trick of top-flight League Cup scalps and a place in the semi-finals.

Everton and Southampton have been put to the sword at Elland Road, and Leeds manager Neil Warnock would dearly love to ratcatch up the pressure on Chelsea counterpart Rafa Benitez.

“I hope we go out and give them a good game, but if we play well and they do as well there’s only one winner, so we have to hope they’re not right up to it and we’re on top of our game,” Warnock told Sky Sports.

“I don’t think I could have picked a better team to play against. It promises to be fabulous with no pressure on us. Whatever team I select we can just go out and enjoy it.”

Britain’s cyclist Bradley Wiggins attends the presentation of the itinerary of the 2013 Tour de France cycling race in Paris on 24 Oct, 2012. "Wiggins targets Giro and Tour de France double "

Reuters
**General**

**Cazorla hat-trick fires Arsenal romp**

Arsenal’s Santi Cazorla (C) celebrates after scoring past Reading’s keeper Adam Federici (L) during their Premier League match at the Madejski stadium in Reading, southern England on 17 Dec, 2012. Reuters

**Juve dream over for Lucio after contract terminated**

TURIN, 18 Dec—Brazilian defender Lucio is now a free agent after his contract with Italian champions Juventus was terminated by mutual consent on Monday. “Lucio’s adventure in the black and white stripes has come to an end,” read a statement on the club’s website www.juventus.com. “Juventus and the Brazilian defender have reached an agreement for the player’s contract to be terminated by mutual consent.”

Lucio made just four appearances for Juventus this term after joining on a free transfer from Inter Milan in the close season. The 34-year-old centre back won the 2002 World Cup with Brazil and also the 2010 Champions League with Inter.—Reuters

**Balotelli’s dolce vita turns sour with City tribunal**

MIAMI, 20 Dec—Manchester City’s Mario Balotelli gestures during a training session at the club’s Carrington training complex in Manchester, northern England on 3 Dec, 2012.—Reuters

A leading Premier League club has been accused of sexual assault after footage emerged showing a young woman being violated by a player. The incident took place at a private party hosted by City’s Italian striker Mario Balotelli, who has been accused of causing a stir in the English capital with his controversial behaviour.

**Schalke’s Afellay missing in Cup debut for coach Keller**

BERLIN, 18 Dec—Schalke 04 forward Ibrahim Afellay will be missing in their German Cup round of 16 tie against Mainz 05 on Tuesday when newly installed coach Jens Keller bids to start with a confidence-boosting win.

Dutchman Afellay has been nursing a muscle injury for weeks as Schalke have slipped down to seventh in the league, triggering the sacking of former coach Huub Stevens on Sunday a day after their 3-1 home defeat to Freiburg.

Keller was named as the new coach until the end of the season. “Afellay will not be at our disposal tomorrow,” Keller told reporters, adding he was satisfied with the team’s first training session under his guidance.—Reuters

**Schalke 04’s Ibrahim Afellay celebrates a goal against Sandhausen during the German DFB Cup. Reuters**

**MYANMAR INTERNATIONAL**

(19-12-12/09:30 am)

- News
- Early Morning Athletics
- Paying Respects to Doyen Literati
- News
- Easily Cooked & Tasty Dishes “Steeamed Pork Rib with Pickled Lettuce”
- 42nd Anniversary Art Exhibition
- The Light of Abhidhamma
- News
- 100 Shuttle Silk Fabric and its Key Notes
- Danish Business Delegation to Myanmar 2012
- News
- Show Settaw (Min Bu)
- The Holy Day with an Air of Festivity (Tazaungdaing Festival)
- Flying without Wings My Great Limitless Adventure (Pakokku)
- Myanmar Movie “Inseparable Sibils”

**MYANMAR TV**

(19-12-2012, Wednesday)

- 7:00 am
- 1. Paritta By Hilly Region Missionary Sayadaw
- 7:15 am
- 2. Dhamma Pajja Song
- 7:25 am
- 3. To Be Healthy Exercise
- 7:30 am
- 4. Morning News
- 7:40 am
- 5. Nice & Sweet Song
- 7:50 am
- 6. Health Programme
- 8:05 am
- 7. Cultural Dace
- 8:15 am
- 8. Myanmar Traditional Performing Arts Competitions
- 8:25 am
- 9. Documentory
- 8:40 am
- 10. International News
- 8:45 am
- 11. Musical Programme
- 4:00 pm
- 12. Martial Song
- 4:05 pm
- 13. Song of National Races

**R/489 Printed and published by the New Light of Myanmar press in Nay Pyi Taw, the News and Periodicals Enterprise, Ministry of Information.**
Government strives for promoting safe migration movement, uplifting socio-economic life of Myanmar migrant workers in collaboration with local and regional organizations

NAY PYI TAW, 18 Dec — The ceremony to mark the International Migrants Day took place at MICC, here, this morning, attended by Vice-President Dr Sai Mauk Kham, Union ministers, deputy ministers Htuttaw representatives, departmental heads, ambassadors and diplomats, resident representatives of UN agencies and guests.

In his address, Vice-President Dr Sai Mauk Kham said Myanmar had become, since 27 November this year, a member of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) at its 101st session. He said that the purpose of commemorating the event was to inform migrant workers and the international community of the government’s efforts and goodwill for the promotion and protection of the rights of Myanmar workers abroad, to protect migrant workers’ interests, to advocate and educate Myanmar migrants in the country and the region as part of efforts to protect them and to raise the socio-economic life of migrant workers and their families.

He continued that Myanmar had abundant human resources supply in and beyond Asian region and also had a workforce for different sectors of regional labour market. The Vice-President quoted the speech of the President that it was important to work vigorously to ensure the legitimate rights of Myanmar workers abroad.

He said that Myanmar had already drawn up a draft on migration policy framework in anticipation of promotion and protection of rights of migrant workers and uplifting of socio-economic life of their families. The government was striving with might and main with a view to promoting safe migration movement and uplifting the socio-economic life of Myanmar (See page 10)

Vice-President Dr Sai Mauk Kham cordially greets UNFPA Resident Representative Mr. Mohamed Abdel-Ahad and attendees at ceremony to mark the International Migrants Day.— MNA

Opening ceremony of Yeni Creek Bridge in progress.— MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 18 Dec — An inauguration of Yeni Creek Bridge, built with the contribution of PTTEPI Company based in Thailand which is taking joint venture with Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise under the Ministry of Energy, took place on 16 December morning.

Next, the Vice-President posed for a documentary photo together with the Thai delegation led by the Thai PM. Prime Minister of Thailand Ms. Yingluck Shinawatra viewed round the sites chosen for construction of Dawei Special Economic Zone and deep-sea port in a motorcade yesterday.

The Vice-President and Thai PM heard reports on progress in construction of roads and buildings in Dawei SEZ and work progress presented by officials concerned while inspecting the project from the view deck.

They were seen off at Dawei Airport by Union Minister for Foreign Affairs U Wunna Maung Lwin, Deputy Minister for Rail Transportation Thura U Thaung Lwin, the Region Htuttaw speaker and officials.

Slight earthquake shakes southwest of Nay Pyi Taw

NAY PYI TAW, 18 Dec— A slight earthquake of magnitude 4.5 Richter Scale with its epicenter inside Myanmar about 30 miles southwest of Nay Pyi Taw, about 180 miles north of Kaba Aye seismological observatory was recorded at 08 hr 02 min 30 sec M.S.T today. Meteorology and Hydrology Department announced.

Summary of observations at 09.30 hr MST on 18 December

NAY PYI TAW, 18 Dec— During the past 24 hours, weather has been partly cloudy in Yangon and Taninthayi Regions, Kachin and Mon States and generally fair in the remaining Regions and States. The significant night temperatures were 0°C in Pinlaung and Loilem each, 2°C in Heho, 3°C in Haka, 5°C in Lashio and Mogok each.

Bay Inference

Weather is generally fair in the North Bay and partly cloudy in the Andaman Sea and elsewhere in the Bay of Bengal.

State of the Sea

Seas will be moderate in Myanmar waters.

Outlook for subsequent two days

Generally fair in the whole country.— NLM