Government is seeking every possible ways to ensure energy security

Nay Pyi Taw, 18 Jan—First National Energy Management Committee meeting (1/2013) was held at the meeting hall of President Office Ministry, here, this morning, with an address by Patron of National Energy Management Committee Vice-President U Nyan Tun.

It was attended by Chairman of National Energy Management Committee Union Minister for Energy U Thant Htay, Vice-Chairman Union Minister for Electric Power Dr Ko Oo, deputy ministers, secretaries of Pyithu Hluttaw Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation and Amyotha Hluttaw Mines and Natural Resources Affairs Committee. The purpose of the committee was to fulfill the people’s needs and to systematically manage the linkages of energy and electric sectors. The government was seeking every possible ways to ensure energy security.

In his speech, the Vice-President said that it was the first meeting of National Energy Management Committee and Energy Development Committee. The purpose of the committee was to fulfill the people’s needs and to systematically manage the linkages of energy and electric sectors. The government was seeking every possible ways to ensure energy security. Priority was being given for increasing energy and electric power consumptions, especially rural areas as well as for ensuring overall economic growth and direct social benefit.

Energy efficiency and conservations was also crucial for energy security.

Nowadays, energy sector faces the lack of infrastructures and human resources. It needs to adopt National Energy Policy so as to solve the impacts on energy sectors. The rationale of policy implementation, it needed to create the conditions that can guarantee adequate extraction of energy with relatively low costs. Institutional framework and implementation should include as well. National Energy Policy must create formation and legal framework that can promote people’s life and meet the government’s goal.

Being a backbone that can steer overall National Energy, the Committee needed to draft necessary laws and rules by forming working committee for sustainable development and effective utilization of all energy resources. He urged experts to give suggestions.

Pyithu Hluttaw calls for ceasefire, resumption of peace talks

Nay Pyi Taw, 18 Jan—Pyithu Hluttaw at its today’s session urged immediately to end the fighting in Kachin State and to resume peace negotiations possibly soonest to establish internal peace.

The following is the full text of Pyithu Hluttaw’s announcement.

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Pyithu Hluttaw
Nay Pyi Taw

Date: 18 January 2013

Pyithu Hluttaw calls for immediately stopping exchange of fire between KIO/KIA and the government troops in Kachin State and to go back to negotiation table as soon as possible to establish internal peace

1. Pyithu Hluttaw Representative Daw Dwe Bu from M’Jangyang Constituency of Kachin State submitted an urgent proposal to discuss an urgent issue under Section 133 of Pyithu Hluttaw Bylaw at the third day sixth regular session of the first Pyithu Hluttaw (18-1-2013).

2. It was an urgent proposal urging Pyithu Hluttaw to approve the proposal urging responsible organizations and the Union government to immediately stop exchange of fire between KIO/KIA and the government troops in Kachin State and to go back to negotiation table as soon as possible to establish internal peace.

3. The Pyithu Hluttaw, therefore, urges responsible organizations and the Union government to immediately stop exchange of fire between KIO/KIA and the government troops in Kachin State and to go back to negotiation table as soon as possible to establish internal peace.

Sd/ Thura Shwe Mann
Speaker
Pyithu Hluttaw

significant night temperatures

(18-1-2013)

Pinlaung 0°C
Loilem 2°C
Heho 3°C
Mogok 3°C
Kyemon, 18 Jan — A ceremony to offer alms to Ashin Uppagotta Image was held in Kyemon of Kawkareik district in Kayin State on 5 January. The ceremony is held annually. On 11 January, the congregation received the nine precepts from the Sayadaw of Kayin State Sangha Nayaka Committee and shared the merits gained at the pavilion where Ashin Uppagotta Image was being kept temporarily.

Next, those present set Ashin Uppagotta Image adrift on a raft into the Haungtharaw river at 7 pm on that day.

**Kyemon**

A truck overturns in Kyimyindine Township

Yangon, 18 Jan — A truck skidded and turned over in front of 360-ton rice processing mill on Strand Road in Kyimyindine Township, here, on 15 January.

The truck of Than Myan Thu (86) bus line driven by U Khin Maung Htwe from Sanpya Fish Market to Thakhin Mya Park skidded out of control and overturned while making a turn at Haungtharaw river at 7 pm on that day.

Kyemon

Traffic Police Corps reconstitute itself as special squad

Mandalay, 18 Jan — Traffic Police Corps of Myanmar Police Force reconstituted itself as a special squad. Graduates and National development calls for development in ICT sector

Yangon, 18 Jan — In his talk entitled “Myanmar ICT Strategy and Development” at Myanmar Engineering Society on 11 January, President of Myanmar Computer Professionals Association U Ye Yint Win said ICT development was a key to development of the country. ICT was widely used in international community to be able to facilitate the transaction of businesses and development of the nation rested on ICT sector development, he added. — Kyemon

Farmland registration process in Pyapon Township

Pyapon, 18 Jan — In accord with the farmland laws that guarantees the farmer to own their farmlands till posterity, the issuance of farmland ownership forms by Staff Officer U Win Kyaw Phyoo of Pyapon Township Land Records Department was in progress in villages in Pyapon Township starting from 1 January.

Pyapon Township Land Records Department will carry out farmland registration process for 26755 farmlands in 54 wards and villages in the township in accord with the farmland laws. — Kyemon

Social welfare works in Taninthayi Region gaining momentum

Nay Pyi Taw, 18 Jan — Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr Daw Myat Myat Ohn Khin presented cash assistance to nationalities youth development centre and nurseries at the cash donation ceremony held at Taungthaya Home for the Aged on 10 January.

On 12 January morning, the Union Minister inspected Vehicles and motorized boats carrying illegal teak, hardwood and wood product seized in Sagaing, Bago Regions

Nay Pyi Taw, 18 Jan — While clamping the area to crack down on illegal timber extraction in the townships of Sagaing Region from 8 to 10 January, forest staff of Bamauk, Phaungpyin, Kyanhla and Mawlaik Township seized 2.6320 tons of teak in Bamauk Township, 3.7820 tons of hardwood in Phaungpyin Township, 2.15 tons sawn wood in Kyanhla Township, 7.844 tons of teak in Mawlaik Township, 3.792 tons of teak and hardwood, 4.5 tons of breakneck speed into the opposite lane.

Kyemon

Shan State sees a flock of globetrotters

Tanaygyi, 18 Jan — Manager U Thaung Shwe of Innlay Khaungdine hotel said tourists who visited Innlay, Pindaya, Kalaw and Taunggyi in Shan State via Heho Airport had reached 12559 up to 31 December and there were tourists who made Yangon-Innlay coach tours. The number of the arrivals of French, British and German tourists who took flights to Shan State stood in sequence and there were more arrivals of Australian, New Zealand, Thai, Korean and Taiwanese tourists this year. Tourists stopped for the night in Innlay, Pindaya and Kalaw and made a day trip to Taunggyi, Katku and Htan Hsan Cave. Some globetrotters biked to Khaungdine, Yaypusan, Taunglaylone, Nyangshwe and Shwenyuang and others to Taunggyi, Khaungdine, Nyangshwe and Innlay from Kalaw. As there has been an increase in tourist arrivals, hotels serve visitors meals in buffet style. At the hotel zone in Innlay region, there are 93 hotels and guesthouses with 2545 rooms. There are two two-star hotels, eight three-star hotels, eight four-star hotels, 13 one-star hotels and 16 hotels and guesthouses. There are 2138 hotel rooms and 407 rooms in guesthouses totaling 2545 rooms. Suit rooms are charged at US$ 100 per room, superior rooms at US$ 80 and ordinary rooms at ranging from US$ 40 to 60.

Plans are underway to establish a new hotel zone with the area of 622 acres in the Innlay East forest reserve in order to meet the demand of hotel rooms with high standards following the increased tourist arrivals. — Kyemon
**New Light of Myanmar**

**WORLD**

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**Smoke rises after what activists said were missiles fired by a Syrian Air Force fighter jet loyal to President Bashar al-Assad in Daraya in this picture provided by Shaam News Network on 16 Jan, 2013.**

**The US Department of Treasury decided on Thursday to slap sanctions on the Meza Flores drug trafficking organization from Mexico. The designation includes that leader, Fausto Isidro Meza Flores, several key family members, and three companies, the department’s Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) announced in a statement, accusing all of them of helping facilitate the operations of the organization.**

**Unfortunately that ban went out of effect,” he said.**

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Over 100 people killed, 70,000 displaced in Sudan’s fresh tribal clashes: UNAMID

**Khartoum, 18 Jan—**Over 100 people were killed and about 70,000 others displaced in recent tribal clashes between the Arab Abballa and Beni Hussein tribes in Jabel Amir area of Sudan’s North Darfur state, the United Nations-African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) said in a statement on Thursday.

**According to the statement, engaging in transactions endangering the goals of Treasury’s designation includes three entities, and the entire organization, and also freezes any assets they may have under US jurisdiction, according to the statement.**

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Smoke rises after what activists said were missiles fired by a Syrian Air Force fighter jet loyal to President Bashar al-Assad in Daraya in this picture provided by Shaam News Network on 16 Jan, 2013.—Reuters

**UNAMID deployed a team, consisting of civilian, military and police personnel, to the three affected areas, the statement said, adding that ‘the team found evidence of mass displacement, including those displaced from their homes in villages around El Sereif, along with workers who said they had fled from the work sites at the Jabel Amir gold mines as a result of the fighting.’**

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**People do not need assault weapons: defense secretary**

**Vicenza, 18 Jan—Defence Secretary Leon Panetta joined the gun control debate on Thursday when he told troops at a military base in Italy that only soldiers needed armour-piercing bullets or assault weapons.**

**A display of 7-round .45 caliber handguns are seen at Coliseum Gun Traders Ltd. in Uniondale, New York on 16 Jan, 2013.**

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**US slaps sanctions on Mexico drug trafficking organization**

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**By targeting the leaders of this extremely violent Sinaloa-based drug trafficking organization we are protecting the US financial system from yet another source of illicit money tied to the narcotics trade,” said OFAC Director Adam Szubin, vowing to continue to target this organization as well as other Mexican drug trafficking operations that threaten the United States.**

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**Florida’s unpopular Republican governor backs election reforms**

**Miausa, 18 Jan—**Florida Governor Rick Scott, who rejected calls to extend early voting ahead of problem-plagued elections more than two months ago, said on Thursday he now supports the measure and other reforms aimed at restoring confidence in the election system. Scott, a Republican, saw his low public approval rating sink even further after long voting lines and a slow vote count made Florida the brunt of late-night television jokes in November.

**A burning truck is seen after a fire incident in Pakistan’s southern port city of Karachi on 17 Jan. At least three people including a member of the provincial assembly (MPA) were shot dead on Thursday afternoon in Karachi, local media and police said.—Xinhua**

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**Plane crash kills eight in SE Mexico**

**Mexico City, 18 Jan—**At least eight people were killed on Thursday when a small plane crashed shortly after takeoff from the airport of Tuxtla Gutierrez, Mexico’s southeast Chiapas State, authorities said.

**Witnesses said that the accident occurred at the time of takeoff after fire and smoke came out of one of the wings.**

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Florida Governor Rick Scott speaks during an interview in New York on 26 March, 2012.—Reuters

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Smoke rises after what activists said were missiles fired by a Syrian Air Force fighter jet loyal to President Bashar al-Assad in Daraya in this picture provided by Shaam News Network on 16 Jan, 2013.—Reuters

**“According to Government figures, an estimated 70,000 people have been displaced and more than 100 killed since the clashes broke out,” the statement said.**

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Florida Governor Rick Scott speaks during an interview in New York on 26 March, 2012.—Reuters

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PC titans take notes from tablets to regain customers

Kirk Skaugen, Intel’s vice president of client group, converts a Lenovo Yoga Ultrabook into a tablet, at an Intel news conference during the Consumer Electronics Show (CES) in Las Vegas on 7 Jan. 2013.— Reuters

SAN FRANCISCO, 18 Jan—Personal computer makers, trying to beat back a tablet mania that’s eating into their sales, are making what may be a last-ditch attempt to sway customers by mimicking the competition.

Many of the laptops to be unveiled around the world in coming months will be hybrids or “convertibles” — morphing easily between tablets and full-powered laptops with a keyboard, industry analysts say. The wave of hybrids comes as Intel and Microsoft Corp., long the twin leaders of the PC industry, prepare to report revenue next week and next, Wall Street is predicting flat to sluggish growth in an industry that has struggled to innovate.

In 2013, some are hoping that will change. With the release of Microsoft’s touch-centric, re-imagined Windows 8 platform in October and more power-efficient chips from Intel, PC makers are trying to spark growth by focusing on creating slim laptops with touchscreens that convert to tablets and vice versa. Microsoft, expanding beyond its traditional business of selling software, is expected this month to rollout a “Surface Pro” tablet compatible with legacy PC software developed over decades.

That’s a major selling point for corporate customers like German business software maker SAP, which plans to buy Service Pros for employees that want it, said SAP Chief Information Officer Oliver Bussmann.

“The hybrid model is very compelling for a lot of users,” Bussmann told Reuters last week. “The iPad is not replacing the laptop. It’s hard to create content. That’s the niche that Microsoft is going after. The Surface can fill that gap.”— Reuters

RIM says users line up to try new BlackBerry 10 platform

TORONTO, 18 Jan— BlackBerry maker Research in Motion is helping customers prepare to switch to its soon-to-be-launched BlackBerry 10 smartphones that it hopes will help it reclaim market share from rivals such as Apple Inc.

RIM is betting that the new range of touch-screen and keyboard devices, set for a 30 January launch, will revive its fortunes.

The company was “very enthused by the engagement and response of our customer base” to a programme aimed at persuading them to adopt the BlackBerry 10 devices, Bryan Lee, senior enterprise accounts director, told Reuters on Wednesday.

The exterior of one of the Research In Motion Limited (RIM) buildings is seen in Waterloo on 10 July, 2012. Reuters

Indeed, whether it will be successful in clawing back market share will depend on the response from RIM’s top clients, like companies and government agencies, who have long valued the strong security features that BlackBerry devices offer.

Lee said more than 1,600 customers in North America had registered for its recently launched BlackBerry 10 Ready Program and more than a thousand were actively using the program, which offers customers access to services, information and tools to ease their transition to the Blackberry 10 and the Blackberry Enterprise Server 10.

RIM also said its BlackBerry Enterprise Server 10, which runs the new devices on corporate networks, was in beta testing with more than 130 major government agencies and corporations in North America.

Ebay tops holiday quarter forecasts on mobile boom

SAN FRANCISCO, 18 Jan—EBay Inc reported holiday quarter results that beat Wall Street expectations as the e-commerce company benefited from a boom in mobile shoppers, but it gave a 2013 forecast in line with analyst estimates, restraining share price gains. The stock rose 1 percent to $53.43 in after-hours trading following the announcement.

Expectations were high ahead of the results because sales data from outside sources suggested strong sales growth from eBay’s online marketplace and a solid increase in transactions processed by the company’s PayPal payments business.

EBay’s online marketplace, one of the largest in the world, has lagged behind the growth of e-commerce and Amazon.com Inc for several years. But under Chief Executive John Donahoe, eBay has invested to improve the buying experience by upgrading search capabilities and prodding sellers to provide more services such as free shipping and easier returns.

The explosive growth of mobile shopping and popular mobile shopping applications have also attracted millions of new consumers to eBay’s marketplace and PayPal in the past year.

“These are great numbers,” said Bill Smeal of Smeal Capital Management, which owns eBay shares. “The marketplace business used to be a nose around their neck, but now it’s a key destination for people wanting to buy new goods as well as existing goods.”— Reuters

US temporarily grounds Boeing 787s pending safety check

WASHINGTON, 18 Jan— The US Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) announced on Wednesday that it will temporarily ground Boeing 787s after incidents involving lithium ion battery failures.

The FAA said that US airlines will have to demonstrate that the lithium ion batteries of the Boeing 787s, the newest commercial airliner nicknamed Dreamliner, are safe before further flights.

“As a result of an in-flight Boeing 787 battery incident earlier today in Japan, the FAA will issue an emergency airworthiness directive to address a potential battery fire risk in the 787 and require operators to temporarily cease operations,” the FAA said in a statement.

The move was taken after an incident earlier Wednesday, in which a battery failure caused one of All Nippon Airways (ANA) Dreamliner passenger jets, flying from Yamanaguichi Ube airport in western Japan to Tokyo, to make an emergency landing.

The FAA said that it will work with the Boeing Co and US airlines “to develop a corrective action plan to allow the US 787 fleet to resume operations as quickly and safely as possible.” The United Airlines is currently the only US airline operating six Dreamliners.

The in-flight battery incident on Wednesday was the second such incident of the Boeing 787s since a Japan Airlines (JAL) Boeing 787 caught fire on 7 January in the US city of Boston, due to a battery problem. Both the ANA and the JAL have grounded their fleet of Dreamliners in order to conduct a safety check. The ANA has a fleet of 17 Dreamliners and the JAL has seven.

After the JAL incident in Boston, the FAA already announced on last Friday that it will have a comprehensive review of the 787’s critical systems with the possibility of further action pending new data and information.

In addition to the review of the airliner’s design, manufacture and assembly, the FAA will also validate that 787 batteries and the battery system are in compliance with the special condition the agency issued as part of the aircraft certification.

Habitat module to be tested at ISS

HOUSTON, 18 Jan—The US space agency will fund a project by a private firm to test an inflatable module for human occupancy at the International Space Station.

NASA Deputy Administrator Lori Garver spoke about the plan on Wednesday in the state of Nevada, where space company Bigelow Aerospace is based.

NASA will pay 17.8 million dollars to launch the company’s prototype module to the station in 2015.

The module—4 metres long and 3 metres in wide—is a third the size of the space habitat the company’s prototype module to the station in 2015.

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Flu vaccine not linked to fetal death

Nurses prepare influenza vaccine injections during a flu shot clinic at Dorchester House, a health care clinic, in Boston, Massachusetts on 12 Jan, 2013.—Reuters

NEW YORK, 18 Jan—Getting the flu vaccine while pregnant does not increase the odds that the fetus will die in the womb, according to a new study of tens of thousands of women in Norway.

Although fetal deaths were rare during the study, they were more common in pregnant women with the flu. “Vaccination itself was not associated with increased fetal mortality and may have reduced the risk of influenza-related death during the pandemic” of 2009, said the team, led by Dr Siri Habeget of the Norwegian Institute of Public Health in Oslo.

Dr Jon Abramson of the Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center in North Carolina, who was not connected with the research, said it was already known that influenza can be unusually dangerous in pregnant women.

“The increased hospitalization rate is about four-fold higher in pregnant women compared to women of a similar age who are not pregnant,” he told Reuters Health.

With some exceptions, the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends the flu shot for everyone over six months of age, including pregnant women.

Aframson called vaccination “a double bang for your buck.”

The study, which appears online in the New England Journal of Medicine, encompassed the H1N1 pandemic in the fall and early winter of 2009 and took place after publicity about more than 30 cases of fetal death following vaccination.

Australian scientists discover potential cure for AIDS

CANBERRA, 18 Jan—A breakthrough that could lead to a potential cure for AIDS has been developed by Australian scientists, a latest study from Queensland Institute of Medical Research (QIMR) revealed on Wednesday.

According to a statement from QIMR, Associate Professor David Harrich, from QIMR’s Molecular Virology Laboratory, has determined how to modify a protein in the virus, so that it instead provides strong, lasting protection from infection. Although QIMR this approach, published in the journal Human Gene Therapy, was not a cure for HIV, Harrich said it would ensure the virus remains dormant. This protein present in immune cells would help to maintain a healthy immune system so patients can handle normal infections.

“I consider that this is fighting fire with fire,” he said. “What we’ve actually done is we’ve taken a normal virus protein that the virus needs to grow, and we’ve changed this protein, so that instead of assisting the virus, it actually impedes virus replication and does it quite strongly.”

“This therapy is potentially a cure for AIDS,” he said. “So it’s not a cure for HIV infection, but it potentially could end the disease.”

More than 30,000 people have been diagnosed with HIV in Australia. Harrich said animal trials are due to start this year and early indications are positive. If clinical trials are successful, one treatment could be effective enough to replace the multiple therapies currently needed.

He also said the new treatment has the potential to make big improvements in the quality of life for those carrying HIV.

“Drug therapy targets individual enzymes or proteins and they have one drug, one protein,” Associate Professor Harrich said. “They have to take two or three drugs, so this would be a single agent that essentially has the same effect.”—Reuters

Sharp talks to sell Chinese TV plant to Lenovo

TOKYO, 18 Jan—Sharp Corp may sell its Chinese TV assembly plant to Lenovo Group as the cash-strapped Japanese TV maker looks to sell assets to bolster its finances, sources said.

Sharp is in talks with Lenovo about selling the LCD TV assembly plant in Nanking and also about tying up with the Chinese company in its other subsidiaries there, two industry sources familiar with the discussion told Reuters.

Sharp said in a statement to the Tokyo Stock Exchange that it had not announced any talks. The talks were first reported in the Nikkei business daily in Japan.

The maker of Aquos TVs in November said it may not be able to survive on its own after it doubled its full-year net loss to $5.6 billion. To repay short-term commercial paper loans and stave off failure in October it won a $4.4 billion bailout from its banks.

Sharp had been in talks to sell its Chinese TV plant to Taiwan’s Hon Hai Precision industry along with an assembly plant in Mexico. Hon Hai, which is also in talks to buy a stake in Sharp and earlier bought a share in the Japanese company’s advanced LCD panel plant in Sakai western Japan, may now buy only the North American facility.

An employee fills a taxi with diesel as her colleague clean the windows of the car at a fuel station in Kolkata on 19 Sept, 2012.—Reuters

Government permits state-run oil firms to raise diesel prices

NEW DELHI, 18 Jan—State-run oil marketing companies can now raise diesel prices in line with increases in global crude oil prices, Oil Minister Veerappa Moily said on Thursday, a move that could help the government reduce its vast subsidy bill.

“Oil marketing companies have been allowed to raise diesel prices in small quantities over a period of time,” senior oil ministry official G C Chaturvedi said. He did not give details about the time-frame. India’s policy to subsidise retail prices of fuels such as diesel, which accounts for about 40 percent of refined fuel consumption, is a major drain on the budget.

Ratings agencies threatened last year to strip India of its investment-grade credit rating if the government did not take steps to rein-in a widening fiscal deficit. Finance Minister P Chidambaram has repeatedly vowed that the deficit will not exceed 5.3 percent of GDP this financial year.

India imports more than 80 percent of its fuel needs. The government liberalised petrol prices in June 2010, but has often prevented them from being raised to reflect rising oil prices on global markets.

Fuel consumption in India rose 5 percent in the last fiscal year, its fastest since 2007/08. Shares in oil marketing companies rose while bond yields fell after Moily’s announcement.

Indian Petroleum Corp shares (HPCL.NS) surged 5.2 percent while Oil and Natural Gas Corp (ONGC.NS) gained 4.3 percent.

Skin cancer phone apps aren’t very accurate

NEW YORK, 18 Jan—Smartphone applications that use algorithms to analyze skin lesions may not be very good at determining which ones are cancerous, a new study suggests.

The apps are marketed as educational only and so aren’t covered as medical devices under the Food and Drug Administration’s regulations.

But that may not stop some people from relying on the inexpensive tools instead of going to see a dermatologist, researchers said—which could mean slower diagnosis of potentially dangerous lesions.

“They’re no substitute, at this point, for a complete skin exam performed by an expert dermatologist for picking up melanoma as well as other skin cancers,” said Dr Karen Edison, a dermatologist from University of Missouri in Columbia who wasn’t involved in the new study.

“Just sending a picture to someone you don’t know anywhere in the world can be reassuring if it’s very clear that (the lesion) is benign, so that’s a good thing,” she told Reuters Health, “but it’s kind of fraught with other issues that we haven’t grappled with adequately, I don’t think.”

For example, even if an app makes a correct diagnosis of melanoma, that doesn’t necessarily help if the patient doesn’t know where to get a biopsy or doesn’t have insurance to pay for it, Edison said.

“We’re all for technology, but we need to keep it in perspective, and make it a tool,” she said.

For the new study, researchers used photos of 188 pre-diagnosed lesions —60 melanomas and 128 benign lesions—to check the accuracy of four Smartphone apps made to look for melanoma in previously-taken images.—Reuters
Japan’s Komeito leader to visit China to mend ties

The New Komeito Party is part of Japan’s coalition government and key ally of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe’s Liberal Democratic Party. The former is considered less hawkish than the latter.

Yamaguchi said both countries should improve the bilateral relations through an overall perspective.

He also said he would consult with Abe whether the two countries should improve relations.

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe’s government and key ally of Tokyo’s New Komeito Party President Natsuo Yamaguchi said on Thursday that he will pay a four-day visit to China from next on Tuesday, aiming at relaying tensions between the two countries.

Yamaguchi said his party has responsibilities to make efforts to restore Japan-China relations that have been damaged over territorial row, Japan’s leading news agency Kyodo News said.

2nd batch of Japan’s PKO in Golan Heights returns home

The second batch of Japan’s Self-Defense Forces personnel involved in UN peacekeeping operations in the Israel-held Golan Heights and other members of the team are welcomed on arrival at Narita airport near Tokyo on 17 Jan, 2013. — Kyodo News

US Navy ship runs aground in Sulu Sea, W Philippines

MANILA, 18 Jan — A US Navy minesweeper has run aground on a reef in Sulu Sea, western Philippines, a local military official said on Thursday.

Oliver Banaria, commander of the Armed Forces’ 6th Civil Relations Group in Palawan, said he received official report that the ship ran aground on Tubbataha Reef, early Thursday, about 98 nautical miles from Puerto Princesa city.

No one was reported injured, but Banaria said that they have sent patrol craft to check on the incident and see how local officials can help the crew.

Banaria said that similar incidents had happened in the past and it’s possible that misnavigation may have led to the grounding.

A separate statement issued by the US Navy confirmed that no one was hurt when the USS Guardian (MCM 5) ran aground on Tubbataha Reef at 2:25 am local time.

The ship had just completed a port call in Subic Bay and was en route to its next port of call when the grounding occurred. The crew is working on how to safely extract the ship.

The ship was a 210-foot coastal survey ship.

Longtime US columnist “Dear Abby” dies at 94

LOS ANGELES, 18 Jan— The women who wrote under the name of “Dear Abby” to offer advice to millions of troubled newspaper readers in the United States died after a long battle with Alzheimer’s disease and Parkinson’s.

She was 94.

Pauline Phillips, writing under the name of Abigail Van Buren, was short-handed to “Dear Abby”since 1956, was one of the most popular columnists in the world as her terse, comic and sympathetic pieces were run by 1,400 newspapers with a daily readership of over 110 million.

The housewife-turned-columnist named her advice column after “Abigail,” a wise woman in the Old Testament and one of her favourite US presidents, “Van Buren.” Phillips’ first feature appeared in 1956 and the column, which became more popular, ran until 2002 when the author suffered from the onset of Alzheimer’s and her daughter Jeanne Phillips took over.

In the meantime, Phillips’ twin sister Eppie Lederer also wrote a similar column, “Ask Ann Landers,” from 1955 until 2002 when she died at 83 of multiple myeloma. Born on 4 July, 1918 in the Sioux City, Iowa, the then 37-year-old housewife started her career at the San Francisco Chronicle in 1955.

Her first column feature appeared on 9 Jan, 1956, and was syndicated in the same year.

Phillips advocated “equal rights for women, minorities, people with mental illness and those who are physically challenged,” and her column “promoted AIDS awareness and education, hospice care, the living will, organ donation and also raised awareness about gender apartheid suffered by women in Afghanistan,” the Universal Uclick syndicate said. When asked what she considered her greatest accomplishment, Phillips was quick to say simply, “surviving.”

She always enjoyed quoting a favorite Swedish toast: “Fear less; hope more. Eat less; chew more. Talk less; say more. Hate less; love more.”

The columnist, who was also a popular radio host, received a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame in honor of her radio show.

Toyota Motor Corp President Akio Toyoda speaks at a ceremony to celebrate production of its fully remodeled Crown luxury sedan at the carmaker’s Motomachi plant in the city of Toyota, Aichi Prefecture, on 17 Jan, 2013. Toyoda said orders for the new Crown had reached around 19,000 units by 15 Jan, three weeks after its launch, nearly five times higher than the company’s monthly sales target. — Kyodo News

Engaging school kids in anti-Posco stir illegal

BURUBANWAR, 18 Jan— Participation of school children in anti-Posco agitation is “illegal” and action is being contemplated against those responsible for it, official sources said.

Rape accused an adult at time of incident, rules Juvenile Board

LUCKNOW, 18 Jan— Eight years after a youth allegedly raped a minor girl, the Juvenile Justice Board here has finally declared that he was an adult at the time of the incident.

Bribe case an ‘aberration’, will take action: Natarajan

NEW DELHI, 18 Jan— Environment Minister Jayanthi Natarajan said action would be taken against the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, a local military official said on Thursday.

Golan Heights returns home

The New Kansai International Airport Co President Keiichi Ando (2nd from L) takes part in a groundbreaking ceremony for FedEx Corp’s North Pacific regional hub at the Kansai airport in western Japan on 17 Jan, 2013. The US delivery service company plans to launch operations of the facility in the spring of 2014 as its consolidation point for shipments from China and South Korea to North America.

KYODO NEWS

NEWS in BRIEF

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Will fight against corruption till my last breath: Anna

NEW DELHI, 18 Jan— “I have been fighting corruption and goondaism throughout without bothering about my life and will continue to do so till my last breath,” he told reporters here en route to Birajpur.

Blood to be delivered by motorbikes: Maha govt

MUMBAI, 18 Jan— In a first, Maharashtra Government has devised a system where blood will be a phone call-away, to be supplied to hospitals by specially kitted-out motorbikes.

Longtime US columnist “Dear Abby” dies at 94
Union Commerce Minister receives Chinese Vice-Minister of Commerce

Yangon City Public Transport Authority meets for first time

Yangon City Public Transport Authority at the meeting hall No. 1 of Yangon City on 11 January morning.

The chairman of the authority continued that plans are to be implemented for smooth transportation of six population of Yangon and more plans are to be set for growing population of 15 million in the future.

Chairman of the All Private Bus-line Control Committee (Central) U Hla Aung reported on services of bus lines. Members of the authority discussed priority to be given to prevention against traffic congestion, use of river and creeks around Yangon, establishment of website, enforcement of traffic rules, collection of data and emphasis on smooth transportation for the people.

New school buildings opened in Tatkon Township

Nay Pyi Taw, 18 Jan—A ceremony to open new building was held at Basic Education Post-Primary School in Khayansatgon Village in Tatkon Township of Nay Pyi Taw Council Area on 11 January morning.

Member of Nay Pyi Taw Council U Myint Shwe, Nay Pyi Taw Education Officer U Myint Zaw and Director of SKK Co U Kyaw Swa formally opened the new school building.

Member of Nay Pyi Taw Council Dr Than Aung made a speech.

Headmistress Daw Nwenti Win of the school explained matters related to the school.

Director of SKK Co U Kyaw Swa handed over the documents related to the school and K 500,000 to the headmaster of Basic Education High School No. 1 and the headmistress of Khayansatgon Basic Education Post-Primary School. The same day, new school buildings were opened at basic education primary schools in Shatonaing and Thayaaye villages.

Children centred approach demonstrated in Salingyi

Salingyi, 18 Jan—A demonstration on children centred approach (CCA) was held at Basic Education Primary School in Myezun Township of Salingyi Township in Sagaing Region on 12 January morning.

Leader of the primary school group Headmaster U Kyaw Swe made a speech. After that, teachers discussed six kinds of teaching techniques for children centred approach from KG to fourth standard.

Golden Myanmar airlines receives first airplane

Golden Myanmar airlines, the first-ever public airlines, is running its schedules.

At 2 pm on 9 January, the first airplane for the airlines arrived at Yangon International Airport.

Local and foreign pilots and flight attendants will discharge duties at the Golden Myanmar airlines. The lines will launch its maiden flight for Yangon-Mandalay route on 17 January and conducted the test-run on Yangon-Mandalay-Nay Pyi Taw-Yangon route on 10 January.

The newly-arrived Air Bus A 320-232, XY-AGS can accommodate 180 passengers. The second airplane for the airlines will arrive in February to be able to extend foreign flight schedules.

The demonstration was attended by Assistant Township Education Officer U Tin Win, Headmistress Daw Khin Soe Yi of Basic Education High School and teachers from 10 basic education primary schools.

The government has adopted the national action plan for education in March 2013 in order to transform the teacher centred approach into the children centred one.
Youth Suicide

The 21st century can be best characterized by challenges as the age has never been as demanding as now to us. Stress has become inseparable part of our lives. When things become unbearable and life seems hopeless by challenges as the age has never been as demanding as now to us. Stress has become inseparable part of our lives. When things become unbearable and life seems hopeless, one would use suicide as a means of exit strategy to end but not to ease his own pains.

Over one million people die from suicide every year, which represents one death every 40 seconds according to the World Health Organization. It was the 10th leading cause of death worldwide as of 2001. Worldwide suicide rates have increased by 60 per cent in last 45 years, mainly in the developing countries. Suicide is now one of the three leading causes of death among those aged 15-44 (male and female).

Due to the belief in sanctity of life, Myanmar people traditionally consider suicide unpardonable sin. Nonetheless, there have been a number of reported cases of suicide in some towns. As youth suicide is increasing at an alarmingly, more and more Myanmar youths are committing suicide, not in the form of actually killing themselves but ruining their lives and sometimes others.

Everyone has at least had a dream big or small, vivid or vague in his childhood or early adulthood. While some pursue and realize their dreams, some take them to the grave. Many people while struggling for survival have forgotten their dreams whereas a handful of people while indulging in the lap of luxury are spoiling themselves and others’ dreams as in the case of a municipal sanitation worker hit hard by a gang of midnight boy racers for no reason.

Many are working but with no ambition which in turns kills their aggressiveness, innovation and initiative. This is attributable to a lack of motivation resulting from an apparent situation of feeling like no option. Meanwhile, many find nowhere to use what they have learnt at lecture halls as most companies are demanding experiences. While some have almost no chance, some are misusing, for example, the internet often portrayed as a treasure trove is often used for wrong purposes.

An idle brain is the devil’s workshop. While opportunities must be created for youths to help improve themselves, youths on their part should not lose track of their dreams, their directions.

Myanmar C-in-C calls on Malaysian Prime Minister

At an invitation of Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker Thura U Shee Mann of the Republic of the Union Myanmar, a delegation led by Mr. Kang Chang-hee, Speaker of the Korean National Assembly and wife will pay a goodwill visit to Myanmar from 20 to 23 January.

Profile of Mr. Kang Chang-hee

Mr. Kang Chang-hee was born in University August 1946. He got B.A from Korea Military Academy in 1969, M.A from Kyungnan University in 1980 and Honorary Dictorate Degree in Politics in 2004 from the same university. He was elected as the Speaker of the 19th National Assembly in July 2012.

Speaker Mr. Kang Chang-hee served as Professor at Korean Command and General Staff College in 1979 and a parliamentarian at 11th National Assembly in 1983. He also served as Chief of Staff of the Prime Minister. He served as Chairman of Committee for National Assembly Science and Technology &Information and Communication in 1996. He served as a member of Grand National Party Supreme Council, Professor of Kyungnan University in the Office of the President of the United Nations.

Mr. Kang Chang-hee attended 11th, 12th, 14th, 15th, 16th and 19th National Assembly and is a parliamentary leader. Madam Lee Jae-sook, wife of the Speaker of the Korean National Assembly, will accompany the goodwill delegation.

Foreign representatives arrive to participate in 1st Myanmar Development Cooperation Forum

Yangon, 18 Jan — Representatives from foreign countries and UN agencies arrived here yesterday to participate in the 1st Myanmar Development Cooperation Forum.

The two-day forum will be opened at Myanmar International Convention Centre in Nay Pyi Taw tomorrow.

The representatives from France, Sweden, Finland, Korea, Netherlands, Israel, Italy, the United Kingdom, EU, Switzerland, New Zealand, Luxembourg, the United States of America, Japan, Germany, Norway, China, Australia, Cambodia, Thailand, Malaysia, the Philippines, Laos, Brunei, Singapore and UN agencies will discuss development of Myanmar.

During the forum, papers on development cooperation for Myanmar will be read by Union ministers, economic ministers from regions and states, repre-sentatives from political parties and Hluttaws, representatives from NGOs, representatives from donor countries, partner countries and INGOs. — MNA
Known as the conflict between the Kachin Independence Organization (KIO) and the Kachin Independence Army (KIA), and the Myanmar military, known as the Tatmadaw, the Kachin conflict has been ongoing for decades. The conflict has led to widespread displacement, violence, and suffering for the people of Kachin State.

1. KIO/KIA troops had been surrounding Lajayan outpost, ambushing military columns which are transporting rations to Lajayan outpost, blocking Myitkyina-Bhamo Union Highway disabling public use, and blasting bridges since March 2012 in Lajayan of Kachin State. The Tatmadaw therefore had to launch attack on KIO/KIA strongholds including Point 771 hill beginning 27 December, 2012.

2. The Tatmadaw, since the resumption of fight between it and KIO/KIA in June 2011, had launched counter-firing only for self-defence in line with instructions of the President. However 35 Tatmadaw men fell and 190 were wounded as KIO/KIA troops ambushed military convoys transporting rations to Tatmadaw men in Lajayan outpost for three times. Lajayan outpost has been a military outpost from which the Tatmadaw troops undertook regional security even before ceasefire agreement in 1994 (before KIO/KIA had built their Laiza Camp) and the Tatmadaw troops had also informed KIO/KIA that rations would be transported to the outpost. In spite of this, KIO/KIA intercepted those convoys. As foodstuffs could not be sent to Lajayan outpost, rations ran out there and the Tatmadaw men therefore had to clear unavoidably the areas of KIO/KIA just for survival.

3. The army asked supporting fire from the Air Force just to make sure accurate hitting of KIO/KIA targets and to avoid hitting civilian targets. KIO/KIA troops had besieged the Lajayan outpost setting up barbed wire cutting off its contact with outside world and thus Tatmadaw men there had nothing to choose but to fight. Though the Tatmadaw had decided to move its outposts through negotiations at table, KIO/KIA failed to come to the table. Their rejection of invitation from the government and failure to come to Shweli negotiation had led to aforesaid fights.

4. The Tatmadaw as has achieved limited objectives for security of Myitkyina-Bhamo Union Highway will stop its operation beginning 0600 hrs on 19 January, 2013.

5. The Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services reaffirmed that the military would strictly adhere to the instruction of the President not to fight except for self-defence. Nonetheless, both sides will need to stop fighting so as to ease tensions in the armed conflict. Therefore, KIO/KIA is urged to order its troops not to attack the Tatmadaw troops first. Studying the previous events, until the instruction from President Office was issued, KIO/KIA had blasted roads and bridges for 122 times, attacked military outposts for 64 times, robbed for 60 times, recruited and abducted civilians for 28 times while civilians came under mine attacks for 30 times. KIO/KIA troops engaged with military columns for 1095 times and many officers and other ranks were killed and wounded in those incidents.

6. In addition, KIO/KIA troops should not block or blast motor roads and railroads in public use in consideration of the people who are in trouble due to skirmishes in Kachin State. For the time being, as KIO/KIA troops have mounted mine blast attacks on Mandalay-Myitkyina Railroad for 56 times, Myitkyina-Sumprabum-Putao Railroad for 15 times, and Myitkyina-Bhamo motor road for 42 times, killing and wounding civilians and disrupting normal transportation. The attacks have resulted in commodity price rise in Kachin State, particularly locals in Putao are facing shortage of food and the Tatmadaw has sent food supplies to the area by military plane. As the Tatmadaw has instructed its troops not to attack civilian targets, KIO/KIO on its part will need to stop attacking public transportation facilities like railroads and motor roads. Only then military tensions will ease and economic, social assistance could be given and rehabilitation works undertaken more for locals.

7. The government will proceed with ceasefire agreements to strong political dialogues in order to make lasting peace with all ethnic armed groups for national reunification and unity. It will also continue peace talks with KIO/KIA. In future negotiations, decision makers from KIO/KIA need to negotiate with the representatives from the Tatmadaw.

8. The government is ready to join hands with all national people including KIO/KIA to be able to build peace and national unity in Kachin State.
ADB to provide 230 mln USD to Cambodia for development projects

Penom Pheak, 18 Jan—The Asian Development Bank (ADB) on Thursday signed up to provide 230 million US dollars to Cambodia for six development projects, aiming at promoting inclusive growth and reducing poverty in Cambodia, according to the bank’s media statement.

The financing agreements were inked between Eric Sidgwick, country director of ADB to Cambodia, and Cambodian Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Keat Chhon.

The $230 million US dollar assistance includes 218.46 million US dollar concessional loan and 11.7 million US dollar grant, the statement said, adding that the six projects are focused on education, decentralized public service and financial management sector, economic diversification promotion, flood and drought risk management and mitigation, power subtransmission line construction, and Southern economic corridor town development project.

“The assistance demonstrates an excellent partnership between Cambodia and ADB,” Keat Chhon said at the signing ceremony. “The financing support to these projects is a timely response to our need for development in the current global context to achieve high economic growth and forms the basis for long-term development.”

To date, he said, the bank’s cumulative amount of project loans and grants extended to Cambodia has reached 1.85 billion US dollars, of which ADB has financed 1.5 billion US dollars as loans for 63 projects and 350 million US dollars as grants for 33 projects.

“This has contributed considerably to the development of Cambodia,” the minister said.

Eric Sidgwick said the projects would improve the quality of life for poor and vulnerable people, further develop the economy by helping the government roll out a series of policy reforms and measures to expand trade and investment, diversify the country’s economic base, and help transform Cambodia into an open and market-based economy.

“They reflect ADB’s ongoing efforts to achieve inclusive growth through harnessing the synergies between a range of interventions,” he said.

Okinawa invites Japanese firms in China

Okinawa (Japan), 18 Jan — Okinawa Prefecture is inviting Japanese firms operating in China to set up business in the southern islands, to spread their risks amid rising tension between the two countries.

Okinawa held an investment seminar in the Chinese city of Dalian on Wednesday. Officials from 65 Japanese firms attended the session.

Okinawa officials explained the islands have ample young labour available. They told the participants that preferential taxes and wage subsidies are being offered in the prefecture’s special economic zones. A participant said that labour costs in Dalian have risen to relatively high levels and it would make sense to set up business in Okinawa from a personnel cost point of view.

Some Japanese firms operating in China are seeking to set up plants in Southeast Asia to reduce risks. Okinawa officials say the prefecture has been left behind as Japanese firms expand their business globally, but they hope to have the prefecture serve as a new hub for distribution and the telecommunication industry.

Central African Republic president to meet stakeholders on gov’t formation

Bangui, 18 Jan—Central African Republic’s President Francois Bozize is set to hold a meeting on Thursday morning with all stakeholders on the formation of a national unity government, according to state radio.

On Saturday, Bozize dissolved the government led by Prime Minister Faustin Archange Touadera, just a day after signing an agreement with rebels in Libreville, Gabon, which was the broker of peace in 2007. According to the agreement, the post of prime minister will be given to the democratic opposition, involving opposition parties, the civil society and the Seleka rebel coalition, which launched an offensive against the government on 10 Dec, 2012 and has taken control of more than 10 towns in northern and Central African Republic.

On Wednesday, Bozize met with the envoy of Republic of Congo President Denis Sassou Nguesso and a delegation from Seleka, the radio said, without elaborating on the talks.

The Republic of Congo is acting as the mediator in the current crisis in neighboring Central African Republic.

Obama pledges to promote peace, security in Somalia

Washington, 18 Jan —US President Barack Obama pledged on Thursday to work with the new Somali government to promote peace and security in the Horn of Africa country, as his administration recognized the new government headed by President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud.

Obama dropped by a meeting with Mohamud at the White House by his deputy national security advisor Denis McDonough, and congratulated him on his election last September as president and the establishment of the first “permanent, representative government” in Somalia in two decades.

“The president noted the impressive security and political gains over the past year in Somalia,” White House spokesman Jay Carney said in a statement. “He acknowledged the many challenges facing Somalia but expressed optimism about Somalia’s future.”

Obama repeated his commitment to work in partnership with the new Somali government to “promote peace and security, improve fiscal management, and increase the provision of social services” in the country.

Secretary of State Hillary Clinton met later with the Somali president, and announced Washington’s recognition of the new Somali government, the first time since 1991. Somalia’s central government collapsed in 1991 when a civil war broke out, in which all Shabaab militants once held all of south-central Somalia including the capital city of Mogadishu.

Students from the School of Fine Art of LiaoCheng University present self-designed masks in LiaoCheng, east China’s Shandong Province, on 17 Jan, 2013. A competition for mask design was held in the school to promote the ideal of environment protection and a low-carbon lifestyle.

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Egyptian president appoints former VP Ambassador to Vatican

CAIRO, 18 Jan — Egyptian President Mohamed Morsi issued a decree on Thursday appointing former Vice President Mahmoud Mekki the country’s Ambassador to Vatican, the official news agency MENA reported.

Mekki, who was named as Morsi’s deputy in August 2012, resigned late December after Egypt’s new constitution was established.

“I realized that the nature of political work does not suit my professional side as a judge,” Mekki, also deputy chairman of the Court of Appeal, said in a statement when he resigned.

He continued to chair a national dialogue between Egypt’s presidency and political forces after his resignation, in an attempt to end growing divisions among Egyptians over Morsi’s controversial decisions and the new constitution.

A visitor watches a piece of art work presented at the 10th International “REALISME” exhibition in Amsterdam, on 17 Jan, 2013.
Japan PM may cut short Asia trip due to hostage crisis

Tokyo, 18 Jan—Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has cancelled part of his trip to Southeast Asia, his first overseas trip since taking office, and is considering flying home early due to the hostage crisis in Algeria. Japan’s top government spokesman said on Friday.

Abe’s forces have stormed a desert gas complex to free hundreds of hostages, including Japanese, but 30 were killed in the assault along with at least 11 of their Islamist captors, an Algerian security source told Reuters.

“The action of Algerian forces was regrettable,” said Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga, adding Japan had not been informed of the operation in advance.

Three Japanese engineers of Japanese engineering firm JGC Corp. have been confirmed safe but 14 others remained unaccounted for, he said.

Speaking after the government’s taskforce meeting on the crisis, Suga said the prime minister had cancelled a luncheon meeting with Japanese residents in Indonesia to focus on the Algeria hostage crisis.

“He is considering coming back home right after a summit meeting (with his Indonesian counterpart),” Suga said. Local organizers said Abe had also cancelled a planned policy speech due later in the day which he was expected to use to push for closer ties in Southeast Asia.—Reuters.

Vietnamese pour into S China amid labour shortage

Nanning, 18 Jan—Rising labour costs and a labour shortage in China’s coastal regions have led to more Vietnamese illegally crossing the border to seek work in south China, border police said on Thursday.

The border-jumpers have created new challenges for law enforcement on the China-Vietnam border, which saw a 20-per cent increase in illegal entries and exits in 2012, according to sources with the border control force in south China’s Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region. Border police apprehended 3,592 Vietnamese border-crossers in 2012, with a third of them stating that they were seeking jobs in southeast China’s coastal regions, the sources said.

Increased demand for short-term labourers during the harvest season has also resulted in increased illegal entry, the sources said. Border police said they will crack down on illegal entry by intensifying checks of hotels and rented apartments.—Xinhua

Concert of violins made from tsunami-hit houses

Tokyo, 18 Jan — Japan’s Empress enjoys a violin concert held in Tokyo. The violins used in the performance were made from wood left behind by the tsunami that hit northeastern Japan on 11th March, 2011. Empress Michiko joined the audience at a recital by Mexican violinist Adrian Justes in Tokyo on Thursday. The event included a joint performance with Japanese violinist Yuriko Kuromiya. The 2 violins played in the concert were made from house pillars that were swept away by the tsunami in Iwate Prefecture. The only pine tree to have survived the tsunami along the coast of Rikuzentakata City was also used in the construction of violins. The “miracle lone pine” became a symbol of hope for reconstruction, but was cut down after it was found to be dying from extensive saltwater damage.

The recital was part of a project in which 1,000 violinists take turns playing the violins to pray for the souls of the victims. Another aim of the project is to help people reflect on the disaster as time passes. So far, 115 violinists have performed with the instruments.

In the concert, Yusuke Tatsuya, an internationally known violinist, performed a duet with piano accompaniment. The Empress and the audience listened quietly to enjoy the stirring melodies and applauded after the performance concluded.

Thursday was the 18th anniversary of the massive earthquake that hit the Kobe City and surrounding areas in western Japan. Earlier in the day, the Empress and the Empress observed a moment of silence in memory of the victims.—NHK

Eleven killed in China road accidents

Shinhazhuang, 18 Jan—At least 11 people were killed and dozens of others injured in separate road accidents in north and central China, traffic police said on Thursday.

More than 20 vehicles were involved in nine separate collisions on Thursday morning on a 2-km section of an expressway in Hebei Province, killing four people and injuring nine others, according to Hebei traffic police.

A total of 35 people died and 89 others were injured in five separate road accidents involving a total of 40 vehicles on Thursday in central China’s Heilongjiang Province, according to local media. The cause of the accidents has yet to be determined.

Eleven were killed and dozens more injured in two separate road accidents in northwest China’s Shaanxi Province on Thursday, police said.

Shaoxing, 18 Jan—A vehicle collision in central China’s Henan Province on Thursday morning left seven people dead and another 20 injured. The accident happened at 8:30 am when a passenger bus collided with another on Zhengzhou, capital of Henan, according to sources with the Zhengzhou Municipal Public Security Bureau.

The injured have been sent to local hospitals. Their conditions are unknown.

Tragically, a vehicle collision in central China’s Henan Province on Thursday morning left seven people dead and another 20 injured. The accident happened at 8:30 am when a passenger bus collided with another on Zhengzhou, capital of Henan, according to sources with the Zhengzhou Municipal Public Security Bureau.

The injured have been sent to local hospitals. An investigation into the cause of the accident is under way.—Xinhua

Australia’s New South Wales braces for ferocious fire conditions

Sydney, 18 Jan—Australia’s southeast state of New South Wales firefight- ers are facing a day of ferocious fire conditions, with temperatures expected to climb into the 40s degree Celsius in Sydney and many other areas of the state. Local media reported on Friday.

A total fire ban is in place across much of the state as hot and windy conditions return.

Currently, 84 bushfires are burning across the state, and 14 of them are uncontrollable.

The NSW Rural Fire Service (RFS) said a fire in the Warrumbungle National Park in northwestern NSW broke containment lines on Friday morning.

The fire has already destroyed 51 homes, burning out 45,000 hectares of bushland in the Warrumbungle National Park.—Xinhua

Singapore to add two new subway lines by 2030

Singapore, 18 Jan—Singapore will add two new subway lines and expand three existing lines by 2030, Transport Minister Lui Tuck Yew said on Thursday.

The rail network stretch in the city state is also expected to double to 360 kilometres from the current 178 kilometres, potentially putting Singapore ahead of Hong Kong and Tokyo, and on the par with New York, local media reports said.

By then, eight in ten households will have a train station within a ten-minute walk, compared with about six in ten currently.

Lui announced the plan as he visited a local train station on Thursday. The plans came after a review of the Land Transport Master Plan.

One of the new lines will be the 50-kilometre Cross Island Line running from the Jurong Industrial Estate in the west of the island to Changi near the airport in the east. It will be connected to all the existing lines and is expected to relieve the load of the current East-West and North-East lines and shorten journey times significantly.

The other new line Jurong Region Line will be completed in 2025. The 20-kilometre line will be mainly in the west.

The existing Circle Line, Downtown Line and North-East Line will be extended.

The population of Singapore has grown steadily from 1.65 million in 1960 to 4.03 million in 2000, and then to 5.31 million in 2012. The fast growth of the population, while contributing to the remarkable growth of the Singapore economy, also led to pressures on infrastructure, including the rail network.—Xinhua
THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR
MINISTRY OF ENERGY

Dated: 17th January, 2013

INVITATION FOR BIDS TO CONDUCT PETROLEUM OPERATIONS
IN MYANMAR ONSHORE AREAS (2013)

1. The Ministry of Energy of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar hereby announces Invitation of Sealed Bids for Petroleum Operations to be conducted in Myanmar Onshore Areas on production sharing basis.

2. The following Onshore blocks are available for bidding in this bidding round:-

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3. All interested parties are cordially invited to submit the Letter of Expression of Interest”, together with Company’s Article of Association (AOA), Memorandum of Association (MOA), Certificate of Incorporation, latest Annual Report and latest Financial Statement (or) Financial Report and Detail Track Record, which are to be endorsed for authenticity by the respective Embassy of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar at the place of Company’s registration (or) establishment or nearest, in sealed envelopes superscripted “Confidential” “Myanmar Onshore Blocks Second Bidding Round-2013”, to the following address not later than two (2) Months after the date of announcing of this invitation (17th January 2013):-

Director General
Energy Planning Department
Ministry of Energy
Building No.6, Nay Pyi Taw
The Republic of the Union of Myanmar

Note: For further inquiry (and/or) information, please contact the followings:-

(1) Director General
Energy Planning Department
Ministry of Energy, The Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Tel: 95-67 411 099/411 057
Fax: 95-67 411 113
Email: myanmaro@ntmmail.net.mm

(2) Managing Director
Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise
Ministry of Energy, The Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Tel: 95-67 411 055/411 056
Fax: 95-67 411 125
Email: myanmaroil@energy.gov.mm

(3) Myanmar Embassies in respective Countries

Journalist shot dead in Mogadishu

Mogadishu, 18 Jan—A local Somali journalist was shot dead on Friday by unknown gunmen in the capital city of Mogadishu as he left his home for work, witnesses and media reports said. Abdi Hared Osman was rushed to hospital after he was shot several times by armed assailants as he walked to a bus stop in the Mogadishu District of Wadajir.

“Reporter Abdi Ha-reed was shot by a group of men armed with pistols who headed to work,” the local Shabelle Radio in Mogadishu reported. Ha-reed worked as an editor and playwright at the radio station.

The reporter died as he was being prepared for operation by doctors at the Medina hospital in Moga-dishu which he was taken to following the attack, health officials said. This was the first killing of a journalist since the beginning of the year. The year 2012 was the deadliest for Somali journalists. In the year, 18 Somali journalists lost their lives in violence.

A journalist is currently under arrest by Somali government police after he was accused of interviewing a woman who claimed to have been raped by government soldiers, a charge vehemently denied by of-ficials. No group has so far claimed responsibility for the latest killing of the jour-nalists. None of the previous attacks were claimed. The Somali government accuses the Islamist Al Shabaab group of targeting the jour-nalists.

International and local media watchdogs consider the war torn horn of Africa country as one of the worst places for media to operate. 

HAVE BEEN MARRIED

The only son of Thang Khan Ciu & Ngin Do Cing of Kalaymyo

Mr. Hau Tung Nung & Miss Cing San Neam

The second daughter of Lam Khan Mang & Hau Khan Cing of Thuklai Village, Tetdin Tsp have been married at 12:00 (noon) on 4th Jan 2013 at Leipi Baptist Church solemnized by Rev. Sian Za Muny, the Church Pastor of Leipi Baptist Church.

Both parents and Mr. Hau Tung Nung & Miss Cing San Neam.

INVITATION TO OPEN TENDER

TENDER NO(1) (Adm): A.M.D (2012-2013)

1. Open Tender are invited by Agricultural Mechanization Department, Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation, for the supply of the following stores (in Myanmar Kyats.):-

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<th>LOT No.</th>
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2. Tender Closing date: 25-1-2013, 16:00 hrs
3. Tender documents are available at Equipment & Stores Branch of Agricultural Mechanization Department (Head Office), AMD Office No. 50, NayPyiTaw, during office hours from (21-1-2013). Only Tenders Purchased from AMD will be accepted.

4. For more details, Contact: 09-95-671333

Director General
Agricultural Mechanization Department

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV SEIYO SAPPHIRE VOY NO (EAL03)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV SEIYO SAPPHIRE VOY NO (EAL03) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 20.1.2013 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon. Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:29 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claims Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.

No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: EASTERN CAR LINER S’PORE PTE LTD.
Phone No: 256924/256914

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV SEA WARLUS VOY NO (-)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV SEA WARLUS VOY NO (-) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 20.1.2013 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of B.S.W (1) where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claims Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.

No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: SANG THAI SHIPPING CO. LTD.
Phone No: 256924/256914

Xinhua
Why Jennifer Lawrence can’t give advice to other young actors

NEW DELHI, 18 Jan—Jennifer Lawrence believes she isn’t experienced enough to give advice to other young actors. The Silver Linings Playbook star — who was recently nominated for her second Oscar and also won a Golden Globe Award on Sunday (13 January) — turned down an offer to appear on the respected Bravo show Inside The Actors Studio with James Lipton because she never knows her lines and has no method.

The 22-year-old beauty told Entertainment Weekly: “Do you know how much that guy would hate me? ‘Tell me about your method?’ There is no method! I never know my lines! He would be horrified. “I love that show but I’m not old enough. I’m not at a place yet where I can look back and think ‘Oh this how it...’ I’m not ready. And, please, I’m an animal.”

The actress also admits she is embarrassed after starting her speech at Sunday’s ceremony with the words “I beat Meryl!” referring to acclaimed actress Meryl Streep and claims it didn’t go down well with her fellow celebrities. She said: “I never know what’s going to come out of my mouth and that’s what always gets me in trouble.”

The newly single actress — who split from boyfriend Nicholas Hoult this month — recently revealed she doesn’t think that acting is anything special.

She said: “Not to sound rude, but [acting] is stupid. Everybody’s like, ‘How can you remain with a level head?’ And I’m like, ‘Why would I ever get cocky? I’m not saving anybody’s life. There are doctors who save lives and firemen who run into burning buildings. I’m making movies. It’s stupid.”

UNAUTHORIZED PERSONNEL

NEW DELHI, 18 Jan—Lindsay Lohan has pleaded “not guilty” in court about lying to police.

NEW DELHI, 18 Jan—The Liz & Dick star — who is possibly facing up to eight months in jail after her probation was revoked last month because she allegedly lied to police about being behind the wheel of her car during an accident last June — has been told she must personally appear in court on 30 January after her long term lawyer Mark Heller, who did not appear at her arraignment on 15 Jan, 2013.

But according to gossip website TMZ.com, Shawn said she still technically connected to her lawyer Lindsay’s lawyer. Everyone involved in the case by the judge, which stopped the judge from issuing a bench warrant for her arrest.

Sources revealed that Lindsay told Shawn that she was cancelling her termination on 14 Jan, 2013 and allegedly ordered her new New York lawyer Mark to send her a letter to confirm this but it never arrived.

However, insiders connected to her lawyer said he has been calling everyone involved in the case to inform them he is Lindsay’s lawyer.
London Olympics boost UK’s image: study

London, 18 Jan—A study released by VisitBritain on Thursday suggested that image of the UK was greatly boosted by the hosting of the London 2012 Games. According to the results of the study, global perceptions of “welcome”, Britain’s “overall nation brand” and the sporting and cultural credentials of the UK have significantly improved thanks to the Games.

The Nations Brands Index (NBI) research rates 50 of world’s leading nations around six core categories, was carried out in last July and repeated after the Olympics. Britain has moved from the twelfth place as a welcoming nation to the ninth, edging into the top 10 for the first time. Its overall national brand and culture ranking moved up one place, with tourism in the fourth position. Nine of the panel countries, including the United States, China, Japan, Russia and India, ranked the UK in the top three on the overall NBI.

The study also found that among those polled for the study, 63 percent said the Olympic had increased their interest of visiting the UK for a holiday, 75 percent agreed they wanted to see more than London, and 70 percent said Britain had lovely countryside.

Perceptions of British sport see it move up two places into the top five in the overall rankings. The UK will continue to host major sporting events in the coming years such as a Champions league Final, Tour de France, and the World Athletics Championships.

“London’s hosting of the Games, the amazing opening and closing ceremonies and the warmth of welcome shown to our international visitors have combined to boost our global image,” said Sandy Dawe, Chief Executive of VisitBritain. “Britain is already an established visitor destination and our tourism ranking is high. The goal this year was to maintain rankings in culture and heritage where we are strong, and improve in areas such as the warmth of our welcome where we had room for improvement.”

Culture Secretary Maria Miller noted that the summer of 2012 put the UK firmly in the global spotlight, shaping international perceptions and showing the best of Britain. “We are determined to deliver a lasting economic legacy for the whole country, boosting tourism and growth,” she said.—Xinhua

Ghana rises to 26th spot on FIFA world rankings

Accra, 18 Jan—Ghana moved four places up to rank 26th on the January edition of the overall FIFA world rankings, the Ghana Football Association (GFA) announced here on Thursday.

Ghana jumped from the 30th position on December’s rankings to the 26th place after picking 11 more points to reach a total of 738. The Black Stars maintained their fourth position on the continental ranking table. Cote d’Ivoire is still leading the African pecking order, followed by Algeria and Mali respectively. World champions, Spain, start the year as the number one side ahead of Germany and Argentina.

According to FIFA, only 46 matches were included in the ranking since December’s episode, 18 of which took place in 2012, with the remaining 28 played in the first half of January 2013. Ghana’s Black Stars, who played AC Milan plan to loan back Kaka

Milan, 18 Jan—Se- rie A giants Mi- lan announced on Thursday via their official Twitter account they have revealed the possibility of loan move that another two clubs are discussing the possibility of a loan move. Adriano Galliani, Milan’s vice president, admitted the talks with Real Madrid to take Kaka on loan will be very difficult.

“It’s true, I was very, very pleased with Kaka’s words. There is contact with Real Madrid. Will it be possible to sign Kaka? It will be difficult, very difficult,” he said.—Xinhua

Fatigue no problem for red-hot Henley

London, 18 Jan—Russell Henley of the US celebrates with the trophy after winning his maiden PGA Tour title, American rookie Russell Henley made light of a fatigued start to the week as he surged into contention at the Humana Challenge on Thursday. The fresh faced 23-year-old fired an eight-under 64 on the Nicklaus Private course at PGA West, ending an ideal day for just one stroke behind his pace-setting compatriots Jason Kokrak, Roberto Castro and James Hahn.

“It was a perfect day,” he told reporters after mixing seven birdies with an eagle and a lone bogey. “The weather is perfect, the greens were true so it’s just trying to stay patient and let the birdies come to me. And I made some good putts. ‘I got off to a fast start. Hit the pin on the first hole for eagle and it (the ball) went to about two feet. So it was cool to start out with a birdie. That gave me a little confidence and I just fed on it all day.”

Asken if he had felt ready for this week’s event after being cataloged into the limelight by his spectacular three-shot victory in Houston, Henley replied: “I’ve gotten some good rest the last few nights, so I felt pretty good today physically, “I made some par putts when I had to. I’m feeling very comfortable this week as I want to do is waste any energy and be emotional right now.”

“I got to conserve all my emotions and energy as much as I can so I can play another full golf tournament. That’s what I’m focused on this week.”

Henley, who stunned the golfing world with a spectacular display of clutch putting and ice-calm nerves as he closed with a seven-under 63 at the Sony Open, is a staggering 32 under for his last five rounds on the PGA Tour.

He came agonizingly close on Thursday to shooting a four-under 68 to the season but eventually had to settle for an eight-under opening round. “I thought about it coming down the stretch... but I was trying to push that thought out of my mind,” Henley said of carding another 63.

Bryant voted to record 15th straight All-Star start

Los Angeles, 18 Jan—Kobe Bryant was voted to an NBA-record 15th consecutive All-Star start on Thursday, leading the votes despite the slight ranking to the season by his Los Angeles Lakers (17-21).

Bryant collected 1,591,437 votes to edge out Miami’s LeBron James as the most popular pick, breaking out of a tie with Jerry West, Karl Malone and Shaquille O’Neal for the most consecutive All-Star selections. The Lakers guard will be joined by team mate Dwight Howard, Oklahoma City Thunder’s Kevin Durant and Los Angeles Clippers’ blude Blake Griffin and Chris Paul in the West. The Eastern Conference starting lineup for the clash against the Eastern Conference in Houston on 17 February.

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James and his Miami Heat team m a t e D w y a n e W a d e a r e n l a r g e l e g e n d s in the Eastern Conference. The Heat have been on fire since the start of the season, and they are currently sitting at the top of the Eastern Conference standings. With a record of 20-7, the Heat are looking to continue their hot streak throughout the remainder of the season.

Bryant, on the other hand, is still a force to be reckoned with. Despite his age, the Lakers star is averaging 26.7 points, 8.1 rebounds, and 5.3 assists per game. He is also shooting an impressive 44.7% from the field and 34.7% from three-point range.

Both players have come a long way since their days as teammates on the UCLA Bruins. With the 2013 NBA All-Star Game, they will have a chance to show off their skills one last time. It will be interesting to see how they perform on the court in front of a new generation of fans.
Arians takes over as head coach of Arizona Cardinals

Los Angeles, 18 Jan

The Arizona Cardinals have installed Indianapolis Colts offensive coordinator Bruce Arians as their new head coach, the official National Football League (NFL) website reported on Thursday.

Arians helped guide the Colts to the playoffs this season, stepping in as interim head coach for 12 games (9-3) when Chuck Pagano underwent treatment for leukemia. Arians has reportedly signed on a four-year deal with an option for a fifth to replace Ken Whisenhunt, who was fired after the Cardinals finished bottom of the NFC West division with a 5-11 record.

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Federer beats Davydenko to set up Tomic meeting

Melbourne, 18 Jan—Wimbledon champion Roger Federer advanced to the third round at the Australian Open tennis tournament in Melbourne, Australia, on 17 Jan, 2013. Roger Federer won 3-0.

Xinhua

Los Angeles, 18 Jan—Wimbledon champion Roger Federer advanced to the third round at the Australian Open with a 5-7, 6-4, 6-4, 6-4 victory over Russian Nikolay Davydenko here on Thursday. The two 31-year-olds know each other well, on court at least. After turning pro just a year apart, they’ve since met on 19 occasions, with Federer besting the Russian in all but two of their matches.

Former world No 3 Davydenko hasn’t enjoyed a career as consistent as that of his opponent. He didn’t win a single title in 2012, which was the first time in nine years that he has failed to capture some silverware. The 17-time Grand Slam champion Federer had few problems with the quirky, 40th-ranked Russian, winning in one hour 59 minutes in a night match on Rod Laver Arena. Federer soon had Davydenko under pressure, breaking the Russian’s service in the sixth game, and he cruised to the opening set in 42 minutes.

He followed up with a service break in Davydenko’s opening service game to take the second set in a similar time and broke him again in the first game of the final set to steam home. Federer stretched his record over Davydenko to 18-2 with a dominant performance containing three service breaks from 13 break point opportunities.

Federer made more unforced errors in his latest match, 42 to his 35 winners, but he was always in command of the Russian, whose last win against the 31-year-old Swiss legend was three years ago at Doha.

Federer will now meet the only Australian felt in the draw. The four-time Australian Open champion will play 20-year-old Bernard Tomic on Saturday for a spot in the top 16.

Xinhua

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The 60-year-old has followed Whisenhunt into a job before, doing so as offensive coordinator at the Pittsburgh Steelers. This will be his first official NFL head-coaching role, although he spent five seasons in charge of Temple in college football.

Arians becomes the eighth and final appointment of all the teams that fired head coaches at the end of the regular season.

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Proposal on urging responsible organizations and the government to stop fighting with KIO/KIA and start making peace talks as quickly as possible, approved

**NAY PYI TAW, 18 Jan—** Ten questions were answered at today's Pyithu Hluttaw Session. Hluttaw approved an urgent proposal submitted by Daw Dwe Bu of M'Jangyang Constituency on if there is a plan to extend Mulham-Mongyai–Kelhsi road sections and upgrade Khonarli and Nama bailey bridges into RC concrete ones. He said that it will be implemented with a special maintenance fund in 2013–2014 financial year.

Regarding the question of U Aye Pe of Cocogyun Constituency on if there is a plan to resume Cocogyun-Yangon trip, Deputy Minister for Transport U Han Sein replied that coordination will be made with Myanmar Five Stars Line under Union of Myanmar Economic Holdings Ltd for resumption of Cocogyun Yangon trip, and with Yangon Region government for the special affairs.

**NAY PYI TAW, 18 Jan—** The Union Government was urged today by a representative from Kachin State at Amyotha Hluttaw to lay down basic principles which can help build trust between the two sides to be able to bring about eternal peace. He also said in his proposal that the Ministry has plans to extend Mulham-Mongyai–Kelhsi road sections and upgrade Khonarli and Nama bailey bridges into RC concrete ones. He said that it will be implemented with a special maintenance fund in 2013–2014 financial year.

**Field study conducted to collect data for agro-business development**

**NAY PYI TAW, 18 Jan—** The Union Government urged to lay down firm basic principles which can help build trust between two sides to be able to bring about eternal peace in the country. In his proposal submitted to Amyotha Hluttaw today, U Khet Hein Nan of Constituency No 1 from Kachin State urged Amyotha Hluttaw to organize a peace mediator or negotiation team as a step for bringing about peace and as a principle to be able to secure ceasefire between the two sides, to make peace and to resume the peace talks politically as there was no signs of easing conflicts despite eleven nego-tiations with KIO/KIA since June, 2011. The peace mediator or negotiation team should be comprised with State-level dignitaries, reliable personnel from Hluttaw and leaders from national races who gain trust and respect from both sides and who can manage to negotiate the two sides. He also said in his proposal that he also supported the idea of stopping the fighting and to provide aid to internally displaced people in Kachin State. During today’s meeting, five questions were discussed.

Dr Myat Nyana Soe of Yangon Region constituency asked if there was a plan to build low-cost housing by Ministry of Construction, Yangon Region Government, Yangon City Development Committee and private construction companies in Yangon as a joint-venture with the assistance of the Union Government. Union Minister for Construction U Kyaw Lwin replied that the Ministry has planned to build the two housing projects in the 2013–2014 fiscal year, injecting K 5.5 billion, to provide new houses for the low-income families.

Regarding the Myanmar Citizens Investment Bill which was sent by Pyithu Hluttaw, Lt-Col Zaw Moe discussed the bill and Amyotha Hluttaw decided that Amyotha Hluttaw Bill Committee was to hear the discussion.

U Myo Myint of Mandalay Region constituency No 6 called on the Union Government to take steps to implement the rehabilitation and modernization project of flood protection, embankments, drainages and ancillary structures for Ayeyawady Delta. The meeting will continue on 21 January.

**Power generators for Hlawga, Thakayta and Ahlon power stations arrive**

**YANGON, 18 Jan—** As first phase of gas engine generators totally thirteen to be equipped at Hlawga, Ywama and Thaketa power plants arrived yesterday and today. To add about 200 megawatt to the power supply to Yangon, Ministry of Electric Power has imported 50-megawatt-gas-turbines, and of them, eight SFGM X generator from USA arrived at Sule Jetty today and they will be equipped at Ahlon Power Plant.

X generator from USA arrived at Sule Jetty today and they will be equipped at Ahlon Power Plant.

The remaining generators will arrive Yangon by the last week of February, and arrangements will be made to equip and run the newly imported generators at respective power plants before 31 March.

**Ng Myint of UNDP and Mr Toyli Kurbaban of UNDP and trainees. The course instructors and trainees made data collection for poverty score card and collected data for agro-business development in Nyaungbintha Village in Pyinmana Township yesterday. They also had an individual interview with farmers on progress of their family’agro-business.**—MNA