President acknowledges crucial role civil society organizations play in political development of Myanmar

NAY PYI TAW, 20 Jan—President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Thein Sein delivered an address at the meeting with community-based social organizations at the hall of Yangon Region Government in Yangon at 2.30 pm today.

Also present on the occasion were Union ministers Lt-Gen Ko Ko, U Soe Thein, U Aung Min, U Tin Naing Thein, U Khin Yi, U Win Myint, Yangon Region Chief Minister U Myint Swe, region ministers, departmental officials, chairpersons, executives and representatives from 86 community-based social organizations and media.

In his address, President U Thein Sein said:

I would like to welcome you all to this meeting by conveying my best wishes. In this meeting with leaders from civil society organizations, I would like to briefly discuss some of the important political achievements our society has attained. To begin with, I would like to stress my firm belief in the crucial role the civil society organizations play in the political development of our country.

One of our political achievements is the new political culture that has emerged in our country during the last twelve months. Under this new political culture, our society has stopped using confrontation as a way to solve problems. We are now solving our problems and differences through deliberation and dialogue.

Here, we must also acknowledge the enhancement in the degree of political consciousness and tolerance among the members of political and civil societies as well as the general public. In the past twelve months or so, we have witnessed the changes that are unprecedented in our history. It is an undeniable fact that the endorsement of these changes by the internal political forces and the international community has raised our country’s reputation.

In order to bring about such unprecedented political changes, our government, Hluttaw, political parties, business associations, civil society organizations, Tatmadaw, and especially the entire population, have worked very hard in performing the duties they are entrusted with.

I firmly believe that regardless of the challenges we are subjected to, the joint effort of all the forces in our country will definitely pave the way for success in all building activities.

In so doing, I am not suggesting that civil society organizations must agree with us on everything. I am just inviting you all to work with the government in the areas of state-, nation-, and peace-building activities where we all agree on.

In dealing with our differences, we must steer clear of confrontational means and seek solution through dialogue.

I am making this particular request mainly because we must be able to solve our problems peacefully if we wish to create a modern society and a modern national economy.

In addition, we will also need to have the kind of national unity General Aung San managed to achieve during our national struggle for independence.

I also want to emphasize that a state-building process is full of challenges. There is a great deal of irrationality in the economy.

In order to amend such irrationality, we have adopted the Framework for Economic and Social Reforms (FESR) and the Framework for Poverty Alleviation and Economic Development (FPAED). Furthermore, we held the first donor cooperation forum yesterday in order to find an effective way for local and international experts, and international organizations and government agencies, to work together in undertaking various reform programs throughout the country. Most of the economic sanctions against our country have also been successfully lifted.

We have also begun to undertake education and health care reforms to better develop the social sector.

The government is also doing everything it could to turn ceasefire agreements into political dialogue. My administration will avoid using piecemeal measures when dealing with ethnic problems. We will only adopt the means that will lead us to lasting peace.

In so doing, we will try to move forward.

(See page 9)

Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Shield Judo Tournament 2012 in Yangon

YANGON, 20 Jan — Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Shield Judo Tournament 2012 was held at Tatmadaw Indoor Stadium in Hline Township, here, from 18 to 20 January. Northern Command stood first with 12 gold medals.

Basic and amateur level Judo events were held in Yangon and International level in which athletes from Tatmadaw are to compete with other athletes will be held in Nay Pyi Taw on 29 January.

Secretary of organizing committee Captain Win Zaw Htwe said only 33 teams, out of 47, from military commands participated in the tournament.

The Judo Tournament is the 17th in series which has been held annually since 1996. Seven Judo champions have emerged from the tournaments, and there are three international level course instructors.

Thant Zin Win (NLM)
Playing sports together a great morale booster for the children

KYAUPADAUNG, 20 Jan — Organized by Shwe Nadi Philanthropic Monastic Education School and Bedaypan philanthropic organization for monastic education, School Family Day of monastic education schools in Kyauk padaung Township was held at Shwe Nadi Philanthropic Monastic Education School on 15 January. School children took part in 24 kinds of sports including track and field and traditional outdoor games and indoor games like subject-wise competition, general knowledge quiz, poem recitation and talent contests. Costs of giving prizes were used from the funds of two philanthropic organizations.

This is the first time. The purpose of holding this event is to boost the morale of the children. Offspring of the poor and orphans are among the children. We want them to know that they are not being marginalized by the society and they have own ability to show their sporting prowess, Saya U Ko Lay, head of two organizations, said.

A total of more than 150 students from some villages in the township and Shwe Nadi monastic education school participated in the school family day held till 16 January.

Kyemon

Funfair, sports meet for autistic children held in Yangon

YANGON, 20 Jan — Organized by Myanmar Special Sports Federation and IFG, the opening of funfair and sports meet for autistic children held in Yangon — An educative talks was given to school children at Basic Education High School (Branch) at Moeygo model village in Pyin Oo Lwin on 11 January. It was jointly-organized by Basic Education Department and Myanmar Police Force with the aim of broadening the horizons of students. Police Officers of Myanmar Police Force gave talks on curbing crimes, traffic rules enforcement and road safety, dangers of narcotic drugs abuse and anti-human trafficking.

Kyemon

Loan disbursements to cooperative societies in Shan State

TAUNGGYI, 20 Jan — A ceremony to disburse loans to cooperative societies in Shan State was held at Shan Literature and Culture Hall of a building on Bogyoke Aung San street in Taunggyi on 12 January. Deputy Minister for Cooperatives U Than Tun delivered an address at the ceremony. Loans provided to cooperative societies in Nyaungshwe, Kalaw, Pinlaung, Yatsawik, Hopong, Hluhseng, Pindaya, Wyanagon, Pekhlon, Namhsan (South) and Kengtung Townships amounted to K 293,335 million. — Kyemon

Artesian well relieves water stress in Aungthukha village of Ayadaw Township

AYADAW, 20 Jan — Under the supervision of region Hluttaw representatives in cooperation with officials of Water Resources Department, DRB 003 of region Hluttaw provided 34 anti-venom injections to the village. It was the second donation of wellwishers in Ayadaw Township in November. The committee presented sports gear and gifts to the President of Shwe Nadi Monastic Education School Family Day of Ayadaw Township in Monywa District recently.

Kyemon

Cash donated to Kanbalu Township anti-venom injection organizing committee

KANBALU, 20 Jan — A cash donation ceremony of Myanmar citizens in Singapore to an anti-venom injection organizing committee was held at Shwe Theim Daw Monastery in Kanbalu Township on 9 December. On behalf of the two philanthropic organizations, said.

A total of more than 150 students from some villages in the township and Shwe Nadi monastic education school participated in the school family day held till 16 January.

Kyemon

Plans underway to provide adequate water supply to Magway dwellers

MAGWAY, 20 Jan — Magway is situated in the arid zone and it is under the possible danger of fire due to the intense heat in summer. Magway Township Development Affairs is striving for ensuring injections. The committee presented eight anti-venom injections to Hankon village and four each to 12 villages.

Kyemon

Cash donated to quake-victims in Thabeikkyin Township

THAIBEIKKYIN, 20 Jan — Cash donations of Meiktila dwellers were presented to quake-victims in Thabeikkyin Township on 16 January.

Kyemon

Paddy price goes up in rural areas

YEDASHE, 20 Jan — Starting from the second week of January, there is an increased demand for paddy in rural areas and the price of paddy which was set to fall again has increased to over K 380,000 for 100 baskets following the decrease in sale of paddy in villages.

Some farmers are expecting to fetch a high price for paddy in their hands, but most of farmers started to sell their produce in the market.

Kyemon
Third time’s a charm: Obama to celebrate with oaths, parade

Barack Obama takes the Oath of Office as the 44th president of the United States from US Chief Justice John Roberts as his wife Michelle holds the Bible during the inauguration ceremony in Washington, in this 20 Jan, 2009 file photo.—REUTERS

WASHINGTON, 20 Jan—President Barack Obama will take the oath of office for the third, fourth and final time this weekend during an inauguration celebration that kicks off his second term in a more muted tone than his historic swearing-in four years ago. High unemployment and partisan fights over fiscal policy have drained some of the hope that marked Obama’s first swearing-in after he swept to victory on a mantle of change in 2008 to become America’s first black president. This time around, there is a less festive inauguration atmosphere.

On Sunday, following a wreath-laying ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery, Obama will be sworn in officially at the White House at 11:55 am EST, meeting the constitutional requirement that he do so on 20 January. That portion will be private—except for a media presence—with a small audience of mostly family members. Obama repeats the procedure on Monday during a public ceremony at the US Capitol. Both times he will be sworn in by Supreme Court Justice John Roberts who, in 2009 after flubbing the oath the first time, administered it to Obama again in the White House the day after his inauguration. The president’s two recitations this year will mark the first time he has taken the oath.

It will be only the second time he has made an inaugural address, however, as millions worldwide will be watching. Some 800,000 people are expected to flock to Washington for the event, down from a record 1.8 million in 2009. With workers rushing to complete preparations for Monday, Obama started his inauguration weekend by joining in a nationwide day of service.

The public swearing-in will fall on the national holiday marking King’s birthday.

The president, first lady Michelle Obama and their daughters Malia and Sasha will take the oath of office in an inauguration ceremony that kicks off the new administration. During the program launched when he took office four years ago as a way to pay tribute to King’s legacy, Obama is expected to talk about the need for political compromise where possible—a nod to the divisive fights that have torn the Republican-led House of Representatives over the “fiscal cliff” and raising the US debt ceiling.

Obama will be accompanied by a wreath-laying ceremony in honor of the 3,000 military and federal officers who lost their lives on 11 September 2001.

Jerusalem, 20 Jan—Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said on Saturday a country with as many enemies as Israel cannot afford a weak ruling party, after polls ahead of Tuesday’s parliamentary election showed a slide in his support. Two polls on Friday showed Israel’s right-wing and religious bloc winning a slim parliamentary majority of 63 out of 120 seats, with Netanyahu’s Likud-Beitenu group on course to be the largest party in the Knesset, albeit with eroding support.

Iran, Lebanese guerrilla group Hezbollah and the Islamic Hamas movement, which controls the Palestinian Gaza Strip, were all following the election, Netanyahu said. “(They) want to know one thing, whether the ruling party has grown or shrunk. They want a weak Israel, a divided one and the most challenged country in the world must not be divided,” Netanyahu told Channel Two’s “Meet The Press.”

Netanyahu says Israel needs strong ruling party

Israel’s Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu (C) speaks on the phone to persuade citizens to vote for his party at the Likud-Yisrael Beitenu headquarters in Tel Aviv on 17 Jan, 2013.—REUTERS

Netanyahu said on Saturday any election would be the third and fourth time he has taken the oath.

The polls in Haaretz and Yedioth Ahronoth newspapers both showed Netanyahu’s party winning 32 seats, its poorest predicted showing so far and some 10 seats fewer than Likud and Yisrael Beitenu took in 2009 when they ran separately. The Republican-led House of Representatives will raise the “fiscal cliff” and raise the US debt ceiling.

There will be no third term in office. But a relatively weak showing at the ballot box would make him more susceptible to the demands of his prospective coalition partners. No one party has ever won a majority in a parliamentary election in Israel and Netanyahu’s government would have to rely on smaller parties for its survival.

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First undersea fiber-optic cable links mainland, Taipei

China works out formula for success

Japan’s Sharp cuts iPad screen output

Ukrainian students design bed-making robot

Dotcom says new site legal, no revenge for Megaupload saga

Apple seen pulling ahead in smartphone race

A visitor tries Apple Inc’s iPad at an electronics store in central Seoul on 19 Jan, 2013.— Reuters

Helsinki, 20 Jan — Sharp has stopped shipping iPad panels, the people with knowledge of Sharp’s production plans told Reuters. Sharp has stopped shipping iPad panels, the people with knowledge of the near total production shutdown said. The exact level of remaining screen output at Sharp was not immediately clear but it was extremely limited, they said. Commerzbank spokesman Matsuaki Nakayama said: “We don’t disclose production levels.” Apple officials, contacted late in the evening after normal business hours in California, did not have an immediate comment. Reuters

Ukraine, 20 Jan — Six students from Ukraine’s Dnepropetrovsk National University have designed a robotics system for bed making, local media said on Thursday.

“This is a real project, not fiction,” project manager Anastasia Rudenko was quoted by Segodnya newspaper as saying.
The robot, which is able to make the bed, change bedclothes and remove stains from bed sheets, was recognized as a winner at the International Student Research Conference Busi- ness Week-2012 in Paris, she said.
Rudenko also expected that the invention could go into mass production soon at the price of 200 US dol-

ler to 800 dollars depending on its characteristics.

Once the robot is put to use, it will help people maintain order at home and save time for sleep in the morning.—Xinhua

A Samsung Galaxy Note II phone—cum-tablet is displayed during the first day of the Consumer Electronics Show (CES) in Las Vegas on 8 Jan, 2013.— Reuters

Apple is forecast to have shipped 46 million iPho-

nes in the quarter, up 25 percent from a year earlier, according to the poll. Shares in Apple dipped below $500 earlier this week for the first time in almost a year after reports it was slashing orders for screens and other components as intensifying competition eroded demand for the new iPhone. The poll showed analysts expect Apple’s full-year shipments to grow to 167 million this year from 134 million in 2012, while Samsung’s shipments are expected to grow to 283 million smartphones in 2013 compared to 210 million in 2012.— Reuters

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US ready to levy steep duties on wind towers from China, Vietnam

WASHINGTON, 20 Jan—
The US International Trade Commission (USITC) decided on Friday that the domestic industry was materially injured or threatened by imported wind towers from China and Vietnam, thus allowing Washington to impose punitive duties on these products. The ruling, backed by three commissioners of the federal bipartisan trade panel, cleared the way for the US Commerce Department to issue antidumping and countervailing duty orders on imports of utility scale wind towers from China and Vietnam.

Two USITC commissioners found the US industry composed of 13 producers was materially injured and another found it threatened with material injury. The other three voted in the negative. The Commerce Department determined in December, 2012 that producers and exporters from China and Vietnam sold these products in the US market at dumping margins ranging from 44.99 percent to 70.63 percent and 51.50 percent to 58.49 percent, respectively. And those from China also received countervailable subsides of 21.86 percent to 34.81 percent.

The punitive tariff orders would apply to goods that entered the US market after 30 May and 27 July when the Commerce Department made affirmative preliminary determinations on countervailing and antidumping investigations respectively. The latest USITC decision concluded the probe that commenced on 19 Jan, 2012, in response to a petition filed on 29 Dec, 2011, by the Wind Tower Trade Coalition comprised of four companies.

The United States imported 265.9 million dollars of wind towers from China and Vietnam in 2011, which accounted for 63 percent of the US market, according to USITC data. China and Vietnam took the second and fifth places in terms of import sources in 2011, respectively. China and the United States are two of the world’s biggest markets for solar, wind and other renewable energy technology. Both governments are encouraging their own suppliers in order to generate higher value added growth.

Trade tensions with China are especially sensitive at a time when the United States and other Western economies want to boost exports to revive economic growth and cut unemployment. The Chinese Ministry of Commerce has repeatedly urged the United States to abide by its commitment against protectionism and work together with China and other members of the international community to maintain a free, open and just international trade environment.

Tainted-chicken probe goes on in Shanghai

BEIJING, 20 Jan—Shanghai’s food safety watchdog is still investigating Yum! Brands Inc and its subsidiary KFC for a scandal involving antibiotics-tainted chicken, vowing severe punishment for any violations. At a news conference in the city on Friday, Yan Zuqiang, director of the Shanghai Municipal Food Safety Commission Office, said it will honor its promise to make the investigation results public, but did not disclose details about the probe. He declined to comment on the possible punishment Yum! may face if found to have used the tainted chicken supplied by a company in Shandong Province in 2010 and 2011.

Legal experts said any punishment will be closely linked to possible damage the company might have caused to consumers’ health, and whether the scandal involves negligence of duty that caused lax quality control or illegal activities in intentionally providing substandard products to consumers. In the latest blow to Chinese consumers’ confidence in food safety, the United States fast-food chain KFC was found to have concealed information that excessive amounts of antibiotics were found in eight batches of raw chicken samples taken from Shandong Liuhe Group.

On 10 January, Yum! publicly apologized for what it called its inappropriate response to the Chinese government’s investigation, admitting shortcomings in the company’s self-checking process and a lack of internal communication. The company destroyed raw chicken products suspected of containing amantadine, a drug used as an antiviral and to treat Parkinson’s disease, on Thursday, the Shanghai Morning Post reported. But it is still not known how much chicken meat the fast-food chain bought from Shandong Liuhe or other problematic suppliers during this time, whether these products were substandard, and whether they had been processed and served in its restaurants.

Experts said the incident exposed faults in food safety supervision at large food-producing companies. The scandal was first reported by China Central Television on 18 December, and the eight batches of tainted chicken meat were found in a test by a testing institution hired by the US company, rather than by tests initiated by food safety watchdogs.

Caterpillar writes off most of China deal after fraud

NEW YORK, 20 Jan—Caterpillar Inc uncovered “deliberate, multi-year, coordinated accounting misconduct” at a subsidiary of a Chinese company it acquired last summer, leading it to write off most of the value of the deal and wiping out more than half its expected earnings for the fourth quarter of 2012.

Shares of Caterpillar fell 1.5 percent in afterhours trading following news of the fraud, which was discovered after problems were found with the Chinese company’s inventory.

Caterpillar, the world’s largest maker of tractors and excavators, said on Friday it would take a noncash goodwill impairment charge of $580 million, or 87 cents per share, in the quarter. Analysts had expected the company to report $1.70 per share when it reports its results on 28 January, according to Thomson Reuters IBES. Caterpillar closed the purchase of ERA Mining Machinery Ltd and its subsidiary Siwei last June, paying HK$5.06 billion, or $653.4 million. ERA had been publicly traded in Hong Kong, doing business through Siwei, which is known for making equipment to support roofs in mines.

A member of the Caterpillar board said during the course of the Siwei deal told Reuters the board was distracted at the time by a larger transaction and paid relatively little attention to the Siwei acquisition. “It came as a complete surprise to us,” the former board member said of the fraud, speaking on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the situation. “It was presented to us as a pretty straightforward transaction. It’s a shame. It should have been investigated further.”

US Treasury commences plan to sell General Motors shares

WASHINGTON, 20 Jan—The US Treasury Department on Friday announced a plan to sell its approximately 300.1 million remaining shares of General Motors (GM) common stock, a key step for the government to exit the bailout after a four-year partial ownership of the firm after the onset of the financial crisis.

The Treasury Department intends to sell its shares into the market in an orderly fashion and fully exit its remaining GM investment within the next 12-15 months subject to market conditions, the department said in a statement.

The Treasury’s sale of its GM common stock is part of its continuing efforts to wind down the Troubled Asset Relief Program (TARP). To date, the Treasury has already recovered nearly 93 percent of the funds in the amount of 418 billion US dollars disbursed through the TARP.

Newborn screening misses some deaf kids

NEW YORK, 20 Jan—New research provides further evidence that some babies who pass their newborn hearing tests are found to be deaf or hard of hearing as young kids. Some of those newborns may receive passing grades incorrectly, researchers said, but others can be born with good hearing but develop progressive hearing loss as babies and toddlers. “A parent or a physician may think, ‘Oh, this child had passed the screen, so they must not have hearing loss,’” said Dr David Chi, the study’s lead author from the University of Pittsburgh Medical Centre in Pennsylvania.

“Don’t depend on just the fact that (your child) passed the screen, especially if there are any concerns about hearing loss or speech concerns,” he told Reuters Health. Chi and his colleagues analyzed the medical records of 923 kids who came to their medical center with hearing loss between 2001 and 2011, and were between four and five years old, on average.

At the height of the 2008 financial crisis, the US government rolled out the controversial TARP, a bailout program to aid the nation’s financial companies and auto giants. The US government invested about 50 billion dollars in GM through the TARP.—Xinhua
Malaysia’s plan to review harsh drug law could save Japanese woman

PUTRAJAYA, 20 Jan—A lawyer for a Japanese woman appealing her death sentence for drug trafficking expressed hope on Friday a government proposal to amend Malaysia’s harsh drug laws could save her.

Attorney-General Abdul Gani Patail was quoted by The Malay Mail last July saying the government is looking at abolishing the mandatory death penalty for drug couriers.

The move could help Mariko Takeuchi who was convicted and sentenced to death in October 2011 for trafficking 3.5 kilograms of methamphetamine into Malaysia on 30 Oct, 2009. Under Malaysian law, anyone possessing a minimum of 50 grams of methamphetamine is considered trafficking a dangerous drug, which is punishable by death.

“All the death sentences by the Federal Court are going to be put on hold until Parliament tables a new bill abolishing death sentence,” Takeuchi’s lawyer Salehuddin Saidin said. Takeuchi has pleaded innocent and claimed the drugs found in a suitcase she brought to Malaysia from Dubai were not hers.

Her appeal in the Court of Appeal began on Friday, with hearings set for 27 March.

“So even if the Federal Court disagrees with us and sentences her to death, that will be put on hold until the law comes into force. When the law comes into force she will no longer be imposed with the death sentence. They will convert that into imprisonment,” Salehuddin said. Abdul Gani told The Malay Mail that among the proposals being studied is to amend the drug law to give judges discretion in imposing sentences. Now, once a person is found guilty of drug trafficking, the only sentence is death.—Kyodo News

UN initiates consultations in Vietnam for post-2015 development agenda

HANOI, 20 Jan—The United Nations (UN) in Vietnam has initiated a series of consultations with a broad range of Vietnamese citizens on the new development framework to be put in place in 2015, once the current Millennium Development Goals expire, Communist Party of Vietnam Online Newspaper reported on Friday.

Pratibha Mehta, UN resident coordinator in Vietnam, said the UN wants to ensure that a diversity of voices is heard in determining the new development goals post-2015. A wide range of people, including eight target groups, are asked about what kind of world they want.

The national consultations are an excellent way to identify how we can best address the new development challenges we are facing, and how to build a world beyond 2015 where all people can enjoy a life of prosperity, equity, freedom and dignity, said Pratibha Mehta.

Bui Quang Vinh, Vietnamese minister of planning and investment, said that Vietnam is committed to achieving the MDGs and has paid special attention to developing policies and mobilizing and prioritizing resources for social and human development, especially poverty reduction and narrowing the development gap. With two years left before 2015, Vietnam has already achieved most of the MDG targets.

The consultations in Vietnam are taking place from the end of 2012 to early 2013 across the country. The opinions and views gathered will be consolidated and included in a final report by the UN in Vietnam.

The report will be discussed at a national workshop before it is shared with the UN secretary-general’s advisory High-level Panel in March 2013, then is expected to be sent to the UN secretary-general in the first half of 2013. These findings will inform the secretary-general’s report to UN Member States at the General Assembly session in September 2013.—Xinhua

Sydney sizzles under record heat

SYDNEY, 20 Jan—Australians are experiencing a record-breaking heat wave.

Temperatures are high especially in the southeast, where the mercury rose to a record 45.8 degrees Celsius in Sydney on Friday afternoon. The previous record of 45.3 degrees was set in January 1939.

The heat led to problems with railway points and traffic lights, causing trains to be delayed.

Emergency responders were flooded with more than 150 calls by people suffering heat stroke. The dry air and strong winds are fanning forest fires that started in early January.

In the eastern state of New South Wales, more than 70 fires have been reported. They are burning down houses and causing other damage. Some residents have evacuated.

Firefighters expect the fires to ease on Saturday, as showers are forecast in some areas with daytime highs of around 25 degrees Celsius. That’s around 20 degrees lower than Friday.—NKH

Eva Air to launch regular flights between Taipei and Okayama

OKAYAMA, 20 Jan—Taiwanese carrier Eva Air is in the process of launching regular flight services between Okayama, western Japan, and Taipei from 3 April, local government officials said on Friday.

The new services are under consideration as there was solid demand among tourists for chartered flights linking Okayama Prefecture and Taiwan when they were available from September to 2 January, the officials said.

Eva Air plans to operate two round-trip services a week, on Wednesday and Saturday, through 26 Oct, using aircraft with capacity for about 150 passengers.

An official of the prefectural government’s aviation planning division said the prefecture hopes that the Taiwanese carrier will continue the services beyond 26 Oct. To that end, the prefectural government will promote the flights by advertising Okayama’s specialties in Taiwan and carrying out other measures.—Kyodo News

Ex-head of nursing home found guilty in fatal fire incident

MAEBASHI, Japan, 20 Jan—The former chief of a nursing home in Shibukawa, Gunma Prefecture on Friday was found guilty by a local court in connection with a 2009 fire that left 10 residents dead.

The court found that the facility had not taken adequate safety measures, such as ensuring the availability of fire extinguishers.

The Maebashi District court handed down a two-year prison sentence, suspended for four years, to Goro Takakuwa, 88, former director of the home called Tamayura while acquitting another defendant, former board member Tomoko Kubo, 76. Kubo was not under an obligation to advise Takakuwa on safety measures, the court said.—NKH

Pakistan to release all Afghan Taleban detainees

ABU DHABI, 20 Jan—Pakistan plans to release all Afghan Taleban prisoners still in detention, including the group’s former second-in-command, an official said on Friday, the clearest signal yet that it backs reconciliation efforts. “The remaining detainees, we are coordinating, and they will be released subsequently,” Jihl Ilahi, Pakistan’s foreign secretary, said at a news conference in Abu Dhabi.

Asked if the former Taleban number 2 Mullah Baradar would be among those to be released, he said: “The aim is to release all,” without elaborating further.—Reuters
Plans underway to assign mobile teams at airports, ports, railway stations

**Nay Pyi Taw, 20 Jan**—Mobile teams will be assigned at airports, ports and railway stations to take out tasks of controlling illegal trade and protecting consumers, said an official of Ministry of Commerce recently.

“Mobile teams have been assigned at border trade checkpoints to prevent illegal trade and protect consumers against dangerous issues. Plans are underway to assign more mobile teams at airports, ports and railway stations,” he said.

In this regard, mobile teams will be stationed at railways along Mawlamyine-Yangon railroad, the railroad leading to Muse and other stations. Moreover, the teams will check not only passengers but also vessels and cargoships from Ayeawady Region.

As mobile teams are discharging their duties at border trade camps, the illegal trade of commodities are being made through aviation, waterway and railroad. So, the teams will be assigned at the necessary points.

Assignments of mobile teams comprising personnel from Ministry of Commerce, Customs Department, General Administration Department, Myanmar Police Force, UMFFCCI and media will raise legal trade of the nation and trading of safety foodstuff for the people.

At present, the teams are assigned at Muse, Tachilek, Myawady and border trade camps.

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**Japanese company donates 50 sets of computer to Myanmar Insurance**

**Yangon, 20 Jan**—Under the insurance and IT programme, Taiyo Life Insurance Company of Japan donated 50 personal computers (PC) to Myanmar Insurance at Parkroyal Hotel, here, on January 18 morning.

On the occasion, Managing Director of Myanmar Insurance U Aye Min Thein spoke words of thanks. Deputy Chief of Mission Mr Ichiro Maruyama of Japanese Embassy to Myanmar extended greetings.

Company Chairman Mr Katsuhiro Oishi and Mr Katsuhide Tanaka explained the purpose of the donation.

Next, the managing director, the general manager and officials concerned from the Japanese Company cut the ribbon to open the donation ceremony. The documents related to the donations were handed over to Myanmar officials.

The donation helps Myanmar Insurance carry out its life insurance with a minimum of delay.

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**Cash donated to patients with cleft lip and palate**

**Nay Pyi Taw, 20 Jan**—President of Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association Dr Mon Mon Aung and CEC members donated K 3.1 million for 68 patients who will receive surgical operations for cleft lip and palate at Nay Pyi Taw General Hospital (1000-bed) on 14 January morning.

After comforting the patients, the president and party presented foodstuffs to them.

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**Robbers arrested within 48 hours**

**Nay Pyi Taw, 20 Jan**—Ko Soe Tin and wife Ma Nyo Nyo Htwe, staff of Irrigation Department, residing in Nyaungbyingyius Village of Patta Police Station in Pobbatthi Township, returned home at 7 pm on 5 January passing 500-acre model plantation.

On their way back home, unknown persons threatened them with dagger and snatched one gold chain weighing 0.75 tical and over K 100,000 from the couple.

Due to the information given by the couple, IP Zaw Min Khai opened a file of lawsuit under Section 392 and made investigation. Therefore, the authorities could arrest suspected New Gyi (a) Thet Naing Soe and Aung Tin who committed the robbery case on 24th street in Aungthaya Ward of Pobbatthi Township at about 11 pm on 7 January.

The authorities seized two daggers, K 270,000, one handset and one motorcycle from the suspected persons. In the investigation, one gold chain and three gold bracelets obtained from last month’s two robbery cases were seized from them.

Under the investigation, these suspected persons committed many criminal cases, so the police station concerned continues more investigation to take action against them.

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**Mobile team controls illegal border trade**

**Nay Pyi Taw, 20 Jan**—“The mobile team is aimed at controlling illegal trade for customers protection and promoting trade,” said Union Minister for Commerce U Win Myint, at a meeting with mobile teams, at the briefing hall of Nawnghkio on 18 January.

Mobile team leader Director U Win Aung of Border Trade Department under the ministry and officials reported trade flow and said that, after that, the Union minister and officials replied to the queries raised by media. Then, the Union minister inspected seized contrabands in the store.

The mobile team is carrying the control of illegal border trade on Mandalay-Muse Union Road.

**Bags of rice donated to Pa-O region**

**Taunggyi, 20 Jan**—Nippon Foundation of Japan donated 1200 bags of rice to Pa-O National Liberation Organization (PNLO) which is one of peace organizations in Shan State, at Taunggyi Hotel in Taunggyi on 12 January afternoon.

Present on the occasion were Shan State ministers, the deputy speaker of Shan State Hluttaw, Pyithu Hluttaw representatives, A myotha Hlut taw representatives, U Khin Thurein of PNLO and officials, Project Director of Nippon Foundation, responsible persons of NGOs and INGOs and departmental officials.

The Shan State Security and Border Affairs Minister and the Project Director of Nippon Foundation explained the purpose of donation. U Khin Thurein of PNLO spoke words of thanks.

After that, U Khin Thurein accepted the bags of rice.

Later, the vehicles carrying bags of rice left for Maukmei and Kadugyi regions. The bags of rice will be distributed to the local people.

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**Hybrid maize plantations thriving in Tatkon Township**

**Yangon, 21 Jan**——A vehicle with the load of bamboo plunged into the ravine near Yathedaung of Si Village-tract in Kanma Township of Thayet Township.

At 5:30am on 11 January, a Hino driven by Nga Zaw, 25, of Alechaung village in Kanma Township with load of bamboo leaving Yathedaung for Alechaung Village plunged into the ravine on left side of the road due to out of break control.

In the incident, diver Nga Zaw, Nyan Aung, 35, Min Myint, 35 and Zaw Lay, 25 of Alechaung Village in Kanma Township died on the spot.

Gyobin Police Station opened a file of lawsuit for the accident case.

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**Vehicle with bamboo plunges into ravine**

**Thayet, 20 Jan**—A vehicle with the load of bamboo plunged into the ravine near Yathedaung of Si Village-tract in Kanma Township of Thayet Township.

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**Fire drill exercised at raft jetties in Tachilek**

**Tachilek, 20 Jan**—As Myanmar Timber Enterprise is earning a large amount of foreign exchange for the State, fire preventive measures is to be taken for export timber logs as an important role.

The talks on fire preventive measures was held in conjunction with the fire drill at No 2 and No 3 raft jetties in Tachilek of Kengtung Timber Extraction region of Myanmar Timber Enterprise on 13 January.

**Assistant General Manager U Wai Kyaing explained the plans on taking fire prevention.**

**U Kyaw Ko Ko of Tachilek District Fire Services Department and members demonstrated fire fighting drills together with staff and workers of Myanmar Timber Enterprise.**
New generation cinemas

According to the desire of the people of the ten categories of Myanmar movie world – producers and distributors, main actors, supporting actors, directors, film editors, script writers, drama industry, technicians, video industry, and makeup professions – Myanmar is working hard on a plan focusing on establishment of a new generation cinemas for introducing internationally practiced F-cinema and D-cinema systems and digital system.

The plan calls for the conversion of the current 35-mm system into digital system and the establishment of D-cinemas all over the Union.

Accordingly we must build 100-seat or 200-seat D-cinemas or new generation cinemas in Yangon, Mandalay, major towns in Regions and States and other towns and villages. The number of D-cinema for each place will depend on population.

In fact, the conversion programme involves digital filming, production and screening systems and D-cinemas which require foreign currency to import them. As this is beyond the financial capacity of domestic film producers and cinema owners, our option is to get international loans, which is the main source for digitalization, as digitalization can bring financial and other progress to our movie world.

We will also form a work committee that will arrange direct financing from banks only to the persons really involved in the project after evaluating the amount of cash required for each project. This method will save the loans from being channeled into other businesses.

Development of Myanmar movie world through digital system will bring benefits to all the persons of movie industry including producers and cinema owners as it will create a new generation D-cinemas. We can also take this development as the success of the Union as it will contribute to national development in one way or another.

Nay Pyi Taw, 20 Jan—

Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) General Soe Win organized a welcoming ceremony for Deputy Chief of General Staff of the Chinese People’s Liberation Army Lieutenant General Qi Jianguo at Zeyathiri Beikman here this morning.

General Soe Win and Lt-Gen Qi Jianguo took salute of the Guard of Honour and Lt-Gen Qi Jianguo inspected the Guard of Honour. The two then held the first strategic discussion between the two armed forces at Zeyathiri Beikman meeting hall, exchanging views on regional and global conflicts, and promotion of joint drills and ties between the two armed forces.

Nay Pyi Taw, 20 Jan—

Deputy Finance and Revenue Minister Dr. Maung Maung Thein presided over fifth session of first Myanmar Development Cooperation Forum and Union Minister for National Planning and Economic Development Dr. Kan Zaw over sixth session of the forum on day two of the forum at Myanmar International Convention Centre today.

Departmental officials, reps from donor countries and development partners participated in discussion.

First Secretary Mr. Brent Rapson from New Zealand delegation discussed: The government of the country would like to state its support to Myanmar Development Cooperation Forum concludes

Myanmar, PLA armed forces hold first strategic discussion

General Soe Win then hosted luncheon for National Assembly delegation and the reform efforts of Myanmar government.

The Union minister met the press after the forum.

Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) General Soe Win, Deputy Chief of General Staff of the Chinese PLA Lieutenant General Qi Jianguo inspect Guard of Honour.—MNA

Myanmar, PLA armed forces hold first strategic discussion

General Soe Win to work for the development cooperation. I believe this forum comes at a crucial time for Myanmar’s development.

It is very important the international assistance is coordinated and delivered in wider support and grows Myanmar government capacity without overwhelming or duplicating efforts. It is also required the international community truly commits to working together transparently. We have unfortunately made mistakes and another occasion that has not might last mistakes here in Myanmar. The pragmatism which is even in the recognition of the need to start modestly and to take concrete steps.

Naw Pyi Taw and to co-work for the development cooperation. I believe this forum comes at a crucial time for Myanmar’s development.

It is very important the international assistance is coordinated and delivered in wider support and grows Myanmar government capacity without the leadership position in planning and cooperation to ensure the national progress and reform and development of this country. It is the only start and there are many challenges ahead. I have experienced from around the world and from other countries coming out from the transition. It shows the need to build strong and competent institutions that is paramount to be able to implement and to monitor reforms.

Singaporean Ambassador Mr. Robert Chua Hian Kong discussed: Singapore is pleased to participate in this forum. We will help to improve the livelihood of Myanmar people and the overall development of the country.

It has been a useful forum to exchange views and to learn about the challenges. As a neighbor and longstanding friend of Myanmar, Singapore has been working together with Myanmar to provide human resources development training for government officials under the Singapore Cooperation Programme. In January last year, we have established the Singapore-Myanmar technical cooperation programme to provide more targeted technical systems and to support Myanmar development and the reform efforts of Myanmar government.

The Union minister met the press after the forum.

Mr Robert Chua Hian Kong

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Mr Robert Chua Hian Kong

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President acknowledges...

(from page 1)

institute a system that ensures equal rights among all ethnic groups, and abides by the principles of non-disintegration of the union and perpetuation of sovereignty.

The international experiences have shown us that it can take several decades before peace-building processes can be completed. The conflicts can fluctuate during times when peace is being negotiated. In spite of such condition, we must not deviate from our commitment to achieve lasting peace through dialogue.

The signing of peace agreements during the leadership of leaders alone will not guarantee the successful completion of the peace process. The general public must take part in the peace process. The civil society organizations play a crucial role in disseminating information about agreements and understandings reached among leaders. The government is now trying to create a role for the civil society in the peace process. The Myanmar Peace Center is now making all necessary preparations to work hand in hand with all relevant civil society partners in the peace process.

In dealing with conflict in the Kachin State, I would like to note that my administration has tried to find a peaceful solution since the inception of the conflict. I have called for a ceasefire with the Kachin Independence Army (KIA) mainly because we want to fully implement ceasefires throughout the country. I would reiterate that the government-wide ceasefire asked for by all ethnic groups is a measure which my administration has clearly committed to undertake since the beginning of our term. Our peace building activities will continue until genuine peace is fully instituted in our country. Up to date, we have concluded ceasefires agreements with 10 major ethnic armed groups. The KIA is the only major armed group that has yet to reach a ceasefire agreement with the government.

I also want to highlight that in spite of all the difficulties we are facing, we must take these challenges of nation-, state-, and peace-building activities simultaneously. In trying to create a fully open and democratic society, all of us, both individually and collectively, must tackle these challenges.

If we fail to tackle these challenges, a proper balance necessary for our efforts to create an open society will be lost, which in turn could have negative impact on the reform process. I will always consider civil society groups important partners and will always count on their well-informed and well-thought-out actions in the state- and nation-building process.

I will always welcome civil society organizations as important forces in the state-building process. I would like to request civil society organizations to engage in the state-building activities that take into account the real conditions in the society.

My government will relax the requirements for the registration of associations and restrictions on their activities in order to enable political parties and civil society organizations to operate freely.

Similarly, in accordance with democratic principles, we have granted media freedom. I would like to encourage the local media to contribute to the democratization process by functioning responsibly.

In conclusion, I would like to encourage civil society organizations to work hand in hand with the government in the areas of nation- and peace-building activities by making positive contributions to the creation of national identity that is in line with the changes, political stability, economic growth and social harmony.

I also would like to invite the participants to make comments or raise questions on issues related to developments in our country.

Chairpersons, executives and representatives from the organizations gave suggestions.

In his concluding remarks, the President said that the Government would fulfill the necessary requirements of social forces.

The deputy chief of general staff of China’s PLA said China endorsed the reconciliation efforts of Myanmar government and Tatmadaw and made clear that it would not support armed conflicts of ethnic armed groups.

The Commander-in-Chief Vice-Senior General Min Aung Hlaing said the Tatmadaw halted its offensives in Kachin State since 19 January and would help the country restore stability. The Commander-in-Chief and the deputy chief of general staff of China’s PLA exchanged gifts and posed for documentary photo.

C-in-C meets China’s PLA deputy chief of general staff

NPED issues statement on Myanmar Development Cooperation Forum

Nav Pyi Taw, 20 Jan—Ministry of National Planning and Economic Development issued a statement on first Myanmar Development Cooperation Forum. The following is the unofficial translation of the statement:

On behalf of the Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, Union Minister for National Planning and Economic Development Dr Kan Zaw chaired first Myanmar Development Cooperation Forum in Nay Pyi Taw on 19-20 January, 2012. The forum was attended by Union ministers, region/state economic ministers, MPs from three legislatures, representatives from partners and 57 international organizations, high-level officials from 10 Ministry of Finance and Planning, 11 departmental organizations, social organizations, local and foreign NGOs and representatives from private sector.

The President in his opening speech at the forum highlighted the need to deepen cooperation between Myanmar and development partners in political and economic reforms for people-centered development. He said Myanmar government would initiate reforms in line with Framework on Economic and Social Reform and called on development partners to cooperate in priority areas. He also urged the government, private organizations, civil society and development partners to work in cooperation thoroughly and transparently.

Development partners recognized historic significance of the first Myanmar Development Cooperation Forum and congratulated the President, Union ministers, deputy ministers and all the participants at the forum on their discussions and Framework on Economic and Social Reform.

Development partners and international organizations praised broad undertakings of Myanmar for development, efforts for peace, and implementation of three-stage reforms for quick promotion of democracy, especially importance of continuous efforts for development of correspondence with the rule of law and national reconciliation based on human rights.

Development partners and international organizations overwhelmingly support Myanmar’s efforts for peace-building, political settlement in ceasefire regions and the President’s commitment to reach peace agreement in conflict areas.

Priorities for State-building set out in the Framework on Social and Economic Reform, National Comprehensive Development Plan and other official documents were discussed at the forum with an emphasis on the importance of poverty alleviation through agricultural development.

Development partners approved major development strategies and priorities of the government including good governance and clean government, private-sector-led development and establishment of inclusive systems. Twelve separate discussions were held simultaneously and suggestions including from ministers, region/state government personnel and local authorities were made on sectoral priorities.

Officials of region/state government and local authorities took part in the discussions and made suggestions.

Development partners approved to prioritize implementation of specific sectors including achievable programmes that can be implemented quickly stated in Economic and Social Reform Framework.

They also approved to lay down strategies and coordinate them in respective sectors to be able to put them at the top of the list of priorities.

Discussions on measures for generating more incomes at home and international aid for development of Myanmar were made.

Development partners welcomed and encouraged goals of Myanmar government in financial allotments for development to be able stand on its feet at certain period.

In the budget allotment, development partners hoped that more financial assistance will go to the key sectors, especially poorly-funded sectors, for development.

They also approved that aid will be used effectively in Myanmar reform processes that will help get more international aid.

In order to formulate international aid management policies and systems for the use of international aid effectively and efficiently, Myanmar government will cooperate with development partners.

Implementation of measures to exchange opinions to be able to carry out the activities of the forum with added momentum was approved.

The forum came to an end after successfully approving the Nay Pyi Taw Accord Effective Development Cooperation.
The Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar (the Government) and its development partners have agreed on a far reaching reform programme to transform Myanmar into a modern, developed and democratic nation that improves the livelihood of its people. The Government has high aspirations for people-centred development while staying focused on achievable outcomes. It shall start modestly, but move decisively with international assistance to enlarge capacity and skill development to reduce incidence of poverty and achieve the Millennium Development Goals by 2015.

The Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar is enhancing relationships with its local community to access knowledge, experience and resources to accelerate its development progress. It recognises its ability to build its own capacity to achieve the most it can from this co-operation. The Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and its development partners agree to take concrete actions to make their cooperation more effective. The Nay Pyi Taw Accord for Effective Development Cooperation is a set of inclusive commitments that take in its foundation Myanmar’s unique history, values, governance systems, and socio-economic circumstances to create a countervailing set of clear, measurable and monitorable actions.

These commitments build on previous discussions between the Government and its partners and also reflect the conclusions of the international dialogue on aid effectiveness, including the Paris Declaration and the Accra Agenda for Action. In particular, the Accord has been informed by deliberations at the Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness and task-forced on the principles of ownership, focus on results, inclusive development partnerships, and transparency and accountabilty, embodied in the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation. The Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar intends to observe all development partners.

The Nay Pyi Taw Accord for Effective Development Cooperation has been developed in collaboration between the Government and development partners in a spirit of mutual benefits and accountability. The range of country-level development effectiveness agreements negotiated across the Asian region and globally has informed local efforts. The Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar intends to move progressively in the coming years towards similar arrangements to promote broader development effectiveness, starting with this agreement on effective development cooperation.

The Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar commits to:

- Continue to deepen consultation on development priorities and plans
- Develop systems for dialogue and knowledge sharing across all levels of government: national, state, regional and local levels
- Engage strongly with civil society in participatory approaches, including providing greater voice to women, minorities and marginalised groups
- Seek and consider the views of development partners
- Focus on achieving national priorities
- Develop a culture of democratic practices that recognises human rights and empowers citizens through participatory processes
- Strengthen the rule of law and improve access to justice and to information
- Create an enabling environment for civil society to contribute to policy formulation, budgetary processes and delivery of services at the grass roots level
- Pursue market based, inclusive growth, equitable and sustainable development with a pro-poor focus to accelerate achievement of the MDGs, including building secure property rights
- Accelerate peace-building, political reforms and development initiatives to promote reconciliation and national harmony in recent conflict and cease fire areas
- Enable effective decision making
- Build and use an evidence base for decision making, including by increasing the quality of statistics and statistical systems
- Integrate capacity building objectives into all development plans and develop appropriate strategies to unleash and develop capacities
- Prioritise national and sector development plans with specific results frameworks that specify national priorities in budget allocations and public policy decisions
- Further develop coherent and efficient information systems
- Publish, review and streamline regulations for approval and implementation of development cooperation
- Develop an aid information management system to help inform planning and budgeting and create one framework for coordination and development partner aid effectiveness performance
- Create systems for regular, nationally-led dialogue with development partners at the national, sub-national and sectoral/ thematic levels
- Strengthen public administration to improve the transparency and effectiveness of government programs and foreign assistance
- Support the legislative and publication of the Hluttaw and new forms of public participation in policy making
- Clarify and simplify lines of authority and devolve decision making processes while strengthening cross-government linkages and the whole-of-government Coordination
- Strengthen government institutions to deliver core functions effect-ively, and establish benchmarks and feedback systems on government performance including transparency and effectiveness
- Increase the transparency of budget operations, including through the timely and reliable publication of budget information, including electronic publications
- Strengthen fiduciary management and safeguards of development cooperation from misuse through improvement of public procurement and implementation of the anti-corruption law
- Encourage domestic resource mobilization and increase reliance on national resources
- Strengthen social and environmental safeguards and comply with their implementation
- Take the unique local context in Myanmar as the starting point
- Collaborate with each other and local and international institutions on diagnostic studies and sectoral reviews
- Build and make greater use of national capacity to collect, share and use development data, consistently disaggregated by gender
- Support South-South cooperation and sharing experiences for regional success stories, especially within ASEAN
- Align development assistance with national priorities
- Align development assistance with national, sub-national and local priorities based on Myanmar ownership, as set out in the framework for legal reforms and Social Reforms, the National Comprehensive Development Plan and other official planning frameworks
- Undertake sustained and efficient dialogue with relevant national counterparts on strategies and programmes
- Consult with civil society organizations, local communities and beneficiaries, especially women, minorities and etc
- Participate in and be guided by country-led coordination processes
- Take strategic direction from the conclusions of high level dialogue with Myanmar government, including by ensuring transparency and effectiveness
- Work with governments and other partners, including the private sector
- Actively support management, Ministry-led, sectoral and thematic coordination mechanisms
- Anisms, organized around Myanmar government structures, avoiding the creation of an excessive number of working groups
- Use conflict-sensitive and inclusive approaches to support peace and state building
- Build deep knowledge of conflict situations and consult widely on strategies and programs
- Move quickly but thoughtfully through established structures to provide transparent and equitable assistance in cease fire and conflict affected areas
- Strengthen the Government’s capacity to perform and be accountable for its core functions in conflict-affected areas, and assist the nation in managing risk from external shocks and natural disasters
- Strengthen the role of oversight institutions and organizations, including Hluttaws, statutory authorities and participatory processes to empower citizens to engage in policy making and review
- Focus on maximizing development results for the people of Myanmar
- Support national and sub-national strategies and programs that are pro-poor and inclusive to accelerate achievement of the MDGs
- Engage with the private sector to understand better how to respond to the impediments to private sector development and to improve the development impacts of private investment
- Work to build and implement nationally-led development results reporting system that includes and encourages joint monitoring and evaluation and that integrates targets for gender equality and women’s empowerment
- Ensure adequate social and environmental impact assessments are undertaken and ensure compliance with the results in designing and delivering development activities
- Work with government to strengthen institutions, build capacity, reduce transaction costs and increase aid effectiveness
- Be fully transparent in developing, designing and delivering assistance, wherever possible through untied aid
- Provide timely and accurate programming and financial information to the Government and other partners
- Provide maximum predictability in future aid allocation for Myanmar, publishing 3-5 year indicative budgets wherever possible
- Ensure that technical cooperation is well coordinated and focused on strengthening national policies, institutions, and systems and in building local capacity, not substituting for it
- Work through country led initiatives, and assume that a wide range of approaches and wherever possible avoid a proliferation of stand-alone activities and separate project implementation units
- Move as quickly as possible to work within Myanmar implementation systems and strengthen the base of sound, jointly-under taken analysis, identifying and rectifying problems in the process
- Find common ground on wherever possible to speak and act as one, and to that end, simplify consultation channels with Myanmar Performance Assessment Framework

The Nay Pyi Taw Accord for Effective Development Cooperation was presented today to Nay Pyi Taw accord partners by the Minister of National Planning and Economic Development and approved by acclamation at the First Myanmar Development Cooperation Forum, Nay Pyi Taw, 20th of January 2013.
**TOKYO, 20 Jan —** Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe says he has spoken by phone with Algeria Prime Minister Abdelmalek Sellal, about the hostage crisis at a natural gas complex in In Amenas. The crisis ended on Saturday with a final military assault against complex in In Amenas. The Japanese Prime Minister was detected while flying Wednesday after smoke Takamatsu Airport on an emergency landing at Airway’s US experts.

**Joint analysis of 787 flight recorder continues**

**TOKYO, 20 Jan —** Japan’s National Transport Safety Board officials are expected to continue analyzing the flight recorder of the troubled Boeing 787 Dreamliner jet jointly with US experts.

The All Nippon Airways Dreamliner made an emergency landing at Takamatsu Airport on Wednesday after smoke was detected while flying over western Japan.

Investigators from the US National Transportation Safety Board and Federal Aviation Administration visited the board office in Tokyo on Saturday. The Japanese and American officials examined the data of the flight recorder at the time of the accident.

The main focus is why excessive electricity flowed into the lithium ion battery, resulting in smoke and produce smoke.

The investigators plan to continue analyzing data for electrical currents and voltages of all systems connected with the battery. This will hopefully help them indentify the cause of the problem.

The Transport Safety Board also plans to analyze the contents of brownish soot collected from an exhaust vent of the 787 to make it clear how the substance was produced.

**Philippine Coast Guard sends ship to assist grounded US minesweeper**

**MANILA, 20 Jan —** The Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) has deployed its marine environmental protection vessel to Tubbataha Reef in Sulu Sea to assist the grounded American minesweeper USS Guardian, a senior Coast Guard official said on Saturday.

PCG commandant Rear Admiral Rodolfo Isorena said that BRP Corregidor, whose speed is 10 knots per hour, has been dispatched by him since Friday. The ship is expected to arrive in the area within 36 hours. On board the BRP-Corregidor are two rescue teams from the Coast Guard Special Operations Group (CGSOG), two teams from the Marine Environmental Protection Command (MEPCOM), and a medical team, he said.

Isorena also said that the MEPCOM personnel brought equipment such as oil spill boom, skimmer and oil dispersant chemicals to prevent any oil spill incident. The USS Guardian, a 68-metre avenger-class mine counter-measure vessel, had made a port call in Subic Bay earlier this week.

It ran aground in the area en route to Puerto Princesa on Thursday morning.

**Skiers perform on man-made Tokyo hill**

**TOKYO, 20 Jan —** A group of professional and amateur skiers has demonstrated its skills on a giant man-made slope in central Tokyo to promote the city’s bid for the 2020 Olympic Games. The 15-metre high hill at the Roppongi Hills complex was made from about a hundred tons of artificial snow. Eleven skiers, including elementary school children, demonstrated “slopestyle” skiing which will make its debut in the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi, Russia, as an official event.

The spectators cheered as the skiers swished down the slope and performed difficult jumps. A man who came to the event with his child said he was amazed to see such skillful skiing in the middle of Tokyo. The event will be held again on Sunday.

**Tolls from flood in Indonesia’s capital climb to 14**

**JAKARTA, 20 Jan —** A senior official at Indonesia’s Disaster Mitigation Agency (BNPB) said on Saturday that fatalities recorded from massive flood in the capital city in the last few days have increased to 14 as two more bodies were discovered by rescue teams.

BNPB Spokesperson Sutopo Purwo Nugroho said one dead body was found on the roof of a building in several areas around the city.

The three-level of basement in the office building was submerged by flood on Thursday. Works to suck out water that trapped in the basement is still underway at the moment.

The agency previously said that the flood in affecting all five municipalities in the capital city has claimed 12 lives since Tuesday.

The latest two body finding have added the tolls from the flood to 14. He said most of the fatality during the flood was caused by electrocution.

Sutopo said that the massive flood following heavy downpour in the capital city and neighboring areas affected 32 subdistricts and 102 villages in the capital city. It also forced 18,018 people seek refuge.

The Central government and Jakarta administrator had imposed alert emergency status in the capital city in order to facilitate relief aids for the refugees.

The flood had paralyzed government and business activities as more than 50 cm-high of water from flood inundated prominent roads in the capital city, disrupts the transportation.

**Six killed as a building catches fire in Pakistan’s Lahore**

**ISLAMABAD, 20 Jan —** At least six people including a police officer were killed and four others injured on Saturday night as a four-storey building caught fire in Pakistan’s eastern city of Lahore, local media reported.

Accoring to the reports, the fire broke out at the third floor of a four-storey building located at the Abbot Road area of Lahore. The fire was so intensive that it quickly engulfed all other storries of the building and also affected three other buildings located around it.

A coating of artificial snow produced by the Japanese company TBM was used in the man-made slope. The snow was made from artificial powders by spraying water steam at very low temperatures.

The snow was created in a specially developed machine which gradually increases in height, allowing the skiers to adjust their level of difficulty.

The artificial snow used was designed specifically for skiing and was expected to provide a more challenging experience compared to natural snow.

The massive event involved several hundred skiers from various countries, who took part in a variety of skiing disciplines, including freestyle, slalom, and giant slalom.

Residents shop at a supermarket in Meishan, southwest China’s Sichuan Province, on 19 Jan, 2013. Retailers all around the country rushed to take many kinds of sales boosting measures to attract shoppers on the occasion of Chinese Spring Festival that falls on 10 February this year. **Xinhua**
### Invitation for Bids to Conduct Petroleum Operations in Myanmar Onshore Areas (2013)

**Dated:** 17th January, 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 Detailed 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 following:-

1. **Director General**
   Energy Planning Department
   Ministry of Energy
   Building No.6, Nay Pyi Taw
   The Republic of the Union of Myanmar
   Tel: 95-67 411 099/411 057
   Fax: 95-67 411 113
   Email: myanmoe@mptmail.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: mganadplann@energy.gov.mm

3. Myanmar Embassies in respective Countries

### Heavy snow to affect flights in Paris airports

**PARIS, 20 Jan—** Upcoming cold snaps and heavy snow are expected to disrupt flights in both airports of Charles-de-Gaulle and Orly on Sunday, according to the Paris airport authority ADP. Following a wave of freezing weather, 40 percent of inbound and outbound flights at the airports in Paris are expected to be canceled, according to ADP, which advised passengers to check the revised timetable before boarding. French civil aviation authority DGAC also suggested airlines to reduce their flights on Sunday from 06:00 am local time (0700 GMT).

French weather agency Météo France has put 55 departments, including the Île-de-France (Paris and its suburb), under orange alert and decided to maintain the alert system in these areas till Sunday afternoon based on last snowfalls in these areas where the snow is expected to be thick as up to 20 centimetres.

### Algeria ends desert siege with 23 hostages dead

**ALGERIA/IN AMENAS, (Algeria), 20 Jan—** Algerian troops ended a siege by Islamist militants at a gas plant in the Sahara desert where 23 hostages died, with a final assault which killed all the remaining hostage-takers. Believed to be among the 32 dead militants was their leader, Abdul Rahman al-Nigeri, a Nigerien close to al-Qaeda-linked commander Mokhtar Belmokhtar, presumed mastermind of the raid. An Algerian interior ministry statement on the death toll gave no breakdown of the number of foreigners among hostages killed since the plant was seized before dawn on Wednesday.

Details are only slowly emerging on what happened during the siege, which marked a serious escalation of unrest in northwestern Africa, where French forces are ratcheting up a war against Islamist militants in neighbouring Mali. Algeria’s interior ministry said on Saturday that 107 foreign hostages and 685 Algerian hostages had survived, but did not give a detailed breakdown of those who died. “We feel a deep and growing unease... we fear that over the next few days we will receive bad news,” said Helge Lund, Chief Executive of Norway’s Statoil, which ran the plant along with Britain’s BP and Algeria’s state oil company. “We have spoken to describe unbelievable, horrible experiences,” he said.

British Prime Minister David Cameron said he feared for the lives of five British citizens unaccounted for at the gas plant near the town of In Amenas, which was also home to expatriate workers from Japanese engineering firm JGC Corp and others. One American and one British citizen have been confirmed dead. Statoil said five of its workers, all Norwegian nationals, were still missing. Japanese and American workers are also unaccounted for.—Reuters
Prince Harry named world’s most eligible bachelor

WASHINGTON, 20 Jan — Prince Harry, known for his adventurous and playful lifestyle, has been named the world’s most eligible bachelor by an American magazine beating the likes of George Clooney and Jack Nicholson.

Town & Country magazine has named the 28-year-old single British Royal as the world’s leading eligible bachelor. “We love him because he’s comfortable in his own skin and isn’t too stiff or pompous to show it. His wardrobe malfunctions — and coups (how dashing does he look in his Army Air Corps blue beret?) — merely refine our impression of Harry as playful, adventurous, a Renaissance man. Sometimes it’s good not to be king,” the magazine said of the British Royal.

Harry, of course, was on a lot of people’s radars last year after naked photos surfaced of a scandalous trip to Las Vegas, the CBS News reported. Harry, beat the likes of George Clooney in a 40-person list that includes a wide variety of celebrity and high-powered men of all ages.

Several other royals made the cut: Prince Philips of Greece and Denmark, Prince Carl Philip of Sweden and Prince Amedeo of Belgium. NBA star Jeremy Lin also snagged a spot on the Town & Country’s most eligible bachelor list, as did NFL player Tim Tebow.

Corey Booker, mayor of Newark and actor Jack Nicholson were also on the list compiled by the lifestyle magazine. Patrick Schwarzenegger found himself on the worthy bachelor list, as did Taylor Swift’s one-time beau, Conor Kennedy. The magazine describes its list as, “a highly subjective, thoroughly opinionated survey of the princes, politicians, scions, DJs, and billionaires to be the most eligible men in the universe.”

PTI

Marion Cotillard named 2013 Harvard University Hasty Pudding Theatricals Woman of the Year

NEW DUBLIN, 20 Jan — Marion Cotillard has been named 2013 Harvard University Hasty Pudding Theatricals Woman of the Year. The Academy Award-winning actress will be honoured with a parade and roast, and be presented with a ceremonial pudding pot, at the prestigious US institution on 31 January 2013.

Marion is following in the footsteps of the likes of Homeland star Claire Danes — who took home the Academy Award last year — 2010 winner Anne Hathaway and 2001 recipient Drew Barrymore in being recognised by the organisation.

The Hasty Pudding Theatricals group will announce their Man of the Year on 8 February, and honour him at a later date. Hasty Pudding Theatricals is the US’ oldest undergraduate drama troupe, and annually honour performers who they believe have made a “lasting and impressive” contribution to entertainment.

The 37-year-old French beauty — who has 19-month-old son Marcel with partner Guillaume Canet — won a Best Actress Oscar in 2007 for her role in La Vie En Rose and has recently appeared in films including The Dark Knight Rises, Contagion and Inception.

PTI

The Hasty Pudding Theatricals group will announce their Man of the Year on 8 February, and honour him at a later date.— PTI

Les Miserables cast to perform at the Oscars, it has been reported.— PTI

LONDON, 20 Jan — Anne Hathaway is expected to join Hugh Jackman, Amanda Seyfried and other stars from the award-winning musical, but it’s unclear exactly what the performance will involve. The Daily Mail newspaper has reported Samantha Barks — who plays Eponine — will be leaving her current stage production of Oliver! so she can be part of the show at the Dolby Theatre in Hollywood, California.

The details are still being finalised in order to fit in with other performances at the Academy Awards ceremony next month (24.02.13), with a number of options being discussed. One would see the cast collaborated for a rendition of one of the musical’s big numbers, One Day More or Do You Hear the People Sing.

Another idea is a medley, allowing Anne Hathaway — who stars as tragic prostitute Fantine — to sing part of the iconic I Dreamed A Dream, with other cast members performing snippets of their own big moments from the film.

The decision hangs on the Oscar creative team figuring out the timings of the show, which will also feature Adele singing the title theme from recent ‘James Bond’ blockbuster Skyfall. However, this could still be incorporated into Academy’s tribute to 50 years of the iconic spy franchise.— PTI

Mariah Carey renewes feud with Nicki Minaj over eye shadow

LONDON, 20 Jan — Mariah Carey slammed Nicki Minaj after her fellow American Idol judge rejected a contestant for wearing the same colour eye shadow as the star.

Judges Mariah, 42, Randy Jackson, 56, and Keith Urban, 45, praised the 20-year-old hopeful for her rendition of I Dreamed A Dream, with Nicki being the only one of the quartet not to vote her through.

Initially, she said: “I thought your voice is pretty, you are pretty, but nothing jumped out at me. We have seen such magnetic things today and I don’t think you compared to what we have seen today. “I do not feel it.” However, when Stephanie was put through the Chicago leg of the show’s auditions, Nicki, 30, revealed the real reason for her snub — they were wearing the same colour pink eye shadow. She admitted: “We have a rivalry and that is why I said no.”

Mariah couldn’t believe the rejection, and it sparked a row between the pair.

She commented: “This is what I deal with, this is what I deal with when I come into my job.” The singer then tried to calm Nicki down as the feud threatened to reach a boiling point. However Nicki Minaj has recently claimed the rivalry has ended since the auditions were filmed.— PTI

Prince Harry beat George Clooney to make it to the top of the list.— PTI

Michael Jackson’s dermatologist hints he is Prince’s father

LONDON, 20 Jan — Michael Jackson’s former dermatologist has hinted in a cryptic Facebook post that he is the biological father of the King of Pop’s son Prince. Dr Aame Klein, who has been mired in bankruptcy and financial woes in recent years, contrasted an old photo of himself with an image of the youngster on the social networking site, reported Daily Mail. Klein posted an old picture of himself beneath a photo of 15-year-old Prince Michael with the cryptic tag ‘hmmmmm’. The photo appears to be a wry nod to conspiracy theorists who have speculated for years that Klein donated his own sperm to help the late King of Pop start a family.

Jackson, who died in 2009, fathered Prince Michael and daughter Paris with ex-wife Debbie Rowe. PTI

Prince Harry will not be fitted for his Army Air Corps beret until a later date. — PTI

The Hollywood, California. The cast of Les Miserables will perform at the Oscars, it has been reported.— PTI

Marion Cotillard has recently claimed the rivalry has ended since the auditions were filmed.— PTI

PTI
Bayern Munich and Leverkusen march on in German Bundesliga

BERLIN, 20 Jan — Mario Mandzukic’s brace ensured Bayern Munich’s 2-0 win over Greuther Fuerth, Leverkusen defeated Frankfurt 3-1 and defending champion Dortmund cruised Bremen 5-0 at the 18th round of Bundesliga on Saturday. Bayern Munich maintain their nine point gap atop the Bundesliga standings following the defeat of the bottom team Greuther Fuerth at Allianz Arena.

From the kickoff Bayern made clear that only three points were sufficient to satisfy their standards. The German record champions let the ball do the work with a ball possession of over 80 percent to frustrate their visitors. Thus Mario Mandzukic converted Bayern’s dominance into a tangible reward when he broke the deadlock with 26 minutes played. The Croatian international used Thomas Muller’s cross to slot home from penalty area.

Greuther Fuerth defended deep but was unable to threaten Bayern Munich’s defence. After the interval the hosts sealed the deal ahead of time when Mandzukic extended his tally to 11 goals at the 61st minute. Toni Kroos’ corner-cross found Mandzukic at the near post to head home for the 2-0 victory. Bayern chasers and second placed Leverkusen wrapped three points against stunner team Frankfurt following their 3-1 victory on home soil. The hosts got hold of a better grip while Frankfurt needed some time to establish their strategy.

Barca lose 3-2 in San Sebastian to prove they are human after all

MADRID, 20 Jan — FC Barcelona surrendered a 2-0 lead to crash to their first league defeat of the season 3-2 away to Real Sociedad on Saturday in the Spanish top league. Barca were two goals ahead and had missed chances to add a third, before a fine firefight from the home side ended with substitute Imanol Aguirre scoring the winning goal in injury time. Barca were not helped by having to play the last 35 minutes with a player less after Gerard Pique was sent off for two yellow cards, and paid the price for a lack of defensive tension throughout the game. Barcelona wasted little time in taking the lead as Leo Messi cut inside and curled home a left foot shot. It was the tenth consecutive league game in which he has scored, equaling a record set by former Barca and Real Madrid striker Ronaldo. The game was only six minutes old when Messi opened the scoring and he should have scored even earlier after wasting a chance when put clean through on goal only to drag his side wide. Five minutes later Pedro Rodriguez hit a curling shot against the Real Sociedad post, with Claudio Bravo well beaten, but on hand to make it 2-0 midway through the half after Xavi Hernandez’s pass set up Dani Alves to slide the ball across the area needing just a touch to send it into the net. Messi could and should have scored a third when his chip from a bouncing through ball bounced back off the inside of the post with seven minutes left in the half and from a possible 3-0, it became 2-1 when Chori Castro was given space on the left to hit a shot across Victor Valdes, but despite looking as if they could score at any moment, Barca were also looking vulnerable in defense.

If coach Tito Vilanova spoke to his players at halftime, however, the message didn’t get home and Pique earning himself a second yellow card ten minutes after the break with a needless foul. Javier Mascherano into the game, but one of his first actions was to deflect another Castro pass Valdes to level the score. — Reuters

Djokovic still has edge over Murray

MELBOURNE, 20 Jan — Andy Murray’s breakthrough win at the US Open was reward for having the courage to leave comfort zone, but the player he beat in the final still has the edge over the Briton, according to seven-times grand slam champion Mats Wilander. Wilander said little could be read into Murray’s five-set victory over Novak Djokovic at a gusty Flushing Meadows last September, given the Serb appeared to have had a bad day in the office. ‘Djokovic does have the edge,’ Swede Wilander told Reuters at Melbourne Park, where both 25-year-old players have reached the fourth round but cannot meet until the final. “He literally will have an edge for a long time but that can be changed. It’s really hard to say what happened at the US Open.” Novak looked like he was thinking, ‘It’s windy, I’m really not enjoying this as much as I should, I’m not playing that well, it’s Monday.’ I’m not saying he did this intentionally, but there are matches in your career where you can’t cope with how you feel. “I don’t know how big a deal that match was... I don’t think this final means anything on paper except that Murray has one grand slam.” Things were still looking up for Murray, however, having taken on eight-times grand slam winner Ivan Lendl as coach, the 48-year-old Swede said.

While Lendl had not necessarily secured Murray’s maiden grand slam, it had certainly sped up the process.

Blackhawks spoil Kings’ coronation with easy win

LOS ANGELES, 20 Jan — The Chicago Blackhawks spoiled the Los Angeles Kings’ opening day party when the visitors eased to a 5-2 victory over the Stanley Cup champions as the strike-shortened NHL season finally got underway on Saturday.

Confronted by a hostile Staples Centre crowd already whipped into frenzy after the pre-game unveiling of the championship banner, Chicago quickly put a lid on the fervor with three unanswered goals in the opening period.

The Kings looked the rustier of the teams after the lengthy labour dispute reduced the 82-game season to 48 contests and were made to pay by the 2010 Stanley Cup winners.

Andy Murray

Barca lose 3-2 in San Sebastian to prove they are human after all

La Quinta, Calif., 20 Jan — Returning to the California desert for this week’s Humana Challenge, the perfect place for Joaquin Vegas to be as he strives to add a second PGA Tour victory to his already impressive career resume.

Two years ago, the Venezuelan claimed his first title on the US circuit in only his fifth start, recovering from a faltering finish to beat Americans Bill Haas and Gary Woodland in a nerve-jangling playoff at this pro-am celebrity event.

Vegas eager to hit PGA Tour jackpot again

Los Angeles, 20 Jan — The Chicago Blackhawks spoiled the Los Angeles Kings’ opening day party when the visitors eased to a 5-2 victory over the Stanley Cup champions as the strike-shortened NHL season finally got underway on Saturday.

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Andy Murray

Jhonattan Vegas of Venezuela

Anders Veseth

Chicago Blackhawks Jonathan Toews (R) fights for the puck with Los Angeles Kings Drew Doughty during the first period of their NHL hockey game in Los Angeles, California, on 19 Jan, 2013. —Reuters

Reuters
La Quinta, (California), 20 Jan—Scott Stallings capitalized on a pair of eagles to surge five strokes clear of the field with a sizzling display of “conservatively aggressive” golf in the third round of the Humana Challenge on Saturday.

Stallings, 27, fired a nine-under par 63 on the Nicklaus Private course at PGA West, one of three venues hosting the tournament renowned for its low scoring in the California desert.

Bidding for a third victory on the PGA Tour, Stallings eagled the par-five 13th and eighth after starting out at the 10th to take command with a 22-under total of 194 in the pro-am celebrity event.

“I feel good,” Stallings told reporters after scrambling well in a round that also included five birdies. “I played well. I stayed aggressive. I’ve been smart when I got out of position. I guess you can say it’s conservatively aggressive. Like number eight today, I hit a really good drive and had eight iron,” he said of his second eagle.

“But just because I had eight iron to a par-five, I fired it in the middle of the green, had a 20-foot putt and was happy to make it.” Former British Open champion Stewart Cink, who has struggled for consistency over the past four years, carded a 66 on the Palmer layout to share second place with fellow American Roberto Castro (69), co-leader overnight.

Scott Stallings of the U.S tees off the 13th tee during Round 3 of the Humana Challenge at La Quinta (Califor-nia), 20 Jan—Britain’s Ross Fisher stormed home with a birdie-birdie finish to make the cut right on the number in the third round of the Humana Challenge on Saturday and was delighted to qualify for the final round on his PGA Tour debut.

The 32-year-old Englishman, competing in his first PGA Tour event as a full member, rolled in an 18-footer at the par-three 17th and then two-putted at the par-five 18th to complete a five-under-par 67.

“It was a good solid finish,” a beaming Fisher told Reuters after mixing seven birdies with two bogeys in dazzling sunshine on the Palmer Private course at PGA West to post a 10-under total of 206 in the pro-am celebrity event.

“I played good. I was three under through nine, made a sloppy bogey on 10 really but came straight back. I hit it to four feet on the par-five 11 but missed it for eagle so I was kind of kicking myself there. I gave myself a lot of chances coming in. I just couldn’t quite get the ball to the hole.”

Fisher, who booked his place on the 2013 PGA Tour by tying for second in the tour’s qualifying school at La Quinta, had to end his round on a strong note after a careless bogey at the 14th put him three strokes outside the projected cutline.

“I really had to dig deep,” he said about his birdie-birdie over his last four holes.

Ross Fisher of England celebrates defeating Kei Nishikori of Japan in their singles match at the Australian Open tennis tournament in Melbourne, on 20 Jan, 2013—Reuters

Ferrer cruises into Australian Open quarter-finals

Baseline specialist Ferrer took full advantage of the 16th seed’s injury, working him around the court and waiting for the 23-year-old to make one of his 65 errors, though the Japanese number one did put up some resistance in the third set.

The Spaniard will next play the winner of the fourth round encounter between eighth-seeded Serbian Janko Tipsarevic or 10th seeded compatriot Nicolas Almagro in the quarter-finals. —Reuters

R/489 Printed and published by the New Light of Myanmar press in Nay Pyi Taw, the News and Periodicals Enterprise, Ministry of Information.
Nay Pyi Taw, 20 Jan—Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann called on ward/village administra-tors to resolve the difficulties of people within legal framework while striving for development of own ward/village with goodwill as he met locals, town elders, departmental personnel and ward/village administrators in Natogyi and Myingyan townships yesterday.

The Speaker on his tour elaborated on functions and assistance of the Hluttaws and government to fulfill public aspirations, guarantee fundamental rights of citizens and bring about regional development.

He urged the locals to openly make known their difficulties and wishes, vowing to take prompt actions in coordination with local government and line ministries. Local people, community elders and personnel concerned openly reported obstacles against and requirements for socio-economic improve-ment of respective townships. The Speaker coordinated essentials.

Union Minister U Nyan Tun Aung, Mandalay Region Chief Minister U Ye Myint, Hluttaw Committee Chairmen U Maung Maung Thein and U Zaw Myint Pe, Mandalay Region Hluttaw Speaker U Win Maung, deputy ministers and departmental personnel accompanied the Speaker on his tour.

Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann meets locals at Myingyan Town Hall.  

MNA

By: Tin Maung Than and Aung Kyaw Kyaw

Sihapitak: All of 100 percent surely because according to the potential of the people and the national reform. Now Myanmar is not alone. And ASEAN members go together hand in hand with it. NLM: So will we be enjoying fruitful results in the future? Sihapitak: Yeah! You can attract foreign direct investment. You can reduce the bad impact on the people. We can share our experience. So you can meet the target. That is a good sign. Thank you very much.

Barbara Manzi, Head of Office of UNOCHA Myanmar NLM: I would like to have some of your comment about this forum? Manzi: I think this meeting is an extremely interesting and timely event that brings together the whole family of the government and the development funds. For me as the person of the organization dealing with the humanitarian aid, it is extremely important field that convergence between humanitarian aids and development knowing that Myanmar is prone to disasters such as cyclones, floods, earthquakes. You have such situations in Rakhine and Kachin that development gained. So it is extremely important that the disaster management, the early quickly look into at the terrible events. So in health, agriculture and social services this forum is making sure that we limit the impact of those terrible events. It is extremely important. I am really glad that this deal has been discussed. It has been discussed in different sections. So I am looking forward to continue working between the government as my organization has done until now. We need to work together. Thank you.

Korean National Assembly Speaker and wife arrive at Yangon

Yangon, 20 Jan—At the invitation of Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann, a goodwill delegation led by Mr. Kang Chang-hee, Speaker of National Assembly of the Republic of Korea and wife arrived here by air this evening.

Speaker Mr. Kang Chang-hee and party were welcomed at Yangon International Airport by Yangon Region Hluttaw Speaker U Sein Tin Win, Deputy Speaker U Tin Aung, Pyithu Hluttaw In-ternational Relations Committee Secretary U Ko Ko Tun, Yangon Region Hluttaw Legislation Com-mittee Chairman U Hla Tun, Korean Ambassador to Myanmar Mr. Kim Hae-yong and officials.—MNA

Forum introduces Myanmar to donor community

NLM today interviewed three more participants of the first Myanmar Development Cooperation Forum at MICC:

Edward Anderson, Program Manager, Myanmar of the Asia Foundation

NLM: At this is a forum involving a wide array of topic, which is your priority topic?

Anderson: Actually forme, our topic is very interesting. I am particularly interested in the media environment and governance in Myanmar and all of the changes, all of the very positive changes that are underway in your country now.

NLM: What is your point of view on this forum?

Anderson: I think this is a wonderful idea, this is the first opportunity, and the government in Myanmar has to introduce itself to the donor community and from the donor community changes itself the government of Myanmar.

This is a very good change of idea. The atmosphere is friendly I think that the tune of discussion is very positive and constructive and I hope to see more dialogues like this in the future. I comment the government of Myanmar for taking the initiative to do this forum. Thank you.

Angsana Sihapitak, Deputy Director-General of Thailand International Development Cooperation Agency

NLM: We would like to have some of your comments on your view on this meeting. Can you give me your comment about the meeting?

Sihapitak: This meeting! I think this meeting is very fruitful for all of stakeholders and partners. Because I hope that all parties come and share information and also to learn about Myanmar and also this forum is something that is an opportunity for us, you know.

NLM: Do you think that in the future we Myanmar can improve everything?

That is a good sign. Thank you very much.

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Speaker of National Assembly of the Republic of Korea Mr. Kang Chang-hee being welcomed at the airport by officials.—MNA

Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker meets local people of Natogyi, Myingyan townships

By: Tin Maung Than and Aung Kyaw Kyaw

Sihapitak: All of 100 percent surely because according to the potential of the people and the national reform. Now Myanmar is not alone. And ASEAN members go together hand in hand with it. NLM: So will we be enjoying fruitful results in the future? Sihapitak: Yeah! You can attract foreign direct investment. You can reduce the bad impact on the people. We can share our experience. So you can meet the target. That is a good sign. Thank you very much.

Barbara Manzi, Head of Office of UNOCHA Myanmar NLM: I would like to have some of your comment about this forum? Manzi: I think this meeting is an extremely interesting and timely event that brings together the whole family of the government and the development funds. For me as the person of the organization dealing with the humanitarian aid, it is extremely important field that convergence between humanitarian aids and development knowing that Myanmar is prone to disasters such as cyclones, floods, earthquakes. You have such situations in Rakhine and Kachin that development gained. So it is extremely important that the disaster management, the early quickly look into at the terrible events. So in health, agriculture and social services this forum is making sure that we limit the impact of those terrible events. It is extremely important. I am really glad that this deal has been discussed. It has been discussed in different sections. So I am looking forward to continue working between the government as my organization has done until now. We need to work together. Thank you.

Korean National Assembly Speaker and wife arrive at Yangon

Yangon, 20 Jan—At the invitation of Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann, a goodwill delegation led by Mr. Kang Chang-hee, Speaker of National Assembly of the Republic of Korea and wife arrived here by air this evening.

Speaker Mr. Kang Chang-hee and party were welcomed at Yangon International Airport by Yangon Region Hluttaw Speaker U Sein Tin Win, Deputy Speaker U Tin Aung, Pyithu Hluttaw In-ternational Relations Committee Secretary U Ko Ko Tun, Yangon Region Hluttaw Legislation Com-mittee Chairman U Hla Tun, Korean Ambassador to Myanmar Mr. Kim Hae-yong and officials.—MNA

Speaker of National Assembly of the Republic of Korea Mr. Kang Chang-hee being welcomed at the airport by officials.—MNA